



The Computerworld Honors Program

Honoring those who use Information Technology to benefit society

Final Copy of Case Study

YEAR:
2012

STATUS:
Laureate

Organization:
CS STARS

Organization URL:
www.csstars.com

Project Name:
STARS Risk Response

What social/humanitarian issue was the project designed to address? What specific metrics did you use to measure the project's success?

Risk managers are concerned about mitigating risks before they happen and quickly addressing events after they do inevitably happen. Most risk management departments don't have the resources to efficiently monitor worldwide news stories and events, immediately determine relevancy, and respond to those events that might have impact by collecting relevant information from those sites. For these reasons, they aren't always able to respond and allocate resources as effectively or as quickly as they'd like to.

Please describe the technologies used and how those technologies were deployed in an innovative way. Also, please include any technical or other challenges that were overcome for the successful implementation of the project.

The STARS Risk Response feature automates the entire process of identifying and assessing external risk by monitoring external data sources, determining which are relevant to an organization's locations and people, automatically sending an assessment for a qualifying event to the appropriate on-site auditors, and finally collecting the results.

For example, an earthquake above a magnitude 5.0 that occurs within 75 miles of a property will cause a structural assessment to be generated and assigned to a structural engineer. Risk Response is a product that is fully integrated within the STARS Enterprise risk management platform, which is a Microsoft .NET-developed application. It was built as an offshoot of our Risk Goggles feature. Risk Response listens for external risk events that are not typically monitored by RMIS systems and automatically generates assessments and assigns them to auditors. This no-touch approach to generating assessments doesn't miss a potentially damaging event because it identifies all National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) derived events within the United States as well as U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) derived earthquakes worldwide. Risk Response allows a risk manager to automate the process by setting appropriate thresholds so that the system keeps them informed and kicks off the auditing process automatically. In addition to automating the process, Risk Response increases the effectiveness of risk identification by qualifying events against impartial, scientific data collected by thousands of scientists and technicians. The feature uses Microsoft Silverlight with Microsoft Bing map visualization technology to extract and transform data hidden in large datasets. Data mash-ups offer external risk data from natural disasters, environmental factors, and political and social events to be combined with a client's own geocoded location information and risk data to provide real-time impact alerts and analysis.

Please list the specific humanitarian benefits the project has yielded so far.

CS STARS discovered this need after a client relayed the challenges of their current workflow, which included surveying and inspecting location exposures after hearing about an earthquake in Chile on CNN that had impact on their company's properties. This feature was just completed in November 2011, and is just being rolled out now. We anticipate that it will provide reliable risk identification and response because it does not rely on human intervention, time frames, or priorities. The depth and breadth of USGS data along with strategically set severity thresholds will increase the effectiveness of risk identification because external events are not likely to be missed or misjudged as they might be in a manual process. Risk control efforts are similarly enhanced because early event detection leads to immediate identification and assessment, which, in turn, reduces the time involved in finding issues.

Please provide the best example of how the project has benefited a specific individual, enterprise or organization. Feel free to include personal quotes from individuals who have directly benefited from the work.

We are implementing our first Risk Response client this month.