Prepared for the Onondaga County Department of Emergency Management

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Executive Summary:

The Onondaga County Department of Emergency Management (OCDEM) is an organization that coordinates all emergency management activities including mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery in Onondaga County, New York. Since its founding in 2003, the Department has struggled to establish a comprehensive communication strategy.

Citrus Solutions conducted primary and secondary research in order to provide recommendations to improve OCDEM's communication strategy. This research was executed through social listening analyses, surveys, and focus groups to research how to best serve OCDEM's key publics.

Based on our results, we recommend that OCDEM create an electronic mailing list for its key publics, establish Facebook as the primary platform for social content, and finally, host trainings for local community organizations on citizen preparedness for their volunteers and clients. We believe that these three communications recommendations will improve OCDEM's internal and external communications.

Problem and Opportunity Statement:

The Onondaga County Department of Emergency Management (OCDEM) is a local branch of the government with the mission to "partner with stakeholders to promote life safety and preservation of property through a progressive cycle of emergency and disaster preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation". Although it aims to maintain efficient preparation and response tactics regarding emergency situations, the Department's lack of a communication strategy hinders its ability to fulfill this goal (EM Home, 2019). The lack of a defined communication strategy by OCDEM creates a struggle to sustain internal and external communications with stakeholders. Furthermore, without properly adjusting its communication strategy, the vulnerable populations of Onondaga County, such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, and non-English speakers, that OCDEM aims to assist will continue to be at risk of injury or death as they will be uninformed of proper emergency situation procedures. A stronger insight into the success, or lack thereof, of OCDEM's current communication methods through media research and data collection is needed to understand how stakeholders are currently receiving, interpreting, and understanding the messages of OCDEM. Similarly, research to determine the ways that the public will best absorb OCDEM's information is crucial to restructuring its communications strategy, as it will allow clarity as to which communication method would reach its targeted publics more effectively.

Situation Analysis:

Internal Factors

Staffing

The Onondaga County Department of Emergency Management (OCDEM) is not adequately staffed to effectively develop and implement an effective communication strategy. According to Daniel Wears, Commissioner of Emergency Management, OCDEM is a loosely connected department of seven people, all of whom have other responsibilities unrelated to communicating emergency protocol (D. Wears, personal interview, January 23, 2019). Not one person in the Department is solely responsible for creating emergency preparedness materials, and therefore the task of designing instructional materials is often forgotten or set aside in favor of more pressing matters. As leader of the Department, Daniel Wears is also in charge of its social media accounts such as Twitter and Facebook, but, admits he does not have the time or skill set to post to social media on a regular basis (D. Wears, personal interview, January 23, 2019). The small size of OCDEM's staff also makes it far more difficult to plan ahead for emerging disaster situations.

Funding

According to Jennyfer Jones, Planner/Grants Administrator, OCDEM has a total office budget of $1,933,430 for 2019. Roughly 39% of that budget comes from grant funding, 47% comes from local funding, and 14% is derived from other sources (J. Jones, personal communication, February 4, 2019). The majority of these funds make up the salaries of the seven people who work in OCDEM's office, while the remainder is put toward medical equipment, office supplies, and finally, emergency preparedness activities. Because nearly all of its annual funding comes from outside sources, OCDEM has very little control over how much money it can spend on emergency preparedness. The size and volatility of OCDEM's annual budget also means it cannot hire an additional person who is exclusively responsible for managing its social media presence.

Unoriginal Content

OCDEM gets all of its emergency protocol materials from ready.gov, the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) website for disaster

preparedness (FEMA, 2019). This database provides the proper emergency protocol for 29 possible disasters, including volcano eruptions, earthquakes, tsunamis, and tornadoes, yet very few of these disasters actually occur in Onondaga County (FEMA, 2019). FEMA's information is not tailored specifically to Onondaga County, and instead is directed toward the needs of the entire nation. The local audience who receives OCDEM's content is required to sift through FEMA's preparedness information about weather-related emergencies that likely will never happen, contributing to the public's complacency about the ones that often do.

External Factors

Partners
OCDEM partners with a variety of organizations due to its role in emergency management within the Onondaga County government. These organizations include local nonprofits such as food banks, Catholic charities, homeless shelters, and caretaker organizations as well as emergency services such as CNY EMS, New York State EMS, Onondaga County Fire Department, and Project Concern. As a governmental organization, it also works with federal groups such as FEMA through dissemination and use of FEMA's publications on emergency preparedness (J. Jones, & D. Wears, personal interview, January 23, 2019).

OCDEM recognizes the importance of navigating its relationships with its partners and has worked to maintain good standing. Despite possible outreach opportunities, OCDEM attempts to respect the boundaries of organizations, such as the Onondaga County Fire Department's place in educating students on fire and emergency safety in schools. However, OCDEM has not made many active attempts to work with its partners besides using them as places for distribution of its emergency information materials. Additionally, OCDEM does not take an active role in the circulation of its information, instead giving its partner groups full control of dissemination and feedback (J. Jones. & D. Wears, personal interview, January 23, 2019).

