

## BURNERS WITHOUT BORDERS



Burners Without Borders is a non-profit group that evolved out of the annual Burning Man art festival held in the Nevada desert. During this annual event, thousands of people gather, erect a city complete with water and facilities, live there for a week and then disassemble it. Last year's Burning Man event coincided with Hurricane Katrina. Following the event, a group of Burning Man participants traveled south to assist in recovery efforts. The group was given \$250,000 in heavy machinery by equipment manufacturers for demolition work. They were the only people in the disaster area with heavy equipment that were working for free.

### OBJECTIVE

Burners Without Borders sought to provide Internet connectivity amidst the wreckage of Katrina in order to provide communication for isolated townspeople, to maintain its vital flow of donations and to make it easier for working people to join the volunteer effort.

Upon arriving in Pearllington, Miss., where Katrina first hit land, the group found a small town of 2,000 people that was virtually wiped off the map. Because the town was unincorporated, there was no local governing body to officially request FEMA or state services. As a result, their electricity was not restored until two months after the hurricane. This also meant the townspeople did not have the resources to clean up the wreckage. FEMA was clearing out debris, but only if residents could get it to the curb, a process that typically cost \$10,000 using private services.

"When we arrived, there was no electricity, no running water, no heat and no phone service," recalls Tom Price, volunteer and project administrator. "It was a 20-minute drive to get to a landline phone and to get access to the Internet. For a group depending entirely on donations, we might as well have been on Mars."

### SOLUTION DESCRIPTION

When Price heard about the Kyocera KR1 mobile router, he waited up all night to order one. As it turned out, he was eight minutes late and the routers were on back-order. When he explained to Kyocera what he was doing and how critical this piece of equipment was to their operation, the company found a way to send out a KR1 immediately.



[www.burnerswithoutborders.org](http://www.burnerswithoutborders.org)

### COMPANY

- Burners Without Borders is a non-profit group that evolved out of the annual Burning Man art festival held in the Nevada desert. The group volunteers and raises donations for disaster relief efforts.

### OBJECTIVE

- Establish Internet connectivity amidst the wreckage of Katrina to provide communication for isolated townspeople, maintain the flow of donations and make it easier for working people to join the volunteer effort

### SOLUTION

- Verizon Wireless BroadbandAccess (EV-DO)
- Kyocera KR1 mobile router

### RESULTS

- Brought communications and aid to the people of Pearllington, Miss.
- Generated \$1 million worth of free demolition and debris removal
- Raised \$80,000 in donations while on disaster location
- Allowed the gainfully employed to volunteer in the 200-person effort



**ALIST™**  
*Finalist*



**Burners Without Borders is a 2006 finalist for the 3G A-List Award in the Non-Profit Organization category.**

The 3G A-List Awards recognize the leading builders of successful wireless data solutions based on 3G CDMA (CDMA2000 1X, EV-DO, and UMTS/HSDPA) technology. **To learn more about the A-List, please visit [www.3galist.com](http://www.3galist.com)**

#### SUPPORTING PARTNERS

The A-List also recognizes supporting partners for their enabling role in assisting winners with their wireless data deployments.



The makeshift solution included one EV-DO PC card and one KR1 router placed in a plastic box, plugged into a solar-powered generator and linked to a telephone pole to pick up a Verizon Wireless EV-DO cellular signal. The time from implementation to activation was approximately five minutes.

The KR1 router made it possible for Pearlinton residents to make phone calls, send emails, and enabled half the town to get online for the first

**If you can get a cell signal, you can communicate with the world and get the help you need. The KR1 router and EV-DO PC card made it possible for us to do \$1 million in free demolition and debris removal.**

*Tom Price  
Volunteer and Project Administrator  
Burners Without Borders*

time in months. "We ended up being in Mississippi for six months and had 200 volunteers cycle through during that time," Price recounts fondly.

"Many of these people had other jobs and were able to keep those jobs thanks to the KR1-facilitated Internet connectivity. We would knock down houses during the day, then come back when it was dark, get online and do our regular jobs."

Burners Without Borders has gone on to do volunteer work in other places and has been traveling with the KR1 non-stop. "I take it with me

everywhere," says Price. "I tell anyone in the disaster relief business that this equipment should be in their immediate response bag with chainsaws, water purifiers and a GPS device. Operating on the fringe, if you can get a cell signal, you can communicate with the world and get the help you need."

## RESULTS

From a humanitarian viewpoint, the best result is that Burners Without Borders completed around \$1 million in free demolition and debris removal, tearing down approximately 60 homes, removing 100 tons of debris and doing countless "small" projects like plucking boats off of roofs, out of trees and out of the streets and returning burial crypts to their cemeteries. "If we hadn't done it, it still wouldn't be done," claims Price.

From a viability standpoint, the group was able to raise \$80,000 in donations while onsite in Mississippi to maintain the basic support and tools for those volunteering in the recovery effort. One of the advantages of Burners Without Borders is that the group didn't need to spend a lot of that money or time setting up infrastructure. "Technologies like EV-DO and products like the KR1 router enable us to get set up and get to work quickly," says Price. "And they allow people with real jobs to lend a hand without sacrificing their livelihoods. We plan to continue our efforts. If there is a natural disaster in the U.S. tomorrow, we could be there and working within 36 hours. That's just how we work."