

Effective Disaster Recovery and Response Time Management Using Innovative Solutions

Whitepaper

Introduction

When an emergency situation occurs, the need for real-time information and quick, effective communication is critical. For organizations tasked with responding to emergencies, having technology in place to help ensure that communication remains strong from the field to headquarters is a surefire way to be able to provide the most helpful aid to any affected areas.

Whether the situation is an accident at a job site in the field, an emergency involving the health and safety of the public or one of your employees, or preparing for/reacting to a natural disaster, having a plan in place allows you to respond quickly and keep everyone on the same page from the start. Once your emergency plan is in place, collecting real-time data about what's going on in the field helps make operations more adaptable. Every minute counts during these situations; quick response times and a willingness to change priorities (if necessary) are essential when coordinating recovery efforts.

What is Effective Disaster Recovery and Response Time Management?

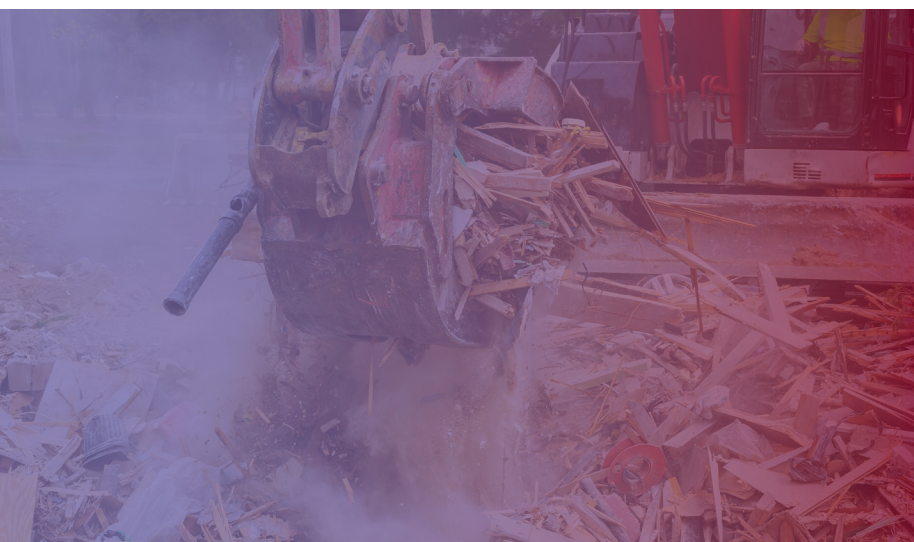
Effective disaster recovery starts with efficient arrival times. As previously discussed, organizations tasked with responding to emergency situations need to have strategies and tested crisis management plans in place to ensure they're resilient. This allows for aid to be dispatched as quickly as possible.