Competitors
OCDEM's major competitors are local nonprofits and government organizations. These organizations are fighting for the same volunteers, public donations, and limited resources available from citizens and the

government (J. Jones. & D. Wears, personal interview, January 23, 2019). At the same time, many of its competitors are also its partners. As mentioned above, established partnerships exist between institutions and organizations for issues such as fire safety.

OCDEM's competitors provide vital services to the public. Many of these competitors have a direct line to OCDEM's priority populations. For instance, Meals on Wheels delivers food to disabled and elderly citizens. In this case, Meals on Wheels (and other competitors) could participate in distributing OCDEM's information. OCDEM's vulnerable populations already have a trusted and established connection with these organizations (J. Jones, & D. Wears, personal interview, January 23, 2019).

Publics
OCDEM serves all publics geographically located in Onondaga County. While OCDEM is responsible for informing, preparing, and protecting the entire population of Onondaga Country in the case of an emergency, it identifies primary publics based on risk of injury or loss of life in emergencies. Currently this includes the elderly, disabled, poverty-stricken, and non-English speaking communities (J. Jones, & D. Wears, personal interview, January 23, 2019). According to census data, there are 465,398 people located within the 778.39 miles that make up Onondaga County. Approximately 16.6% of the population is 65 years and over, which is above the national average of 15.6% (United States Census Bureau, 2019). While only 9.1% is under age 65 with a disability, this is above the national average of 8.7% (United States Census Bureau, 2019). Syracuse has a high poverty level at 13.7% above the national average of 12.3% (United States Census Bureau, 2019). All publics are identified as not necessarily seeking out OCDEM's serves outside emergencies for preparation purposes due to a state of "complacency." OCDEM hopes to reach its most vulnerable publics first (J. Jones, & D. Wears, personal interview, January 23, 2019).

SWOT Analysis:

Strengths

- The Onondaga County Department of Emergency Management (OCDEM) excels at its emergency response and recovery operations to properly manage emergency situations and disasters within the community (Onondaga County Department of Emergency Management, Training, 2019).

- OCDEM utilizes the support of emergency medical services, public health, hospital, utility, public works, and local jurisdiction workers to train citizens in the case of house fires, flash flooding, and snow storms (J. Jones, & D. Wears, personal interview, January 23, 2019).

- Public and government officials are actively involved in community organizations within Onondaga County to help share weather alerts and emergency preparedness information (Onondaga County Department of Emergency Management, Training, 2019).

- OCDEM currently follows the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) branding guidelines which gives it brand recognition (FEMA, About the Agency, January 30, 2019).

Weaknesses

- OCDEM lacks a cohesive communication strategy (J. Jones, & D. Wears, personal interview, January 23, 2019).

- The Department has found it increasingly difficult to communicate effectively with vulnerable populations in preparing them for emergency situations (J. Jones, & D. Wears, personal interview, January 23, 2019).

- Like many other governmentally funded agencies, OCDEM has found it increasingly difficult to fund part-time and full-time staff. (J. Jones, & D. Wears, personal interview, January 23, 2019).

- OCDEM uses FEMA's disaster relief information and quick help guides to communicate with its citizens. However, this information is overgeneralized. This generalized content is not always helpful to local communities like Onondaga County (FEMA, About the Agency, January 30, 2019).

Opportunities

- Onondaga County Department of Emergency Management (OCDEM), has a vast network of municipal fire departments they can use to reach a much larger and more diverse group of publics to inform and educate about proper emergency preparedness. Specifically, OCDEM and these municipal fire departments can work together to conduct training on emergency preparedness within senior living facilities, schools and community centers within the fire departments area of responsibility.

- OCDEM has a large network of nonprofit and for-profit organizations it works with and has worked with in the past. Better use of these partnerships can be used to target the more vulnerable populations within Onondaga County. This can include purchase and distribution of preparation kits, collaborative training sessions and information gathering to better identify the vulnerable populations.

- The Department currently has a very small footprint on social media. It has the ability, with some minor staff devotion or the addition of an intern, to greatly expand its efforts with outreach to publics that are currently being underutilized. Interns from local colleges can help implement and improve the social media network OCDEM has failed to utilize.

- OCDEM has the ability to work with neighboring counties and entities such as the United States Army and New York State National Guard developing, organizing and implementing a more narrowly focused preparation guild for the local area instead of relying on FEMA's national information that lacks enough localized information about disasters experienced in Onondaga County.

Threats

- The lack of funds OCDEM has is due, impart, by the increased severity of storms within Onondaga County caused by climate change. OCDEM does not have the resources to respond to every disaster or help everyone affected by disasters due to this funding shortage.

- The high poverty rates in Syracuse and the rest of Onondaga County make it difficult for citizens within Onondaga County to maintain proper emergency preparedness kits suggested by OCDEM (United States Census Bureau, 2019). When free preparation kits do become available through other nonprofit organizations, the kits are often stripped of the food and water to help supplement every day meals.

