

Sharing the science behind disasters with digital storytelling



Mark Letham (New Zealand), in conjunction with the Looking Beyond Disasters Film Documentary Project

The past 2 years...

- During the Christchurch earthquakes, it wasn't uncommon for people outside New Zealand to think that Christchurch was completely destroyed and further earthquake predictions didn't help the thousands of people still able to live in the city.
- Misinformation can encourage fear and doesn't help people move forward into recovery.

We can tell better stories...

- Disasters may not be happy stories, but objectively sharing the science behind them and their impacts on society – the good and the bad – may be a better way forward to help people make better decisions for themselves during any stage (reduction, response, and recovery) of a disaster.
- To be able to share this information with somebody who has never experienced earthquakes or volcanoes, we can use digital storytelling.

#1: Earthquakes - project & aims

- With a wide audience in mind, give a clear summary of the science behind the Christchurch Earthquakes and their social impacts
- Demonstrate that there are different levels of disaster risk, but the Earth processes that cause disasters are the same processes that create landscapes in which New Zealanders like to live.
- Suggest that a love for the landscape may be a platform on which to begin building better community resilience
- Produce a video that is widely accessible via Youtube

#2: Volcanoes – project & aims

- With a wide audience in mind, give a clear summary of the science behind volcanoes and their social impacts
- Explain the current research into how they work and their impact on society
- Visit White Island volcano (if it's not erupting) and create a video to upload to Youtube
- Reinforce the messages introduced in the Earthquakes video in the volcano context

The plan

- Start script-writing - Nov-Dec 2012
- The script will help determine our budget
- Budget will be in conjunction with Looking Beyond Disasters Documentary Film Project
- Film video in and around Christchurch and volcanoes in New Zealand - early 2013
- Edit video – early 2013
- Update on progress online - ongoing
- Post 2 videos to Youtube, share in Christchurch, and present at the next Forum

Contact

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