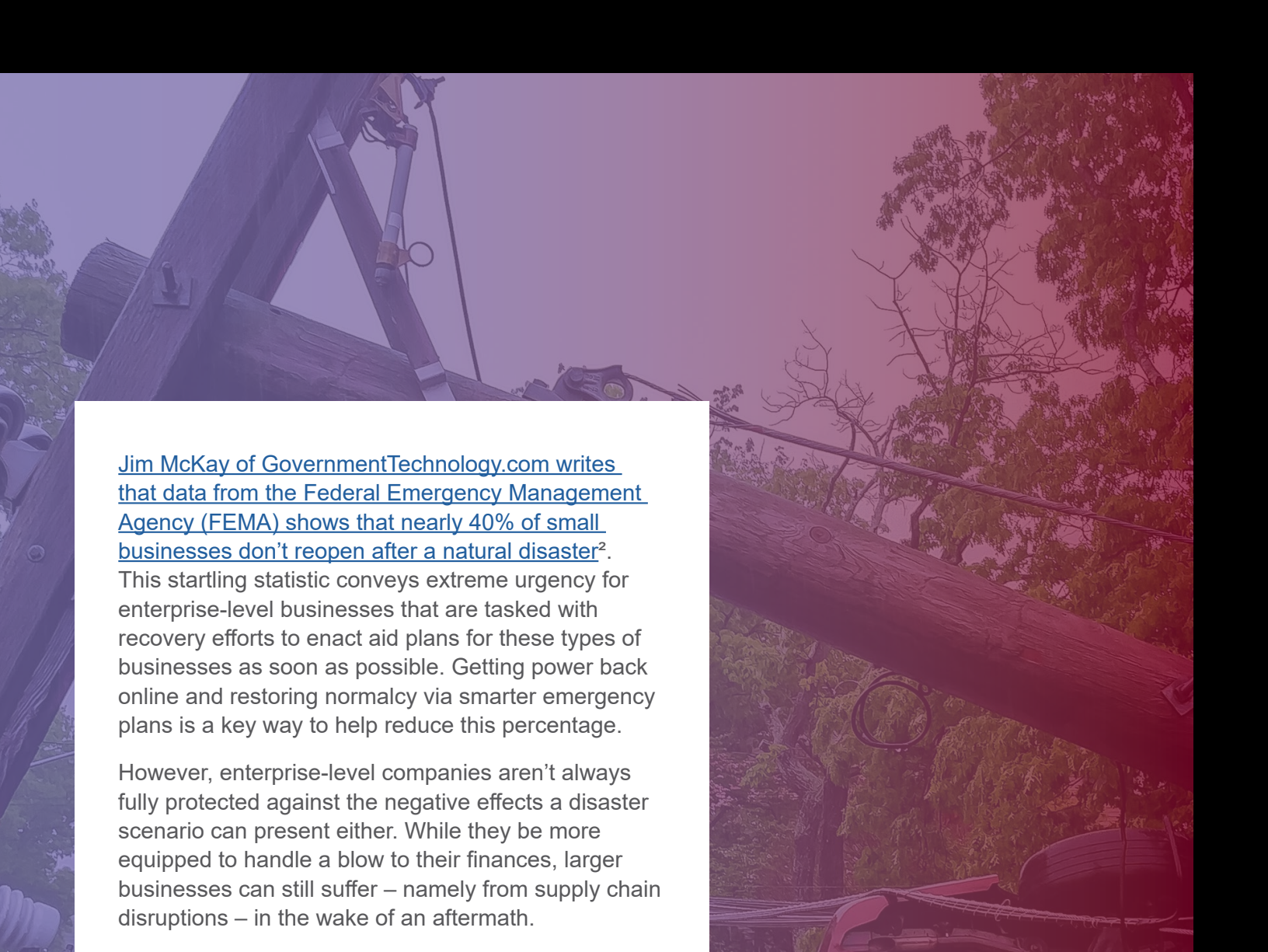
However, the unpredictability of mission-critical scenarios means you need to account for as much as possible in advance, yet stay flexible, as things change. In the example of recovering from a natural disaster, it's difficult to truly understand the full scope of what needs to be done until you have personnel actually present at the catastrophe-stricken area. [According to the National Hurricane Center, there were 20 named tropical cyclones in 2021¹](#). With storms like these each causing varying degrees of damage, having a digital solution to allocate resources effectively allows you to serve multiple areas at once and distribute workloads more evenly (reserving more emergency resources for harder hit areas).

Managing efficient response times also means measuring average durations between calls for assistance and when your personnel actually arrive onsite. Identifying ways to streamline and automate processes like dispatching, paperwork, and time tracking helps you reduce any delays for future disaster recovery efforts. As the restoration of power grids becomes the next primary concern once immediate safety and medical aid has been administered, effective office-to-field communication is also critical to monitor progress and keep your employees safer, especially if they're dealing with downed electrical lines.



“It’s critical to put a crisis management plan in place to minimize the risk of emergencies, as well as reduce the disruption an emergency may impart on your team’s operations,” says AnnaMaria Turano, Actsoft’s chief marketing officer. “A proactive plan can help keep you prepared, focused, and able to provide essential services.”