- The lack of major natural disasters within Onondaga County such as hurricanes, earthquakes and forest fires, make it difficult for OCDEM and citizens from becoming complacent with emergency preparation planning.

- The increase in the refugee population within Onondaga County makes it difficult for OCDEM to communicate information to the public. The public may not be able to understand the materials and warnings provided by OCDEM because of the wide range of languages spoken by the refugee population.

Key Publics:

Persons with Disabilities

(Getty Images, 2017)

Flora Jackson, a 64-year-old Hispanic woman, is deaf. Jackson was born and raised in Onondaga County and currently lives in the westside neighborhood of Syracuse, NY, a city in which 13.7% of the population has a disability (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). As a person with a disability, Jackson is unemployed and maintains a median income of $21,572 (University of New Hampshire, Institute on Disability, 2018). As a person who is deaf, Jackson makes daily visits to Aurora of Central New York, a social services organization located in Syracuse, NY. At Aurora, she receives updates about weather and crime from friends, but it is not always the most comprehensive, informative source of news. Therefore, she enjoys watching the news on television with closed captioning. It should be noted that Flora does not use social media. Jackson has had to adapt to her environment and take extra precautions during emergency situations. Additionally, Jackson visits friends weekly in the Frank DeFrancisco Eastwood Senior Center. Here, she has friends who communicate with her in sign language to give updates about the community, such as volunteer, citizen engagement, and emergency preparedness events. Flora enjoys spending time with her grandchildren, ages 9 and 12.

Nonprofit Community Organizations

(Pershan, 2018)

Giving Dependence is a not-for-profit organization that serves vulnerable populations of Onondaga County as a discounted warehouse for food, clothing and other essentials. Giving Dependence gets most of its donations from church groups and other volunteer organizations, but asks for continued support from the community on social media. The nonprofit operates with a full-time staff of only five people and therefore relies heavily on community volunteers. Giving Dependence helps low-income families, unemployed adults, and their respective dependents. For this reason, we feel as though Giving Dependence's aforementioned stakeholders would benefit from the information provided by the Onondaga County Department of Emergency Management (OCDEM). Giving Dependence has served Onondaga County for the last nine years and provides access to various communities that the OCDEM has historically struggled to distribute its emergency protocol information. Giving Dependence currently posts flyers in the lobby of its warehouse with upcoming events and relevant news, and it additionally utilizes Facebook to share similar messages. Statistics show that New York nonprofits favor Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube as they allow the strongest communication with nonprofits' publics (Nonprofit Communications, 2016). Additionally, a monthly newsletter is shared with Giving Dependence mailing list of one hundred people, including both volunteers and customers.

Research Objectives:

- Understand which communication channels persons with disabilities use to receive emergency preparedness information.

- Discover what emergency preparedness information is disseminated to county residents via local not-for-profit organizations.

- Identify what emergency preparedness information the residents of Onondaga County are currently aware of.

Research Methodology:

Methodology

Citrus Solutions, after conducting secondary research, conducted quantitative and qualitative primary research to accomplish our research objectives. This was achieved through a social listening analysis, focus group and an online survey. After conducting all of our primary research, Citrus Solutions was able to get a better insight into the lack of knowledge the Onondaga County Department of Emergency Management's (OCDEM) publics have in relation to emergency preparedness. In addition, Citrus Solutions was able to better understand the perspectives the key publics hold toward OCDEM and those responding to disasters.

Research Method 1: Social Listening Analysis

Sampling Frame: All social media posts on Meltwater between March 15, 2018 to March 15, 2019 that Onondaga County Department of Emergency Management, disasters and preparation for those disasters within Onondaga County.

Rationale: Conducting a social listening analysis allows to better gauge the reach and influence that OCDEM currently has over its key publics. Similarly, the overall tone of the content being published about OCDEM on social media platforms will show how the organization is being perceived by those who depend on them for information.

Execution:
- Recruiting Method: None
- Location: Online (Meltwater)
- Length: Five hours
- Incentive: None
- Number of Social Media Posts: 30

Data Analysis Method: Content Analysis

Research Method 2: Online Survey

<u>Sampling Frame:</u> Our sampling frame was Onondaga County nonprofit volunteers and employees at organizations that specifically interact with the vulnerable populations of OCDEM. The adult volunteers at a variety of Onondaga County nonprofits gave us a strategic look into how current information was being distributed to their publics and how current employees perceived and understood OCDEM.

<u>Rationale:</u> This research method helped us gather primary quantitative data directly from nonprofit employees to evaluate and understand the current relationship and awareness between OCDEM and the organizations that interact with OCDEM's vulnerable publics. By understanding the organizations' current awareness of OCDEM as well as their media habits, we are able to understand which methods will be most effective in distributing emergency preparedness materials.

