

Overview

The backbone of the Congregational Disaster Readiness (CDR) communications system is AlertMedia. This is the system that CDR leadership uses to communicate with Disaster Readiness Coordinators (DRCs, Response Team Leaders, and Site Supervisors while responding to a disaster. The system relies on multiple channels to send and receive messages, including voice, email, and text. As a DRC, you will need an AlertMedia account to initiate multi-channel notifications to your Response Team Leaders, to update event pages, and to provide status reports to your Response Director. Your Response Team Leaders will also need AlertMedia accounts to communicate with their Site Supervisors

You can access your AlertMedia account through the web on your desktop or through the AlertMedia app (iOS and Android). We recommend that you download the app on as many devices as you might use throughout the year, including your mobile phone, tablet, and even your spouse's mobile phone. The app is available for free from the AppStore and Google Play.

AlertMedia is a multi-channel and persistent communications platform.

- When we need to communicate DRCs, Response Team Leaders, and Site Supervisors can expect to receive messages simultaneously through all the channels they share, including voice messages, texts, emails, or alerts on the AlertMedia app.
- The system is persistent. It will keep attempting to reach you until you respond through one of the channels.

Assumptions

CDR assumes that during standby and response phases, most means of communications (landlines, cellular phone service, text, and internet applications) and the cloud-based AlertMedia system will be available. CDR is not planning to have any alternative means of communication.

An Example of a Response Organization Structure

For example, assume that the CDR leadership, OEM and Incident Command determine that we need to deploy Response Teams from four networks/coalitions (North, East, South, and West), including 16 Congregations (C01 through C16), and Response Teams for Muck and Gut (M), Tarp & Board (T), Chainsaw (C), and Shelters (S). The Response Organization Structure would look like this:

