

Case Study

Artificial Intelligence in a Time of Crisis

How Aurora, IL, Leveraged Data Analytics to Help Manage a Mass Shooting

In February 2019, a mass shooting rocked Aurora, Illinois, ultimately leaving five dead and six injured, including five police officers. Within a matter of minutes, the shooting went viral, making local and national headlines.

The Challenge

In the wake of the shooting, over 300 first responders from 30 different agencies descended on Aurora. The City was faced with two main challenges: first, ensuring that it was getting the most accurate information to its community; and second, understanding from a national standpoint how the shooting and the City were being perceived.

The Zencity Solution

Zencity's platform visualized local and national data about the shooting, enabling Aurora to understand who was talking about the shooting, how it was being reported, and the community impact of the shooting over time.



Actionable, Data-based Insights

Aurora's executive team and the Police Chief used this data to weed through the noise, effectively communicate with residents, and help the community heal. From the data it learned:

1. Other public safety groups were sharing information that generally only the City's Police Department would have shared.
2. The City was not its residents' primary information source during the crisis.
3. The biggest concern in the community following the shooting was the recovery of the officers - and the community was not focused on the victims or their families.



Since the shooting in Aurora, Zencity has become part of our tapestry. It's a very powerful tool in the decision-making process because it helps the Mayor laser focus in on the concerns of the community and it helps us keep the pulse of the community.



Clayton Muhammad

Director Community Relations/Public Information, Aurora, IL

Results



The City proactively and successfully communicated that it was the official and most accurate information source about the shooting to its residents.



The City was able to keep a continuous finger on the pulse of things as its community recovered from the shooting.



Within a few weeks, the City succeeded in helping the community raise \$500,000 for the victims' families: a tremendous success from a tragic incident.