<u>Execution:</u>
- Recruiting Method: Contacted volunteers at nonprofits and followed-up via email. Asked the nonprofit to share the link with other volunteers.
- Location: Online
- Length: 10-question survey
- Incentive: None
- Number of Participants: 103 respondents

<u>Data Analysis Method:</u> Qualtrics Data Analysis

Research Method 3: Focus Group

Sampling Frame: We conducted in person discussions with male and female participants over the age of 18 years old from within Onondaga County who had some form of disability. The type of disability ranged from blind, vision impaired, deaf, and hard of hearing to physical disabilities and developmental disabilities.

Rationale: The focus group produced insight into the knowledge and perception of OCDEM, as well as disaster preparation practices. Citrus Solutions also focused on the methods at which the participants received weather related news and warnings. By understanding the methods in which the participants receive weather related news and alerts will allow Citrus Solutions to develop communication strategies for OCDEM to better inform, not just the disabled community, but the Onondaga County as a whole as to information regarding weather related disasters.

Execution:
- Recruiting Method: Contacted Jennyfer Jones from Onondaga County Department of Emergency Management via email. She then organized a focus group comprised of persons with disabilities from within Onondaga County.
- Location: Access CNY in Syracuse, NY
- Length: 25 minutes per group. There were two groups of 3 and one group of four participants.
- Incentive: Beverages and donuts
- Number of Participants: 10 people

Data Analysis Method: Content Analysis

Research Results and Analysis:

Social Listening Analysis and Themes:

Citrus Solutions used Meltwater to conduct a social listening analysis in order to discover what information our key publics received related to emergency preparedness. Our sampling frame spanned a full year from March 20, 2018 to March 19, 2019. To collect data, we searched the following keywords using Meltwater: Onondaga County, disasters, fire, flood, snow, emergency, and disaster.

Theme 1: Lack of disaster preparation information posted on social media

Citrus Solutions analyzed 30 social media posts. Of those posts, we found that only 3% of all social media content about disasters and weather-related emergencies in Onondaga County were from OCDEM. We also found 63% of all social media posts on weather or emergency information came from nonprofit and news organizations. This data shows that the public is not getting its information from OCDEM. This means OCDEM is not producing enough content to keep the public informed on emergency preparation for weather related emergencies. Our research shows that OCDEM can help prepare citizens for an emergency by establishing a social content distribution schedule.

Minimal Social Media Posts by OCDEM

3%
OCDEM

| 40% News | 34% Governmental | 23% Nonprofit |

Citrus Solutions analyzed 30 social media posts, and of those posts we analyzed, 23% of all social media content about weather-related emergencies was posted by nonprofit humanitarian organizations. In addition, 40% of posts were sent out by news organizations. On the other hand, approximately 37% of all social media content came from governmental organizations. With 63% of all posts coming either nonprofit or news organizations are becoming the main source of information for the public to better prepare for weather-related emergencies. According to Direct Relief, a nonprofit organization that improves the health and lives of people affected by emergency information, "delivering messages and information through social media channels to inform and advance knowledge of the public to the current disasters allowed relief organizations to strengthen the health and well-being of the people in crisis." Our research suggests that OCDEM should partner with nonprofit organizations to distribute emergency preparedness information through social media posts.

Organizations Posting About Emergencies and Disasters

Nonprofit 23.0%

News 40.0%

Government 37.0%
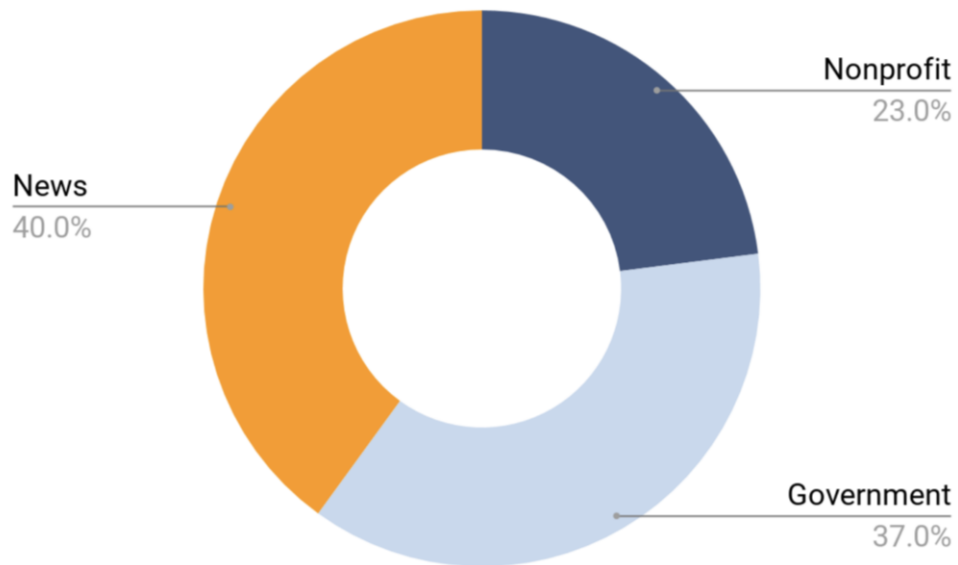
Theme 3: Neutral content from social media better informs publics