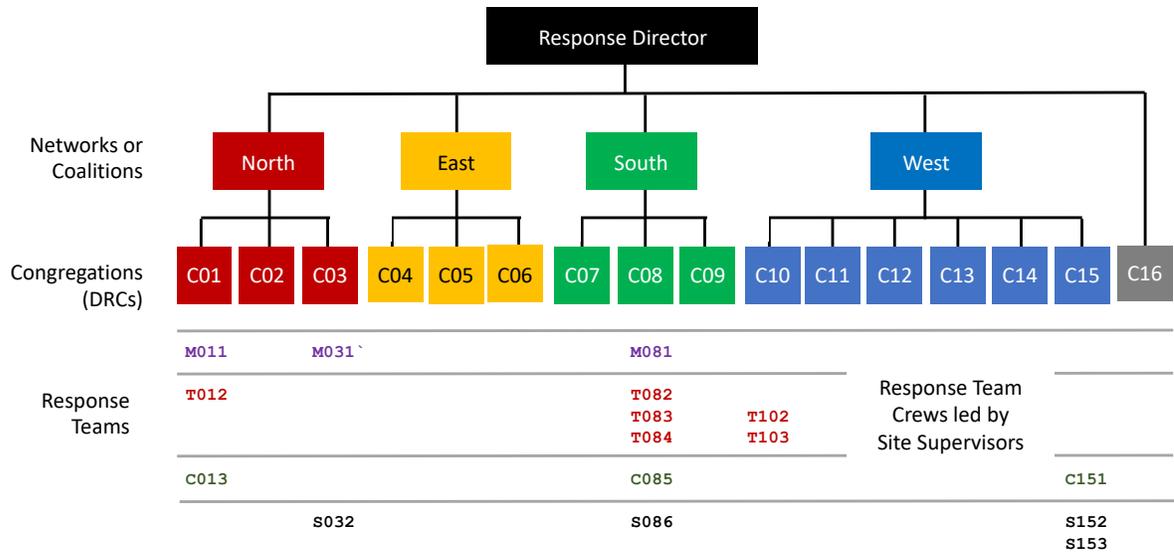


Figure 1. Response Team Organization

Note that

- Networks/Coalitions North, East, South, and West report to and are accountable to the CDR Response Director.
- Each Congregation reports to and is accountable to one Network/Coalition. (For example, C01, C02, and C03 report to the North Network/Coalition.
- Response Teams report to and are accountable to one Congregation. (For example, M011, T012, and C013 report to Congregation C01.
- Some Congregations may elect not to raise Response Teams (such as C02). During a response, they will be asked to recruit Spontaneous Volunteers.
- Congregation C16 does not belong to any of the Networks or Coalitions and will communicate directly with the Response Director.
- Each group of Response Teams is advised by a Response Team Advisor (not shown). In our example, there would be Response Team Advisors for Muck and Gut, Tarping, Red Cross Shelters, and Chain Saw.

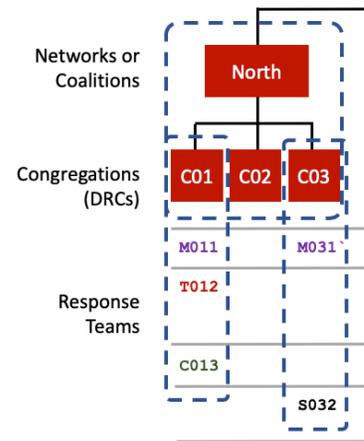
Groups

Within AlertMedia, the Response Organization Structure is reflected in AlertMedia groups. We have defined three types of groups to facilitate communication. The membership of each group is determined entirely by the Response Organization Structure.

The position of each organization/person in the deployment organization determines three types of groups to which a DRC will belong.

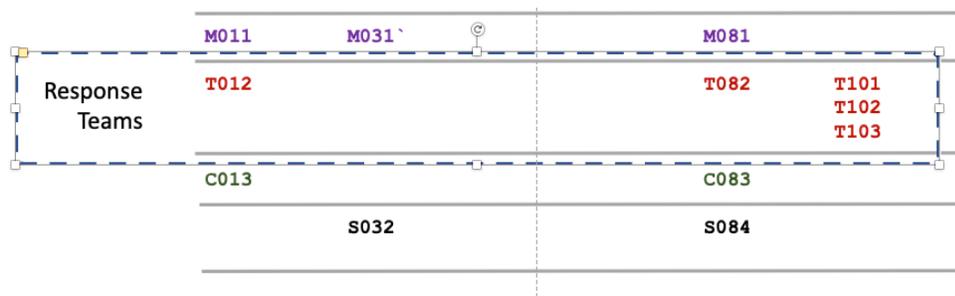
Direct Groups include networks/coalitions and the Congregations with direct reporting relationships and Congregations and their Response Teams.

- Congregation C01 and their Response Teams M011, T012, and C013 are a Direct Group. The North Network/Coalition and Congregations C01, C02, and C03 also comprise a direct group.
- The leader of a Direct Group in AlertMedia will be a Notify Admin and can create group notifications for their Direct Group.
- All DRCs with Response Teams will be Notify Admins for their direct groups.



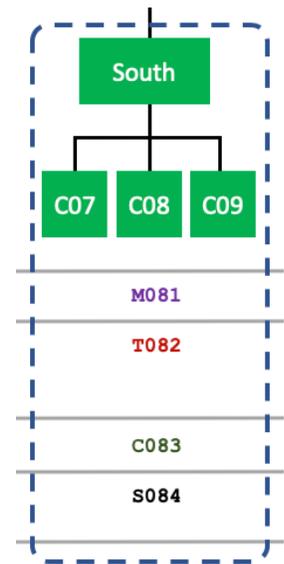
Response Advisory Groups consist of Response Team leaders and their Response Advisor.

- Response Teams T012, T082, T101, T102, T103, and the Tarp and Board Response Advisor belong to the Tarp and Board Response Advisory Group.
- The Response Advisor will be a Notify Admin and can send notifications to the members of their Response Advisory group.
- Response Advisory Groups exist to providing advice, share new learnings, and answer technical questions.



Monitoring Groups consist of all organizations that ultimately report into a network/coalition.

