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# Non-Profit JCIE Manages Japan Disaster Relief with Caspio

## Industry
Non-Profit

## Company
The Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE) was founded in 1975 as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization. JCIE/USA is the North American affiliate of JCIE, one of the few truly independent think tanks in the field of international affairs in Japan. Located in New York City, JCIE/USA conducts political exchange programs for leading American and Japanese policymakers, carries out policy research and dialogue projects on pressing international issues, and works to promote a greater understanding of civil society and philanthropy in Japan and the Asia Pacific region.

## Challenge
The JCIE/USA was looking to create a centralized online repository allowing website visitors to search out and track grants and donations for relief and recovery from the massive earthquake and subsequent tsunami that hit Japan in 2011.

## Solution
After weighing several online database platforms, JCIE/USA selected Caspio for on its ease-of-use and strong reputation for customer service. With some guidance from Caspio experts, JCIE/USA was able to build its database and user front-end to specification, ramping up to a successful launch.

**In the aftermath of the massive earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan in 2011, the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE) wanted a better way to track funds earmarked for relief efforts. A small non-profit with a tight budget, the project team used Caspio to create an online database of U.S. donations aiding the disaster. Today the database holds nearly 1000 grants representing $1 billion in foreign aid for disaster recovery efforts in Japan.**

## Behind the Headlines of a Disaster

The Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE) is a non-profit designed to increase the dialog between the United States and Japan. JCIE is based in Tokyo, with its U.S. affiliate, JCIE/USA, based in New York City. The organization maintains numerous dialogues for political leaders and policymakers, and it carries out research on foreign policy, the nonprofit sector, and international exchange as part of its efforts to foster international cooperation.

So, when the tragic earthquake and subsequent tsunami hit Japan's coast, JCIE was looking to help maximize the efforts towards relief and rebuilding. JCIE saw itself as a logical hub for collecting and sharing stories around relief, but also acting as a valuable resource for those looking to donate or discover how donations would be utilized. "Some of the real important work goes on after the news coverage goes away," says David Monico, Program Associate with JCIE/USA. "Those stories
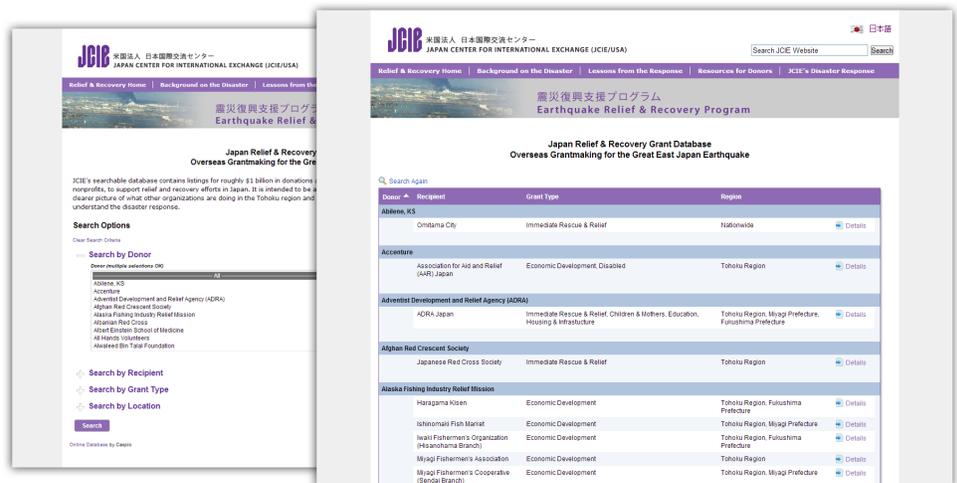


JCIE's searchable database includes over $1 billion in foreign aid from 370 donors to 400 recipients.

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usually go untold, so we wanted to offer a resource to share those stories and best practices around relief."

The organization quickly built out its website to link to donation channels and other helpful areas. But, Monico and his team realized there was a lot of confusion around the funds being donated. Since the disaster, roughly $1 billion has been donated by overseas organizations – and little has been documented around it. Monico's team set out to change that, and wanted to create a centralized data repository for all grants earmarked towards Japan relief efforts.

### Caspio Wins on Service and Value

The team began brainstorming how to best chronicle the millions of relief effort funds during the spring of 2012, but wasn't able to scope the technology details until the next year. The team was lacking in data-specific IT resources, so the process was slower than expected. "I am the IT staff," jokes Monico. Thus, the team realized that building from scratch would not be an option. "The scope and expense of a custom project was simply way out of our budget," Monico explains.

While researching online database tools, Caspio quickly rose to the top of the list. Monico notes that Caspio's cost-effectiveness and reputation for great customer support won the team over. "Other products needed quite a bit of technical knowledge to be successful," Monico notes. "The Caspio platform looked easy. So, we worked with sales team to create a package that made sense for us."

The small team then started designing their project – using Caspio and some HTML to match the look and feel of JCIE's branding and website. However, given the large task of collecting the large amounts of grant data, and the fact that non-IT staff were designing a complex searchable database, the project stalled mid-2012.

### Caspio Professional Services Provides Relief

Monico notes that in the fall of 2012, the team went through Caspio's client onboarding program, and also contracted Caspio

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>
> **David Monico,** Program Associate, JCIE/USA

Professional Services to help speed up the remaining development. During onboarding, the JCIE/USA team learned how to best design the database, building a logical data model so spreadsheet data could be easily uploaded and made instantly searchable by web visitors.

"In hindsight, we probably should have done the onboarding from the get-go," David says. "Once we worked with Caspio directly, we had the database exactly where we wanted it to be."

### Sharing Industry Best Practices Moving Forward

The JCIE/USA has since launched the grant repository featuring in-depth information on nearly 1000 grants, coming from 370 donors in the United States. The organization will allow visitors to search across 13 grant types, and across three prefectures in the Tohoku region devastated by the earthquake and tsunami. Searches can be made based on the donor, recipient, grant type or location.

Monico says that JCIE/USA plans to use the repository as a way to help disaster responders get a better picture of what is happening on the ground and for funders and fund-seekers to find out more about one another. The organization is also looking into the future, possibly enhancing the Caspio-powered repository to accept user-generated submissions to increase the richness of the data set. "With Caspio, we can share best practices with other think tanks to discover the most effective ways to handle future disasters around the world," Monico says.