Citrus Solutions analyzed 30 social media posts, and of those posts, we found 50% had a neutral tone. The posts with neutral sentiment were meant to inform the public of specific information, such as alerts to incoming storms. These posts were direct, straight to the point leaving out filler information making it easier to discern the more important information the public needed to receive. We found that 33% of posts analyzed had a positive sentiment. These posts were long winded in a story structure making it harder to discern the important information the public needs to know versus the less important information. Keeping social media posts to a neutral tone will help get the important information out to the public faster in times of an incoming storm or emergency.

Social Media Sentiment of Analyzed Posts

33% Positive	50% Neutral	17% Negative

Survey Results:

Citrus Solutions distributed an anonymous online survey to nonprofit employees and volunteers in Onondaga County. Citrus Solutions asked a variety of demographic and psychographic questions that gave insight into how community organizations communicate with OCDEM's key publics, such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, and non-English speakers. Thorough analysis of the results collected from 103 survey respondents provided Citrus Solutions with useful feedback that can be incorporated to improve the Department's communication strategy.

Theme 1: Nonprofits are interested in emergency preparedness materials

The survey asked 103 respondents whether they felt clients of their organization would be interested in emergency management communication. There was a majority response in which 54% of respondents said 'yes', 38% said 'maybe', and only 8% said 'no'. These results demonstrated that 92% of respondents felt that their organization could utilize the information OCDEM disseminates. This means that a majority of OCDEM's potential partner nonprofits may be receptive to passing important information to their clients.

Nonprofit Client Interest in Information

Maybe
38.0%

Yes
54.0%

No
8.0%
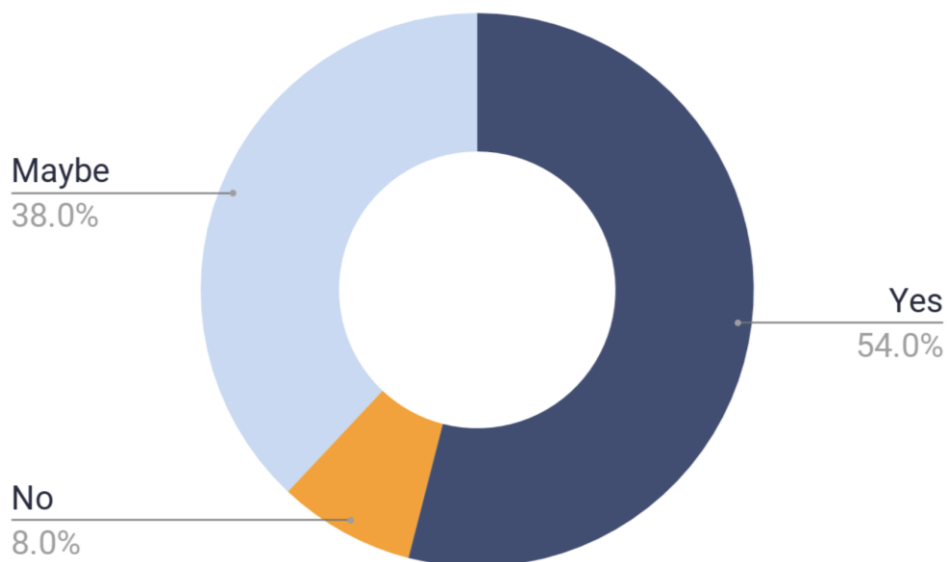
Theme 2: Lack of distribution of OCDEM materials

Through our survey to employees and volunteers of nonprofits, we analyzed the correlation between receiving and distributing materials related to emergency management. Specifically, we examined if a group had previously distributed emergency management materials in relation to whether they had received any information from OCDEM. Of 103 respondents, only 31 had ever distributed information as volunteers or staff of their organization. Of those 31, only 7 had ever received information from OCDEM regarding emergency management. This information indicates that OCDEM's information is not being distributed, but nonprofits are engaging with emergency management materials. The low numbers of distribution emphasize the importance of redesigning material so that it better suits the needs of organizations' clients.

Disparity in Receiving vs. Distributing Materials

		Have you ever distributed emergency management information as a part of your organization?			
		Yes	No	Other	Total
Have you ever received information from the Onondaga County Department of Management?	Yes	7	13	0	20
	No	24	52	5	81
	Other	0	2	0	2
	Total	31	67	5	103

Theme 3: Some platforms are more effective mediums of communication

In our survey, we asked which social media platforms local nonprofits used in order to determine effective communication tools. Facebook is the most used platform, with 57% of nonprofits utilizing the medium to connect with clients. Instagram and Twitter were nearly tied at 19% and 18%, respectively, with a few other platforms listed. The use of Facebook in comparison with other platforms signals that, in terms of using social media to disseminate information and increase online presence, Facebook should be OCDEM's main focus. While Twitter may be useful for quick emergency updates, the majority of shareable content in the nonprofit sphere is centered on Facebook.