- Response Teams M081, T082, C083, and S084, and Congregations C07, C08, and C09, and network/coalition South all belong to the South Monitoring Group.
- A monitoring group allows the network/coalition leader to listen in on the communications of all their direct reports and their organizations. Monitoring Groups help the leader have situational awareness about the activities in their organization.
- Monitoring Groups tie organizations working in the same geography together.
- DCRs will be a member of at least the network/coalition monitoring group and the “everyone” group.



Using AlertMedia

Requesting an AlertMedia Account

All DRCs and Assistant DRCs will receive an email with instructions on how to request an AlertMedia account. Once you ask for an account, you can expect an email by noon the next business day, confirming that your account has been established and is ready for you to register your account and set your password. At this point, you will want to download the app onto your device(s) and complete setting up your account as instructed.

You will want to follow the instructions provided to you to ensure that AlertMedia notifications will reach you even if your device is in the Do Not Disturb or Silent mode. You will also want to subscribe to some third-party newsfeeds so that you are well informed during a response.

There are three user types in AlertMedia: Users, Notify Admins, and Admins. All users can receive notifications, but only Notify Admin and Admin users can log in to the system and send/manage notifications. Admin users have full access to all features and functions including reports, user profiles, and data management, and template creation and organization

Monitor

Upon logging into the AlertMedia platform, the Monitor Dashboard gives you immediate access to all critical activity.

The Monitor Dashboard displays incoming messages and source event activity in real-time and presents the core function you can navigate to in the platform.

Core functions accessible from the Monitor section include

- Map,
- Incoming Messages,
- Notification Activity,
- Events, and
- Threats & Alerts.

The screenshot shows the AlertMedia Monitor Dashboard. At the top left is the AlertMedia logo and a '+ NEW NOTIFICATION' button. The top right shows the user's name 'GHCDR', phone number '(832) 934-9714', and 'Gary Flaharty | Logout'. The main dashboard area is titled 'Monitor Dashboard' and contains six summary cards: 'Incoming Messages' (2), 'Notification Replies' (3), 'Your Threats', '15 People', '9 Groups', and 'Locate People & Groups'. Below these is a section for 'INCOMING MESSAGES sent to your number: (832) 934-9714' with the message 'You have no unacknowledged messages.' and a 'View all 2 Incoming Messages' link. On the right, there is a 'News' feed with items from 'Houston Police Department' and '13 Eyewitness News (ABC - Houston, TX)'. The left sidebar has sections for 'Monitor', 'Communicate', 'Configure', and 'Help'.

