



Societal Challenges and Opportunities in the NWS: One Perspective

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Outline

- The traditional NWS
- The modern customer
- Challenges
- Opportunities
- Implementing change



Traditional NWS Services

- Product-driven
 - Pre-defined set of products
 - Pre-defined warning thresholds
 - One way communication
- NWS-centric
 - NWS regions
 - WFOs
 - Zones and counties
- Product dissemination
 - Web
 - NOAA Weather Radio
 - Weather Wire
 - EAS



The Modern Customer

- Becoming less tolerant of:
 - Adverse weather conditions
 - Incorrect forecasts
 - Poorly designed products
- Uses new technology
 - GIS
 - Mobile phones and computers
 - Web 2.0
- Expects information that is tailored to their own needs.
- Is responsible for the well being of others



Challenges

- We crank out products, but how useful are they to the customer?
 - Content
 - Format
 - Medium
 - Existence
- Internal NWS constructs (examples: WFOs, zone numbers, etc.) are prevalent in our products, but not necessarily meaningful to customers.



Challenges cont.

- Our means of dissemination are becoming outdated.
 - Weather Wire – Very few users
 - Weather Radio – Is used some, but not very popular with younger generations.
 - Web – Good web presence, but it needs updating
 - EAS – Works if you catch the customer, over-warns
- Change is slow in the government
- Private sector / public sector concerns



Opportunities

- How do we address the mentioned challenges?
- What should the role of the NWS be in the coming years?



Opportunities

- How do we address the mentioned challenges?
- What should the role of the NWS be in the coming years?
- One answer:
 - Improving decision support to community decision makers during the anticipation of, response to, and recovery from high impact events.



Opportunities cont.

- **Decision support** – Through a collaborative relationship, providing information that is more applicable to the decisions it is used to make.
- **Community decision makers** – A wide group of community leaders that make strategic, economic, and staffing decisions.
- **High impact events**
 - Not necessarily meteorological.
 - May impact:
 - Public safety
 - Property
 - Commerce
 - Different for each customer



Implementing Change

- Already starting at many offices
 - Needs to be adopted and developed at higher levels of the NWS
- WRH is actively involved in projects to move the NWS in the right direction.



Implementing Change Cont.

- US wireless penetration reaches 84% in 2007
 - US subscribers totaled 255.4 million
 - Overall revenue was up 10.7% on the year to \$138.9 billion
 - Data revenue jumped 53% to \$23 billion
 - Voice and data minutes totaled 2 trillion - equivalent to one person using a cell phone for 3.8 Million year
- Americans let their fingers do the talking
 - Wireless customers in the U.S. sent 50 billion text messages in December 2007, with multimedia messaging totaling 4 billion in the second half of the year.

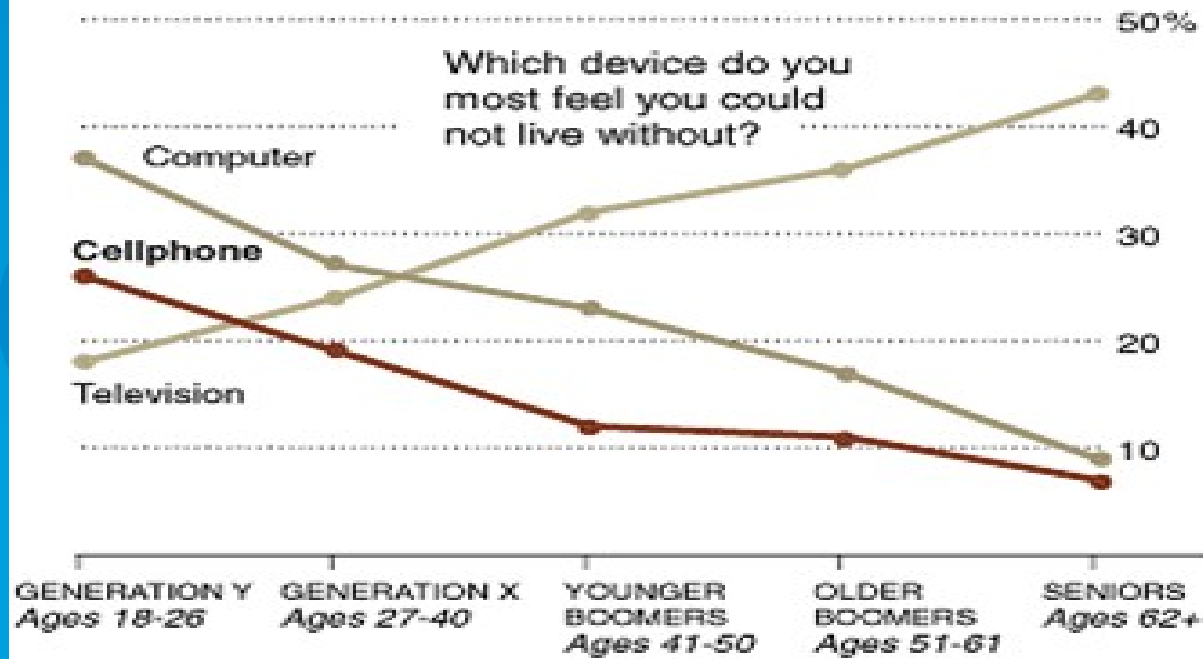
CTIA-The Wireless Association® ctia@smartbrief.com



Implementing Change Cont.

Can't Live Without It

Cellphones rank higher than television in the 18-to-26 age group — and media executives are hoping that it will have a large appetite for mobile video content.



Source: Forrester Research

The New York Times



Implementing Change Cont.

- Western Region Projects
 - Text message alerts to customer cell phones.
 - Eventually reverse 911
 - Web 2.0 and mobile applications
 - Content driven by user preferences
 - NWSChat (IEMChat) – Chat room collaboration between NWS forecasters, news media, and EMs
 - GoToMeeting – Interactive online briefings with customers.
 - IRIS Database – Facilitates the collection and management of customer information and integrates it with NWS data
 - Using verification to:
 - Improve forecast and warning products
 - Re prioritize forecaster work to focus on decision support



Questions? Ideas?

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