Social Media Used in Nonprofit Communication

57% Facebook	19% Instagram	18% Twitter	6% Other

Focus Group Summary:

On Wednesday, March 20, we conducted a focus group of persons with disabilities who reside in Onondaga County. The group was composed of nine people, all with different disabilities including visual impairments, mobility impairments, and deafness. The participants were split into three smaller groups to ensure that all voices were accounted for, in order to help us develop a strong understanding of the diverse experiences of persons with disabilities. In total, the three sessions spanned approximately two hours and were held at Access CNY.

Theme 1: Participants have little emergency preparedness training

During our focus group, almost every participant mentioned that they have never received training to prepare for an emergency situation. One participant mentioned, "A couple organizations used to run trainings for a while for people with developmental disabilities. They learned how to prepare themselves for an emergency." The participants expressed concerns with the lack of training tailored to their specific needs. As one of the Onondaga County Department of Emergency Management's (OCDEM) most vulnerable populations, people with disabilities need to be educated on the county's citizen preparedness operations. Despite being active within various community organizations, the participants vocalized their lack of awareness regarding emergency preparedness. Based upon our findings, OCDEM needs to offer more trainings for persons with disabilities. In addition, the Department should visit disability community groups to complete in-person trainings. They could also utilize virtual technology to share videos about emergency preparedness for vulnerable publics to access from their homes.

Theme 2: Persons with disabilities prefer direct communication via smartphones

Overall, most of the participants noted that they utilize traditional media outlets such as television, online newspapers, and radio in order to seek information about an impending storm. Additionally, many of the participants said that they use their smartphones to access this information via text alerts or mobile applications. Many of the participants mentioned that they "like getting alerts on [their] iPads." New technologies have allowed organizations to provide accessible and inclusive emergency

preparedness information such as weather alerts, home safety tips, and accessible resources in case of an emergency to all vulnerable populations. OCDEM can communicate directly to county residents by using electronic mailing lists that have already been established by nonprofits. By creating a centralized messaging system, OCDEM can monitor distribution to specific populations.

Theme 3: Most of the participants were not confident in first responders' abilities to assist them in emergency situations

During the focus group, almost every participant expressed concern about first responders' ability to assist and communicate with persons with disabilities. In some cases, first responders were unable to communicate with persons with disabilities. In others, first responders were not unable to accommodate the specific needs of these vulnerable publics. One participant explained, "I don't have a doubt that they'd be trying to help us, but I have concerns about their ability to adapt for different people." However, participants stated that they were more confident and trusting of first responders when they recognized the responder or had some sort of personal interaction with him or her in the past. With this in mind, OCDEM should require combined annual meeting that invite emergency responders to meetings within the community of persons with disabilities so that they are able to vocalize their concerns and create a more open, accessible future where everyone feels safe in an emergency.

Interesting Observations:

Every participant expressed interest in voicing his or her opinion to every question. They seemed interested and passionate about the topic, even without a complete understanding of the current goals of OCDEM. Although the participants had many different disabilities, they vocalized similar concerns regarding emergency situations. The participants all had different experiences shaping their perceptions of emergency management in Onondaga County, which often contributed to their levels of trust in the organization. Additionally, almost every participant was involved in multiple nonprofits, but overall, most of them had no training for emergencies. This was interesting to us because although many humanitarian nonprofits are focused on emergency aid, there is a lack of emergency planning.

Recommendations:

Based on the results of our surveys and the feedback we received from our focus groups, Citrus Solutions has three main recommendations that the Onondaga County Department of Emergency Management can implement to improve its overall communication strategy. These recommendations include creating an electronic mailing list, establishing OCDEM's Facebook page as a central hub for all timely weather-related information, and organizing annual trainings for local nonprofit organizations on how they can best distribute OCDEM's emergency materials. With these ideas in action, we are confident that OCDEM can more easily and effectively target its key vulnerable publics before, during, and after emergency situations.

Recommendation #1:

When we asked our focus group of persons with disabilities where they typically look for timely information about weather-related emergencies, many said they use their smartphones to find this information. Even in the cases where respondents could not use a smartphone due to their disability, most lived with or near people who could. Because of this finding, we recommend that OCDEM create an electronic mailing list in order to distribute emergency information quickly by sending the same email to large numbers of people at once. Mailing list technology is easy to set up and is already being used by universities, businesses, and many others. To help prospective subscribers within OCDEM's vulnerable key publics join the electronic mailing list, we also recommend OCDEM create a short tutorial pamphlet and distribute it on its social channels as well as to organizations that work closest with its target populations.