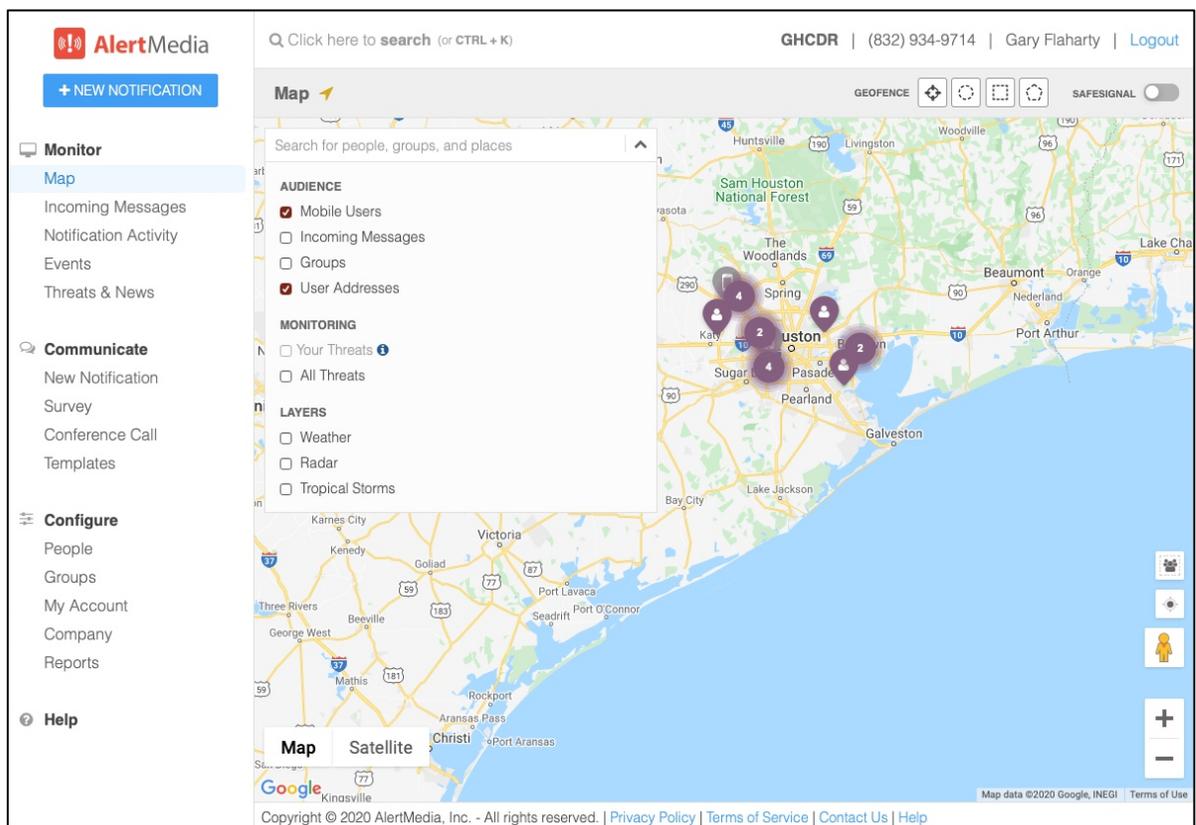
Monitor | Map

View and track Incoming Messages, Groups, and mobile app users by location from the live map.

The map layers provide visibility of

- the location of mobile users (if location services is activated), incoming messages, groups, and CRD members addresses;
- threats
- radar and weather warnings.

The geofencing tool allows you to define a boundary around a location and send a notification to the users in the selected area.



Monitor | Incoming Messages

Incoming Messages shows all the AlertMedia messages that you have received in real-time. These messages come in when a person leaves a voice message or sends a text message to your emergency phone number or signals for help from the mobile app.

Each message has an option to “View on Map” (If the member has turned on locations services.), “Mark as Read” or “Mark as Unread,” and “Archive.” The “+” button accesses a screen to forward the message to individuals or groups.

Admins and Notify Admins can choose to be notified of Incoming Messages and will automatically receive the content of the message and the user’s name via email or text message. Go to “My Account” and select the “User Preferences” tab.

The screenshot displays the AlertMedia web interface. At the top, there's a search bar and user information: GHCDR | (832) 934-9714 | Gary Flaharty | Logout. Below this is the 'Incoming Messages' section with a filter for 'SHOW: Incoming Messages, Notification Replies, Event Posts, Unread Messages Only'. The main area shows a list of messages:

Sender	Message Content	Actions	Time	Forward
Gary Flaharty	Message	View on Map Mark as Unread Archive	14 hours ago	+
Gary Flaharty	What message?	View on Map Mark as Unread Archive	14 hours ago	+
Gary Flaharty - Re: Hello. Got it! Also received severa...	Check the Hyperlink for the twitter feed!	View on Map Mark as Unread Archive	2 weeks ago	+
Sonya Meyers - Re: Sonya, Would you be my guinea ...	Could not open attachment, but I think I was able to s...	View on Map Mark as Unread Archive	4 weeks ago	+
Gary Flaharty	View Media Attachment View Messages	View on Map Mark as Unread Archive	7 weeks ago	2

The left sidebar includes sections for Monitor (Map, Incoming Messages, Notification Activity, Events, Threats & News), Communicate (New Notification, Survey, Conference Call, Templates), Configure (People, Groups, My Account, Company, Reports), and Help.

Monitor | Notification Activity

Notification Activity shows all the AlertMedia messages that you can access. It is searchable by keywords in the notification, by the author, and by the event.