[Jim McKay of GovernmentTechnology.com writes that data from the Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\) shows that nearly 40% of small businesses don't reopen after a natural disaster².](#)

This startling statistic conveys extreme urgency for enterprise-level businesses that are tasked with recovery efforts to enact aid plans for these types of businesses as soon as possible. Getting power back online and restoring normalcy via smarter emergency plans is a key way to help reduce this percentage.

However, enterprise-level companies aren't always fully protected against the negative effects a disaster scenario can present either. While they be more equipped to handle a blow to their finances, larger businesses can still suffer – namely from supply chain disruptions – in the wake of an aftermath.

[According to SecurityMagazine.com, disturbances to supply chains cost companies a combined \\$184 million on an annual basis³.](#) Natural disasters can impede supply chains due to backups at affected ports, the destruction of inventory, and changing priorities of where available resources are to be directed to.

It's imperative for response-based organizations and enterprise-level businesses alike to have tools in place that allow them to provide instant aid and understand how things in the field are evolving in real-time. Whether a situation involves the health and safety of your field employees, the well-being of the public, or both, installing plans in advance and leveraging digital solutions allows you to better execute those plans when the time comes (especially for professions where the potential of danger is a constant concern).

Industries Where Emergency Response is Critical

Crisis management plans are essential for virtually any organization. However, there are specific industries that must typically place an even greater emphasis on their emergency strategies due to the nature of their work:

- Public sector
- Remediation services
- Trash removal services
- Oil and gas
- Government agencies
- Local municipalities
- Construction
- Healthcare
- Transportation
- Electrical
- Utilities
- Manufacturing
- Mining
- Civil engineering



New Innovations for Emergency Management

[An article by Nancy Torres of Harvard University details some of the new advancements and trends in emergency management, such as an increasing reliance on artificial intelligence \(AI\) and the Internet-of-Things \(IoT\).](#) Both of these concepts provide entities with enhanced oversight and coordination for their resources.

[In the instance of AI, reduced costs and usage of predictive analytics for disaster situations help organizations better prepare in advance, as well as more accurately predict damage costs](#) That way, if an emergency situation occurs, it's easier to manage and know how to act quicker.

The Internet of Things (IoT) describes a connection of physical objects with various built-in or attached sensors that all exchange information with one another via the internet. In addition to consolidation and making it easy for data to flow throughout your organization efficiently, [Torres writes that IoT chains enhance your ability to monitor risk factors and have better plans in advance](#)

Both AI and IoT are built upon the principle of collecting near real-time data from the field, particularly in their applications for emergency management. In general, data allows organizations to make smarter, more efficient strategies to ensure resources aren't spread too thin and remain even more adaptable.

How Real-Time Data Helps Organizations Make Quicker, More Informed Decisions

Data provides organizations with the know-how and capacity to provide more specific aid in times of crisis. Knowing what areas have already been reached by emergency workers via GPS tracking and fostering enhanced communication using digital solutions allows administrators at headquarters to take note of what's been accomplished and reroute resources as needed. Plus, as a situation develops or worsens, it's important that dispatchers and administrators at the office are aware, so that they can dedicate additional resources to it. The unpredictability of emergency scenarios creates an even greater need for relying on new information as it surfaces. Strengthened communication from the field to the office gives managers the tools to better coordinate changing circumstances on the fly.

Enhanced Communication and Acting on Data from the Field

In the business world, inefficiencies in communication can lead to errors that cost companies financially. In the emergency management world, higher costs are just a microcosm of the consequences of poor communication, as health and safety are also a major potential fallout.

Receiving accurate, timely information from the field allows administrators to react and act accordingly with greater precision and know how to better serve the public (and their own employees). Electronic messaging of your field personnel and using strategies like proximity-based dispatching can help you have backup channels of communication, keeping you always informed of current operations. Simply put, data and real-time communication provide greater surety for each of the decisions you make as an administrator. Acquiring a digital solution to enhance connectivity from the field to the office is an investment that can increase safety, cost savings, and efficiency for your team, no matter what the emergency situation is.