Example mailing list and email:

Contacts   🔍 Search

Name	Email
EMERGENCY WEATHER INFO MAILING LIST (99+)	
C Callie Goodman	cagoodma@syr.edu
E Erin Rose Elliot	erelliot@syr.edu
F Flora Jackson	floraj@gmail.com
J Jackie Brouilette	jbrou@syr.edu
J John Smith	jsmi@syr.edu
J Joseph Livshin	jlivshin@syr.edu

Winter Storm Warning   _ ⤢ ✕

To (**Emergency Weather Info Mailing List** ✕) | Cc Bcc

Winter Storm Warning

Onondaga County:

Please be advised that we will be getting up to 7 inches of snow between 12AM Wednesday and 10PM Thursday. Please visit our Facebook (@OnondagaEM) page for constant updates on the storm, and our website (http://www.ongov.net/em/) for tips on how you can prepare.
Stay safe and warm!

Sincerely,

Onondaga County Department of Emergency Management
421 Montgomery Street
Syracuse, NY 13202
Phone: (315) 435-2525
Fax: (315) 435-3309

Send   A 📎 🔗 😊 ▲ 🖼 🕗 $ ⋮ 🗑

Recommendation #2:

Our social listening analysis showed us that the majority of other organizations similar to OCDEM use Facebook as their primary social platform. In fact, 21 of the 30 social media posts we analyzed were found on Facebook. We also learned through personal communication with Jennifer Jones and Daniel Wears that OCDEM does not have an employee whose sole duty is to manage the organization's social media presence. Because of this, we recommend that OCDEM rebrand its Facebook as a one-stop-shop where visitors can find any and all pertinent weather-related information. OCDEM would not need to create much original content, but instead fill its timeline with reposts from local television stations and other news outlets about impending bad weather. The benefits of this course of action are twofold: First, this would mitigate OCDEM's need for a social media manager, as it would only have to worry about managing one specific platform. Secondly, this would establish OCDEM's Facebook page as an easily accessible, reliable source of emergency-related information without the need for it to spend the time and effort to develop original content.

Example Facebook Content:

Recommendation #3:

Based on our survey responses from local nonprofit organizations, it became clear that very few volunteers at these organizations knew what OCDEM is or what purpose it serves to county residents. Only 20 of the 102 survey respondents reported having received emergency information from OCDEM. Therefore, we recommend that OCDEM host annual trainings for the volunteers of these local nonprofits on proper preparation for weather-related emergency situations. This will educate a crucial population of Onondaga County volunteers who work closely with the vulnerable publics that OCDEM has had trouble reaching in the past. These volunteers can then pass this information along to the citizens with whom their organizations work, creating a direct and constant flow of OCDEM's preparedness information directly to the people who need it most.

Example Invitation to Emergency Preparedness Training

You're Invited

to the Onondaga County Department of Emergency Management's annual
Weather-Related Emergency Training Session

Join us at 421 Montgomery Street, Syracuse NY this Saturday for up-to-date, comprehensive emergency preparedness training.

Snow season is just around the corner, and it's important that every citizen of Onondaga County is kept safe and sound no matter how harsh the weather gets.

We encourage all local nonprofit organizations and their volunteers to attend so that this crucial information can spread to those who rely on such assistance

We'll be going over...

- Winter storm preparation
- Special care required for specific populations
- Combating icy road conditions for wheelchair use

Please visit our Facebook page (@OnondagaEM)
or our website (www.ongov.net/em/) for more information about this training.

See you there!

Appendices

Appendix A: Social Listening Coding Sheet

Variable	Instructions	Code
Keywords	Write the number corresponding to the group of keywords used in the search: **Group 1** *All*: disability; emergency; *At least one*: Syracuse; Onondaga County; Central New York; *None*: **Group 2** *All*: Syracuse; *At least one*: disaster; *None*: FEMA; Ready.gov; ACC **Group 3** *All*: disability; emergency; Onondaga County; *At least one*: services; disaster; readiness; *None*: FEMA; Ready.gov; **Group 4** *All*: disaster; readiness; *At least one*: Syracuse; Onondaga County; Central New York; CNY; Cuse *None*: FEMA; Ready.gov; **Group 5** *All*: emergency; *At least one*: Syracuse; Onondaga County; Central New York; CNY;	

	Cuse *None*: FEMA; Ready.gov; **Group 6** *All*: emergency; preparedness *At least one*: Syracuse; Onondaga County; Central New York; CNY; Cuse *None*: FEMA; Ready.gov; **Group 7** *All*: weather; disability *At least one*: Syracuse; Onondaga County; Central New York; CNY; Cuse *None*: FEMA; Ready.gov; **Group 8** *All*: weather; preparedness *At least one*: Syracuse; Onondaga County; Central New York; CNY; Cuse *None*: FEMA; Ready.gov; **Group 9** *All*: weather; prepare *At least one*: Syracuse; Onondaga County; Central New York; CNY; Cuse *None*: FEMA; Ready.gov; **Group 10** *All*: emergency services; *At least one*: Syracuse; Onondaga County; Central New York; CNY; Cuse *None*: FEMA; Ready.gov;	
Date	Write the **day, month, and year** the post was	