The screenshot shows the AlertMedia web interface. At the top, there's a search bar and user information: GHCDR | (832) 934-9714 | Gary Flaharty | Logout. Below this is the 'Notification Activity' header with 'UNREAD REPLIES: 0' and a 'TYPE FILTER: All' dropdown. The main content area is a table of notifications. The left sidebar has sections for Monitor, Communicate, Configure, and Help.

		Search Message	Search Author	Search Event	EVENT TYPE	UPDATED	
	Pie		Gary Flaharty	03/13 6:41 PM New Event	General Low	15 hours ago	Archive +
	Hello. Got it! Also received sever...		Sonya Meyers	02/12 5:42 PM New Event	General Low	2 weeks ago	Archive +
	Hello. Just testing.		Sonya Meyers	02/12 5:42 PM New Event	General Low	4 weeks ago	Archive +
	Sonya, Would you be my guinea ...		Gary Flaharty	Jan 29 3:09 PM Event	General Low	6 weeks ago	Archive +
	Wish Godfrey Happy Birthday!		Gary Flaharty	Jan 23 9:56 AM Event	General Low	7 weeks ago	Archive +
	Happy Birthday		Gary Flaharty	Jan 23 9:52 AM Event	General Low	7 weeks ago	Archive +
	Happy Birthday!		Gary Flaharty	Jan 23 9:48 AM Event	General Low	7 weeks ago	Archive +

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Monitor | Events

The event is the reason we are responding. Each notification will be associated with an event name. Some examples of event names include “Harvey,” “Imelda,” “Plant Explosion,” “COVID-19”, “Tornado,” “Apartment Fire,” or any other situation. Each notification you send is either a new Event or an update to an Event already happening. Only administrators acting in specific roles should create a new event. If you have not been given this authority, please choose from the existing event(s). The event page is the place where we will post photos, videos, and other resources.

The screenshot shows the AlertMedia Events page. The top navigation bar includes the AlertMedia logo, a search bar, and user information for GHCDR, (832) 934-9714, Gary Flaharty, and a Logout link. Below the navigation bar, there are tabs for 'Active Events' and 'Archived Events'. A filter dropdown is set to 'All Events', and there are buttons for 'New Event' and a refresh icon. The main content area is a table with the following columns: 'Filter by Event Name', 'AUTHOR', 'TYPE', and 'UPDATED'. The table lists several events:

Filter by Event Name	AUTHOR	TYPE	UPDATED
02/12 5:42 PM New Event	Sonya Meyers	General Low	8 hours ago
Jan 29 3:09 PM Event	Gary Flaharty	General Low	4 weeks ago
Jan 23 9:56 AM Event	Gary Flaharty	General Low	5 weeks ago
Jan 23 9:52 AM Event	Gary Flaharty	General Low	5 weeks ago
Jan 23 9:48 AM Event	Gary Flaharty	General Low	5 weeks ago
Jan 23 9:42 AM Event	Gary Flaharty	General Low	5 weeks ago

Monitor | Threats & News

In the sources section, you can track location-specific data sources you have chosen. Subscribe to sources you trust and care about in your area so we can alert you of potential dangers like severe weather, crime, and other urgent events.

The screenshot shows the AlertMedia web application interface. At the top, there is a search bar with the text "Click here to search (or CTRL + K)" and user information: "GHCDR | (832) 934-9714 | Gary Flaharty | Logout". The main heading is "Threats & News". Below this, there are tabs for "All Threats & News", "Manage Your Threats", and "Manage Your News". The "News" tab is selected. On the left sidebar, there are sections for "Monitor" (Map, Incoming Messages, Notification Activity, Events, Threats & News), "Communicate" (New Notification, Survey, Conference Call, Templates), "Configure" (People, Groups, My Account, Company, Reports), and "Help". The main content area has a "Search sources" input field and a "My Sources" list containing: "13 Eyewitness News (...)", "Alief ISD (Houston, ...)", "CDC - Centers for Di ...", "City of Houston Offi ...", "Fort Bend County OEM", "Fort Bend ISD (Houst ...)", and "George Bush Intercon ...". The news feed shows four items: 1. "Houston Police Department" (1 hour ago) about an accident on I-10 Katy Fwy. 2. "13 Eyewitness News (ABC - Houston, TX)" (2 hours ago) about a boil water order. 3. "13 Eyewitness News (ABC - Houston, TX)" (5 hours ago) about a boil water order. 4. "Houston Police Department" (7 hours ago) about a stalled vehicle on I-45 North Fwy. Each item has a "View on Map | Hide" link. At the bottom, there is a copyright notice: "Copyright © 2020 AlertMedia, Inc. - All rights reserved. | Privacy Policy | Terms of Service | Contact Us | Help".

