

**case 1-429-284**  
**March 6, 2012**

## Cisco SCRM in Action: 2011 Tōhoku Earthquake

The Roppongi (六本木 or “six trees” in English) district was Tokyo’s most popular nightlife district. Redevelopment projects from 2000 to 2011 for elegant retail, leisure and residential space, offices, and luxury hotels had made Roppongi appeal to a much wider range of visitors and residents.<sup>1</sup> A little before 3 p.m. JST on Friday, March 11, 2011, panic struck guests in the elevators of the Ritz Carlton Hotel, housed in the famous midtown tower, when they felt a severe jolt, and thought for a moment that they were in a free fall. Fortunately for the guests, the elevators stopped at the next floor and the doors opened. They exited and raced to the stairs to rush out of the building. Unbeknownst to the guests, 240 km north of Tokyo, an 8.9 magnitude earthquake had struck the northeast coast of Japan at 2:46 p.m. JST. Twenty four minutes later, more than 8,000 km away, near Cisco’s headquarters in San Jose, California, the following alert popped up on Trent Marchuck’s smartphone screen:



As Cisco’s supply chain incident manager, Marchuck was responsible for monitoring potential disruptions to Cisco’s vast global supply chain. Marchuck was used to late night alerts, but this alert had his attention. Following Cisco protocol, he immediately escalated the alert to his manager, James Steele, Cisco Director of Supply Chain Management. At 10:50 p.m. PST, Steele’s phone rang. Even though Steele was relatively new

*Published by WDI Publishing, a division of the William Davidson Institute (WDI) at the University of Michigan.*

©2013 Prof. Ravi Anupindi. This case was developed by Professor Ravi Anupindi with assistance from research associate Kristin Welling for the purpose of class discussion. Ravi Anupindi is David B. Hermelin Professor of Business Administration & Professor of Operations Management and the Program Director for the Master of Supply Chain Management Program at the Ross School of business. The intent of this case study is to look at lessons learned and best practices with a view toward contributing to cross-industry dialogue for effective responses to similar situations.