



GULF DATA SYSTEMS
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

R.E.S.C.U.
Relief Effort and Support for Credit Unions

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Leo Vaulin, CEO 800-293-7554 x229

**ALL CREDIT UNIONS ARE WELCOME
AS GULF DATA SYSTEMS
JOINS OPERATION "R.E.S.C.U."
ON THE GULF COAST**

*Navigator Credit Union of Mississippi is now providing telephone service to over 32,000 members from a Call Center provided by **Gulf Data Systems**. PC Home Banking using the **GDS OnCUE**® system is helping credit union members manage their accounts. Gulf Data Systems continues its aid-outreach in conjunction with **CUNA's R.E.S.C.U.** initiative to bring affected credit unions back online.*

MOBILE, AL (9/19/05) – Just three weeks ago, Gulf Data Systems of Mobile was in the same position as credit unions along the Gulf Coast – working hard to serve members at the start of another busy back-to-school season.

Today, the Gulf Coast is a vastly different place.

Navigator Credit Union of Pascagoula was devastated as Hurricane Katrina flooded the central office and shut down most of their ten branches. Navigator's IT Manager, Chris Crabtree, implemented his disaster recovery plan to preserve member data and resume operations from a backup site in Georgia. However, it was very difficult for the credit union to re-establish local service to members,

most of whom also live and work along the Gulf Coast. For example, ordering phone lines to create a new Call Center was all but impossible in the short term. "We tried to order new lines through the local phone company, and they were telling us 4 to 6 weeks," says GDS' Director of Information Systems Jeanne Croom. "The old lines were gone, and new lines were going to take a long time to get installed. The credit union's systems were up and running at their backup site, but they did not have the phone lines available for members to call in."

Fortunately, GDS was able to help. Using their underground fiber-optic connection to an internet backbone, GDS was able to dedicate a set of 6 lines to serve the needs of the Navigator CU. A Call Center was set up in the GDS offices, and PC's were configured to connect to the Navigator CU servers.

To make the Call Center's job easier, GDS also provided members with 24hour access using the OnCUe[®] Home Banking System. In the first 48 hours of operation, the OnCUe[®] system handled over 2100 member log-on's.

Navigator is hardly alone. Hundreds of credit unions find themselves in the same situation, with their data and systems ready to serve credit union members but no telecommunications lines, phones, or internet to run them on. The unprecedented destruction of Katrina has left members without critical financial services, compounding an already traumatic situation.

The situation prompted a grass-roots solution between credit union providers and national associations like CUNA. Operation R.E.S.C.U. is the movement's effort to focus energies for the relief and support for credit unions affected by the hurricane and its aftermath. It was established with the support of the Credit Union National Association, American Association of Credit Union Leagues, National Credit Union Foundation, Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi Leagues.

GDS was eager to offer its services to Operation R.E.S.C.U., particularly because its Mobile, Alabama location is already in the region and easily accessible to credit unions in the hardest hit areas.

"We work with all sizes of credit unions on our system," says sales manager Bernie Desrosiers. "Adapting to their specific needs is not a problem for us."

GDS will run credit unions on whatever system they are currently using, and will continue to offer the help free of charge for as long as it takes to get the credit union back on its feet.

"Nobody has to drop their current provider to get help," Desrosiers emphasizes. "They don't sign a contract and there is no charge."

He adds, "Our commitment to Operation R.E.S.C.U. is to offer aid and support, not profit from this disaster or take advantage of people who have suffered." GDS's position, as set by company president Leo Vaulin, is to help other credit

unions like Navigator CU restore services to members as quickly as possible. This aid is comprehensive and ranges from providing telecommunications, as with Navigator, to helping rebuild databases.

"Most will have their records, whether they are on paper, tape, disk or CDROM. We can make those records available to them again in whatever capacity they need." Vaulin says. "But if all they've come away with is a trial balance, we can work with that."

Vaulin and Desrosiers both express the expectation that the credit union community is rebuilding; and like the entire Gulf Coast, it will be stronger and better from the hard lessons brought by Hurricane Katrina.

Credit unions who would like more information about GDS's ability to restore services as quickly as possible are asked to contact the following people, or visit the website at www.gulfdata.org for complete information and assistance.

GDS (Toll Free): 800-293-7554 Ext. 229
www.gulfdata.org

Leo P. Vaulin
CEO
Gulf Data Systems
251-438-4853 x229 e-mail:
lpv@gdsps.com