Recommended Subscriptions

Fire and Law Enforcement



Harris County Sheriff's Office Texas News
News and alerts from the Harris County Sheriff's Office



Harris County Sheriff's Office (TX) Emergency, Police Community news alerts and updates from the Harris County Sheriff's Department
Houston Police Department Emergency, Police HPD's local updates on crime and city news



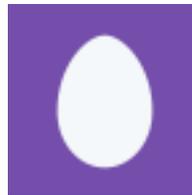
Houston Fire Department Emergency, Fire Houston Fire Department's emergency and local news updates



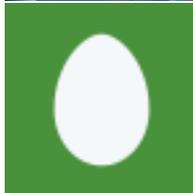
Local Media



KPRC 2 Houston News
News and alerts from KPRC 2 Houston



KPRC Local 2 (NBC - Houston, TX) Local
Breaking news alerts from KPRC Local 2 News



KPRC Local 2-Weather (NBC - Houston, TX) Local
Weather alerts from KPRC Local 2 News



KHOU 11 News (CBS - Houston, TX) Local
Breaking news alerts from KHOU 11 News



KHOU 11 News-Weather (CBS - Houston, TX) Local
Weather alerts from KHOU



13 Eyewitness News (ABC - Houston, TX) Local
Breaking news alerts from 13 Eyewitness News

Offices of Emergency Management



City of Houston Office of Emergency Management
 Emergency, City
 City of Houston Office of Emergency Management's city and weather alerts that affect a large portion of Houston



Houston Office of Emergency Management (TX)
 News
 News and alerts from the Houston office of emergency management.



Fort Bend County OEM
 News
 News and alerts from Fort Bend County OEM



Harris County OHSEM
 Emergency, Local, News
 Your official source for emergency management information in Harris County.



Homeland Security
 Government, Security
 The official emergency feed of the US
 Department of Homeland Security

School Districts



Alief ISD (Houston, TX)
 School
 General news, pictures, and emergency information from Alief ISD



Fort Bend ISD (Houston, TX)
 School
 General news, pictures, and emergency information from Fort Bend ISD



Humble ISD (Houston, TX)
 School
 DESCRIPTION
 General news, pictures, and emergency information from Humble ISD



Conroe ISD (Houston, TX)
 School
 General news, pictures, and emergency information from Conroe ISD



Goose Creek ISD (Houston, TX)
 School
 General news, pictures, and emergency information from Goose Creek CISD

Transportation



houstontranstar
 News
 News and alerts from houstontranstar



George Bush Intercontinental Houston Airport
 Logistical updates and emergency alerts from George Bush Intercontinental Houston

Universities



University of Houston
 Emergency Management
 Emergency, University UHEMB alerts to improve the preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation against natural and manmade disasters



Houston Baptist University
 University, News
 General news, pictures, and emergency information from Houston Baptist University

Weather



National Hurricane Center - Atlantic Ops
 Weather
 Providing analyses, forecasts, and warnings of tropical cyclones and disturbances over the Atlantic basin.



NWS Houston
 News
 News and alerts from NWS Houston



The Texas Division of Emergency Management
 Government, Emergency
 Alert feed for the Texas Division of Emergency Management

Other



CDC - Centers for Disease
Control
Government, Health
The official emergency feed
of the CDC and Prevention

Communicate

The Communicate Dashboard shows you a complete view of all notification types you can deploy to deliver a communication to your CRD.