TeamWherx™, an All-in-One Solution for Managing Mission-Critical Situations Effectively

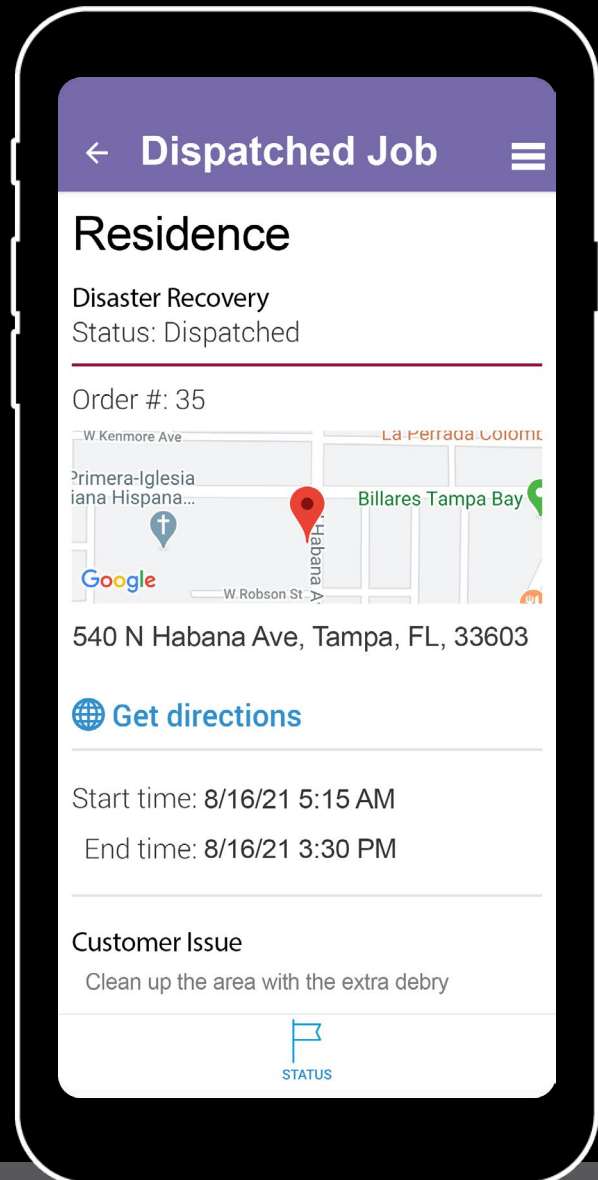
Actsoft's TeamWherx™ platform is an all-in-one software that helps organizations retain poise, insight, and strong communication while serving the public. In addition to increasing the cost-efficiency of your organization's operations, our platform makes coordination during emergency situations seamless, faster, and less confusing to navigate.

Key Features of TeamWherx™ for Disaster Recovery and Faster Response Times

Wireless Forms: Create custom digital forms of your organization's paperwork and be compliant with the OMB and NARA requirements to be paperless. For real-time damage assessments, use Wireless Forms' photo capture tool to dynamically document restoration efforts in certain areas.

Job Dispatching: Digitally direct available staff to new locations in need of assistance at will. As needs can frequently and rapidly change during an emergency situation, on-the-fly, electronic dispatching enables personnel to stay engaged and adaptable by receiving notifications to their mobile devices.

Intra-Company Messaging: Communicate with your mobile employees nearly instantly via secure messaging. Use the TeamWherx™ web app to send updates to your staff's mobile devices in the field, as well as receive new information that comes in.

