



Assistance League of Southern California, a nonprofit organization established in 1919, provides a broad range of essential human services and economic development activities to low and moderate income residents within Hollywood, the San Fernando Valley and the greater Los Angeles area through a partnership of dedicated volunteers and staff.

Challenge: Tracking Emergency Response Volunteers

One of the functions of the Assistance League of Southern California (ALSC) is to manage a database of volunteers who can be deployed in an emergency. Contractual agreements with agencies including Homeland Security, Los Angeles County and the State of California require ALSC to provide a system that employs biometric readers and card scanners to facilitate the registration, management and deployment of volunteers.

ALSC hired a software developer to create the database and other applications needed to manage their volunteers' information. A year of delays, missed deadlines and incomplete projects prompted ALSC to investigate other software development options.

Solution: An Application That Works When the Internet Doesn't

R. B. Zack & Associates was asked to make recommendations about how to complete the system to satisfy ALSC's contractual obligations. RBZ&A reviewed the original requirements, software contracts and database structures and found very little could be salvaged from the prior effort. The software was incomplete, unstructured and coded in a manner which would be difficult to maintain and support. The database was inadequate and the overall design could not meet ALSC's requirements.

RBZ&A architected a solution that will enable ALSC to manage their volunteers online, as well as off-line during a disaster that prevents internet access. The volunteer system enables deployment of critical disaster workers in even the worst of scenarios with its failover, replication and automatic synchronization mechanisms. As of February 2009, the system is in the final stages of development and testing. It will be presented to a national committee in April 2009 for consideration as the new standard for volunteer management systems.

Results:

- Rebuilt volunteer management system
- Met local and federal agency requirements
- System accommodates online and off-line scenarios
- Being considered as standard for volunteer management systems

Technology Used:

- .NET Framework 3.5
- WCF web services
- SQL Server 2005
- C#
- ASP.NET web forms
- WINForms
- Card scanner
- Biometric fingerprint scanner
- Windows Services
- LINQ
- CSRS (Client Side Reporting Services)

**For more information,
contact us today at
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