From the Communicate Dashboard, you can send a Notification, Survey, Conference Call Bridge request, or create and save Templates to use regularly or in the future.

The screenshot displays the AlertMedia Communicate Dashboard. At the top left is the AlertMedia logo and a '+ NEW NOTIFICATION' button. A search bar is located at the top center with the text 'Click here to search (or CTRL + K)'. The top right shows the user's name 'Gary Flaherty' and a 'Logout' link. The main content area is titled 'Communicate Dashboard' and features four primary action cards: 'Notification' (with a 'SEND NOW' button), 'Survey' (with a 'SEND NOW' button), 'Conference Call' (with a 'SEND NOW' button), and 'Templates' (with a 'CREATE TEMPLATES' button and a '2' indicator). A left sidebar contains navigation menus for 'Monitor', 'Communicate', 'Configure', and 'Help'. The footer contains copyright information and links to 'Privacy Policy', 'Terms of Service', 'Contact Us', and 'Help'.

Communicate | New Notification

Use any blue "New Notification" button to create and send a Notification to People or Groups.

AlertMedia

Templates (Manage)

Search by name

TRAINING DRAFT: Deploy...

TRAINING - Status chang...

Create Notification

1 What type of notification is this?

Notification Read Confirmation Survey Conference Call

2 How would you like to send?

Text App Voice Email Social

3 What message do you want to send? [Switch to Advanced View](#)

4 Who do you want to send this to? [New Filter Group](#)

5 Is this for a new or existing event? [Preview Recipients](#)

Create Event Automatically or [Create Custom Event](#)

Select an Existing Event

EVENT OPTIONS

Include event page link [?](#)

Preview and Send Test Schedule Send Now

In the "Create Notification" screen, you have five steps to send your notification:

1. Select the type of notification to send. If you've selected "New Notification" or clicked on a blue plus sign next to a group or person, the notification will auto-populate with the corresponding item.
 - If you select the 'Read Receipt' button, you have the option to resend once, twice, or three times at five-minute intervals to recipients who have not confirmed the reception of that message.
 - If you select "Survey," you will be able to add custom survey responses in step three. You also have the option to allow recipients to change their responses and to send custom responses to survey participants.

2. Select the channel, or how the message will be sent: text message, app push notification, voice, email, and social media. You can edit each message format in the "Advanced Options" section.
3. Type the message you want to send. Select "Switch to Advanced View" to edit messages for text, voice, and email.
 - You can add an attachment to an email notification by clicking 'Switch to Advanced View'
 - You can also use one of the templates to populate your message that you can edit to meet your immediate needs.
4. Select the group(s), or recipients.
5. Choose to add an update to an ongoing event.

Help

AlertMedia has an extensive collection of articles and videos in their Support Portal which can be accessed at

<http://help.alertmedia.com/support/home>

AlertMedia

+ NEW NOTIFICATION

Monitor

- Map
- Incoming Messages
- Notification Activity
- Events
- Threats & News

Communicate

- New Notification
- Survey
- Conference Call
- Templates

Configure

- People
- Groups
- My Account
- Company
- Reports

Help

Click here to **search** (or CTRL + K)

GHCDR | (832) 934-9714 | Gary Flaherty

Help

We want to help! We take customer support seriously at AlertMedia. Below we have provided ways to read more about our product, as well as provide paths to reach us directly by submitting a support ticket or by contacting us directly.

Knowledge Base

Go to [AlertMedia Support Portal](#) now to review our Knowledge Base and look for your answers online.

Submit a Ticket

Can't find your answer in the Knowledge Base or need to file a bug or feature request? [Submit a Ticket](#) and a support team member will get right on it!

Contact Us

Want to reach us directly? Contact support directly at support@alertmedia.com or call 1-800-826-0777

Tutorial

For a guided tour of AlertMedia, click [here](#). To watch a video overview, click [here](#).