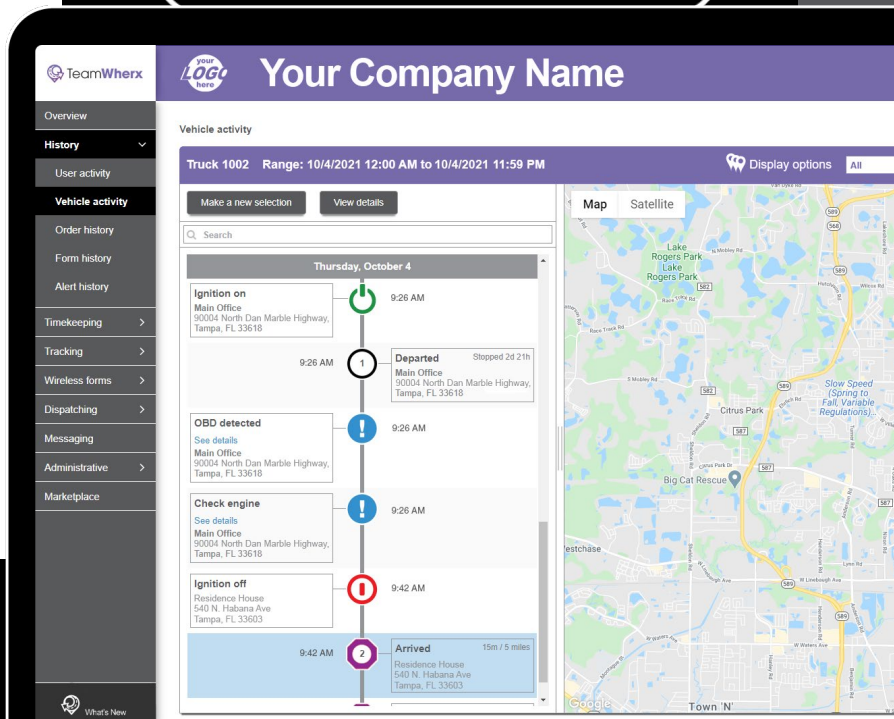
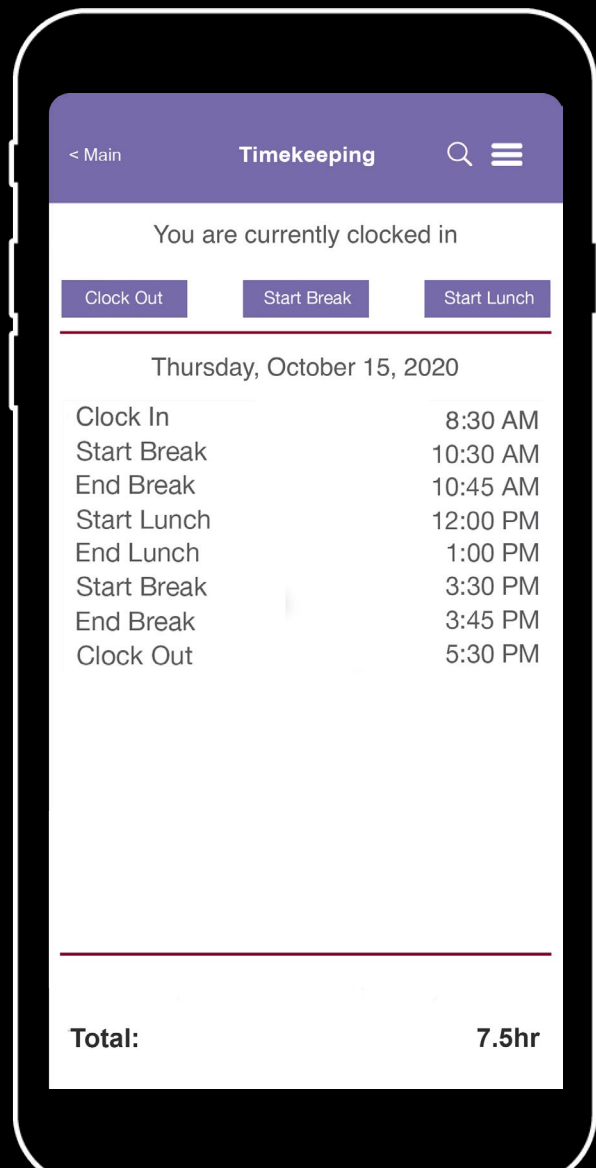


GPS Tracking: See the real-time positions of your personnel in the field, as well as those of valuable vehicles and equipment. Knowing the locations of where your organization's resources are puts you in a more versatile position to be able to use them in the most effective ways possible.

