

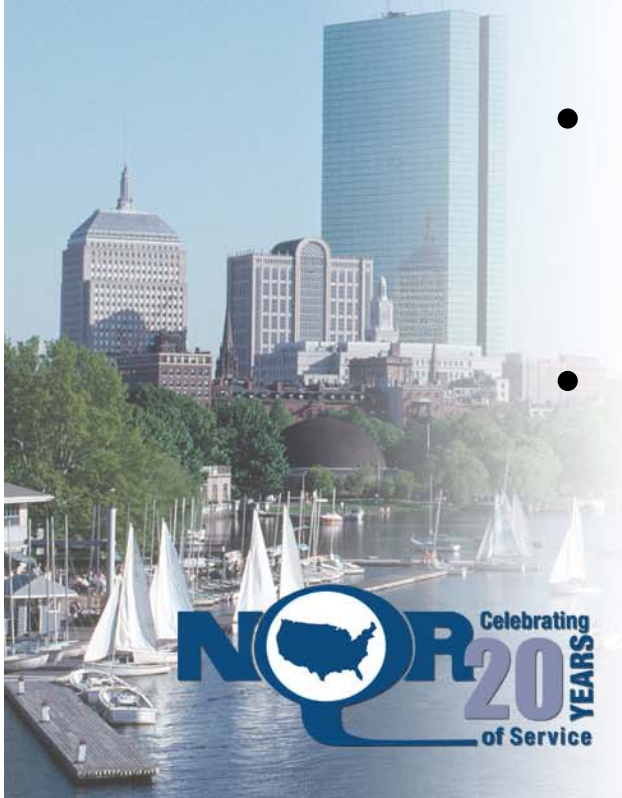
The Empowered Customer

Customer Service in the Age of Social Networking



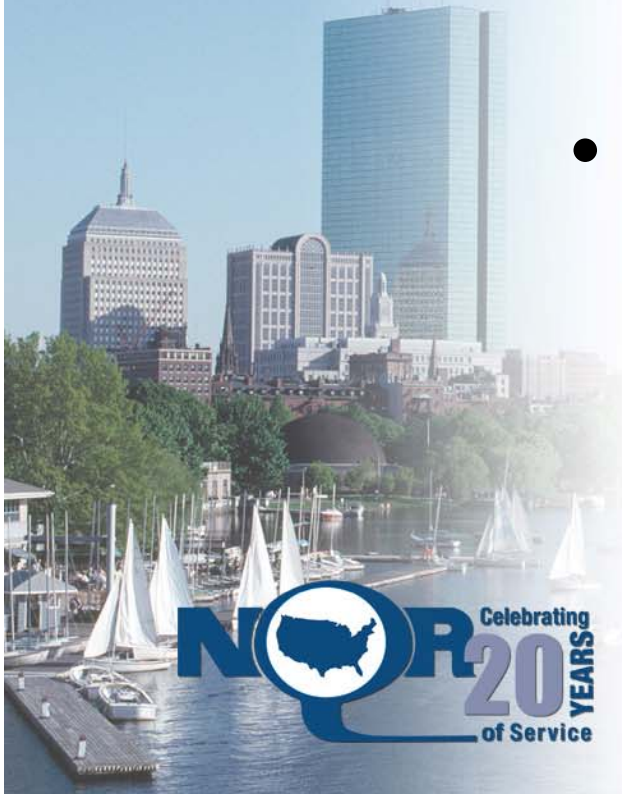
Some of the Data

- As of July '10 Facebook had 500 million users.
- LinkedIn has over 60 million users.
- Twitter has 105 million registered users and 50 million tweets per day.
- World-wide, people spend over 110 billion minutes on social networks and blogs – 22% of all online time.
- Year over year online time increased from 2009 to 2010 almost doubling, from 3 plus hours in 2009 to almost 6 hours in 2010.



The worldwide web has “democratized” our ability to both find out about goods and services and to express our opinions – and that can be a problem.

- Accuracy: Some information on the Web, via blogs or reviews etc., is biased, incomplete, or factually incorrect.
- Hyper emotionalism: On almost all product or service web sites, and certainly within the general blogosphere, people can post their unfiltered product or service reviews, their opinions – informed or uninformed – or they can simply go on a rant.



Implications for Service Providers

- Get out there. Create a blog, get on Facebook. Participate in the dialogue.
- Respond quickly. “No comment” or “Company X was contacted and refused to comment” is often viewed as an admission of guilt.
- Invest in human resources. Have staff devoted to both monitor the web and to respond to what is being said.
- Invest in aggressive problem recovery.