	published**.**	
	Write **0** if the date is not given.	
	Write **N/A** if the date is not applicable to the particular post, followed by a reason.	
Media Platform	Write the number(s) corresponding to the platform on which you found the post: **1** = Facebook **2** = Twitter **3** = Instagram **4** = YouTube **5** = News source (include name of news source) **6** = Other (include name of source)	
Username	Write the **username** of whoever created the post.	
Demographic Information	Write all demographic info associated with the author of the post, including but not limited to: **Ethnicity, gender, age, sex, education level, income level, marital status, occupation, religion, and size of a family.** Write **0** if this information is not available. Write **N/A** if this information is not applicable to the post's author, along with a	

	reason why.	
Psychographic Information	Write all psychographic info associated with the author of the post, including but not limited to: **Attitudes, interests, hobbies, activities, habits, values, lifestyle, and opinions.** Write **0** if this information is not available. Write **N/A** if this information is not applicable to the post's author, along with a reason why.	
Sentiment	A media post's sentiment or tone is constructed by using words, quotes, and/or images that result in positive, neutral, or negative coverage for the information searched. **1** = Positive **2** = Neutral **3** = Negative Write **0** if this information is not available. Write **N/A** if this information is not applicable to the post's author, along with a reason why.	
Sentiment Keywords	What keywords, phrases or images are associated with the post that created	

	the sentiment (tone) coded above? Write no more than **5** keywords. Write **0** if this information is not available. Write **N/A** if this information is not applicable to the post's author, along with a reason why.	

Appendix B: Qualtrics Survey

We are a group of Syracuse University students conducting a survey of those that work with organizations to understand their knowledge of emergency preparedness. Please help us by completing this 3-minute survey below. All responses are confidential. Thank you.

1. Through which medium(s) do you receive information about emergency advisories?
    a. TV news
    b. Newspaper
    c. Social media
    d. Radio
    e. Other (please specify)

2. How often in the past month have you used social media to receive information about emergencies within your community?
    a. Very often
    b. Somewhat Often
    c. Neutral
    d. Not very often
    e. Never

3. Have you ever received information from the Onondaga County Department of Emergency Management regarding emergency preparedness?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Other (please specify)

4. What is the name of the nonprofit organization(s) where you are employed or where you volunteer?

      a. Open-ended answer.

5. Have you ever distributed any emergency management information as a part of your organization listed above?
      a. Yes
      b. No
      c. Other (please specify)

6. Does your nonprofit utilize social media to connect with clients?
      a. Yes
      b. No
      c. Other (please specify)

7. If you answered yes to #6, which social media platform(s) does your nonprofit use? Select all that apply.
      a. Facebook
      b. Instagram
      c. Twitter
      d. Other (please specify)

8. What is your age?
      a. Younger than 18
      b. 18-34
      c. 35-44
      d. 45-64
      e. 65 or older

9. What is your gender?
      a. Male
      b. Female
      c. Other, please describe.

10. Do you think that your clients would be interested in communications from your nonprofit organization regarding emergency management?
      a. Yes
      b. No
      c. Maybe

Appendix C: Focus Group Questionnaire

Welcome	Good Morning. Thank you for participating in this focus group today. My name is Joseph and I will be the moderator for this group discussion.
	Today, I would like to discuss with you, your perspective and opinions of the emergency services within Onondaga County. Our purpose in conducting today's focus group is to assist Onondaga County Department of Emergency Management in understanding how to better communicate with Onondaga County residents regarding emergency preparedness.
	I will be asking you all a series of questions. There are no right or wrong answers. I only ask that you answer honestly, respect each other's opinions and make sure only one person speaks at a time.
	This focus group will take about 20 to 25 minutes. We will be recording this focus group to make sure we do not miss any of your opinions and comments. This recording will remain confidential and no names will be used in our study. Please respect the privacy of others in this group today.
	If at anytime you want to stop, please let me know. Are there any questions before I begin?
Ice Breaker	I would like to begin by going around the room and have each of you state

Questions	1) From what media outlets do you use to access your news? a) Which social media outlets, if any, do you use to access news? 2) Where do you get information about weather-related emergencies within Onondaga County? a) Specifically, how do you get information immediately before a storm? b) Specifically, how do you get information that a storm is evolving? 3) How do you prepare for weather-related emergencies? a) Specifically, how do you prepare for snow storms? b) Specifically, how do you prepare for floods? 4) In what ways have you prepared in the case of a house fire? 5) In what ways do you feel unprepared for weather related emergencies? 6) How confident are you in first responder's ability to accommodate your specific needs during emergency situations? 7) What support organizations do you interact with? a) Probe…. Have these organizations provided you with training or other information to help you better prepare?
Review and Closing	(Review summary of discussion) Did I correctly restate your comments in today's discussion? Is there anything else you would like to add? I want to thank you very much for coming today and sharing your thoughts and opinions with me. I hope you enjoyed the discussion.

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