Mobile Timekeeping: Enable quicker response times by letting your employees register hours worked from a mobile device from virtually anywhere. This feature allows your staff to remain in the field and take breaks while deployed, enabling them to reduce unnecessary travel back to headquarters and provide uninterrupted aid to affected areas.

Alerts: Gain more knowledge from the field with Alerts. Establish geofence perimeters around emergency zones to monitor entries/exits of your tracked personnel, equipment, and vehicles for increased safety and accountability.

API Integration: Sync data collected from the field with the third-party systems you already use to better connect your systems and workflows. Enhance the ways you manage your data and gain additional insight that helps you enhance operations.





Our Platform in Action

Here are three examples of how TeamWherx™ provides specific assistance to organizations in different situations related to crisis management.

Use Case: Natural Disaster Recovery

In the wake of a hurricane, a government organization was able to provide more effective relief by using TeamWherx™ to effectively schedule and reassign directives to personnel in the field digitally. They also retained strong field-to-office communication by digitally receiving information from the field in real-time. Using photo capture to document damage at affected areas gave their headquarters a better understanding of what resources were needed next, helping them move assistance forward in a timely manner.

Use Case: Dispatching Resources

A police department used TeamWherx™ to allocate resources effectively and identify where their nearest available officer was to a new emergency call that came in, helping them provide quicker response times to people in need. They also used its GPS Tracking feature to increase safety for their workforce by being able to see the positions of all officers on shift at once. Filing police reports digitally using the software's Wireless Forms feature made the process easier and less time consuming for officers, giving them more time each shift to serve the public.

Use Case: Healthcare

A healthcare organization specializing in emergency patient transport relied on TeamWherx™ to better coordinate and monitor their operations in the field. For new emergency service requests, they were able to use its GPS Tracking and Job Dispatching features to identify the closest available medical transport driver to an emergency location and then reroute them, helping them provide optimized service to their patients. Plus, they reduced operational costs from unnecessary fuel burn and idle time by eliminating the need for their drivers to travel far distances for their next service call (as well as further reducing long wait times for patients).

Future Outlook of TeamWherx™ and Its Applications for Emergency Respons

The landscape of effective disaster recovery and response time management as a whole continues to shift toward a foundation of technology. Emergency plans based off of real-time data and strong communication are key, and solutions that equip organizations with both of these concepts increase their capacity and savings while they carry out their disaster recovery plans.

Our solution continues to be developed to handle increased focus on emergency response, disaster preparedness, and operational insight as we head into the future. With quarterly releases, TeamWherx™ gains new tools constantly to help you sustain connectivity from the field to the office and serve the public with truly efficient coordination.

Schedule a free demo of TeamWherx™ today to discover the power of our solution for your organization.

<https://www.actsoft.com/request-a-demo/>

Footnotes

1. "Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters." <https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/billions/>. NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI), 2022. Accessed 4 April 2022.
2. McKay, Jim. "Small Businesses Are a Vital Part of Community Resiliency but Often Overlook Vulnerabilities." <https://www.govtech.com/em/preparedness/small-businesses-are-a-vital-part-of-community-resiliency-but-often-overlook-vulnerabilities.html#:~:text=According%20to%20FEMA%2C%2040%20percent,reopen%2C%20fail%20within%20a%20year.&text=%E2%80%9CThey're%20not%20well%2D, recovery%20period%2C%E2%80%9D%20she%20said>. GovernmentTechnology.com, 2018. Accessed 4 April 2022.
3. "Global supply chain disruptions cost companies \$184 million annually." <https://www.securitymagazine.com/articles/95489-global-supply-chain-disruptions-cost-companies-184-million-annually>. SecurityMagazine.com, 2021. Accessed 4 April 2022.
4. Torres, Nancy. "Three Emerging Technologies To Improve Emergency Management." <https://datasmart.ash.harvard.edu/news/article/three-emerging-technologies-improve-emergency-management>. Data-Smart City Solutions, 2018. Harvard University. Accessed April 4, 2022.

