Customer Service at the Records Research & Certification Section of the US Copyright Office

Office of Policy and Analysis

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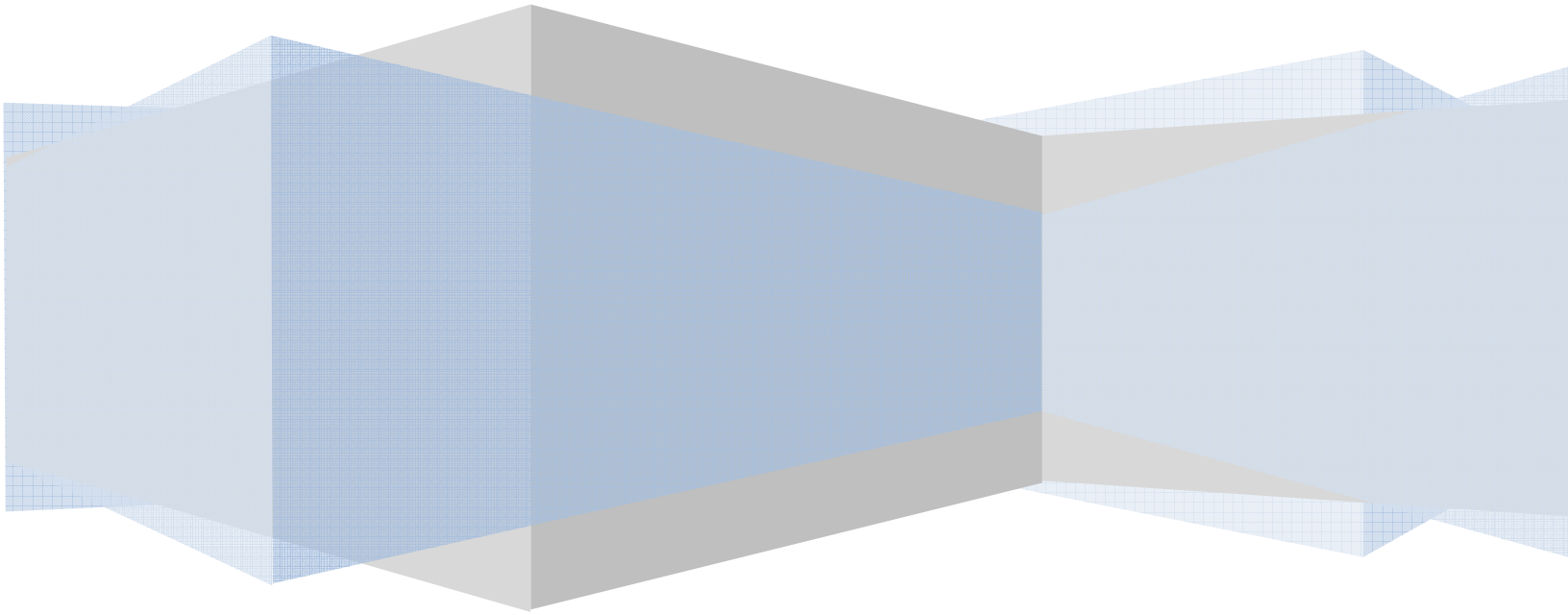

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Preface

Elizabeth R. Scheffler, Chief of Operations, Copyright Office of the Library of Congress, requested that the Smithsonian Office of Policy and Analysis (OP&A) assess the quality of customer service in two Sections of the Information and Records Division, the Public Information Office and the Records Research & Certification Section. The objective of the study was to provide recommendations to improve customer service in both Sections.

OP&A staff Whitney Watriss, David Karns, Lance Costello, and Jarrid Green designed and conducted this study. They benefited greatly from the contributions of three capable interns, Eddiemae Nash, Grace Hart, and Damaris Altomerianos, who helped with the interviews, observations, and analysis. Many OP&A staff and interns assisted with transcription and mystery shopping: Kathleen Ernst, Sarah Block, Claire Eckert, Renae Youngs, Alexis VanZalen, Maurice Johnson, Caryn Carlson Rothe, Megan Lee, and Givi Khidesheli. I very much appreciate their help on this project.

I thank all the interviewees who participated in this study. They helped the researchers to develop, expand, and refine the information.

Finally, I am grateful to Elizabeth Scheffler for asking OP&A to undertake this study and for helping us better understand the tasks I&RD carries out. Being able to meet customer expectations is a complex undertaking. The Copyright Office's clear dedication to this endeavor is in the best interests of the public.

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List of Acronyms

CO	US Copyright Office, Library of Congress
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
CTO	Copyright Technology Office, Copyright Office
FCR	First-call resolution
IAC	Inventors Assistance Center, US Patent and Trademark Office
ITS	Information Technology Services, Library of Congress
IVR	Interactive voice response
I&RD	Information and Records Division, Copyright Office
OP&A	Office of Policy and Analysis, Smithsonian Institution
PIO	Public Information Office, Information and Records Division, Copyright Office
RAC	Receipt Analysis & Control Division
RMS	Records Management Section, Copyright Office
RR&C	Records Research & Certification Section, Information and Records Division, Copyright Office
RRP	Registration & Recordation Program, Copyright Office
TAC	Trademark Assistance Center, US Patent and Trademark Office
USPTO	US Patent and Trademark Office

Executive Summary

The US Copyright Office (CO) believes that high-quality service is important for its customers and, further, that it fosters and supports the creativity of Americans and thereby contributes to the creation of jobs and economic returns. The Information and Records Division (I&RD) has primary responsibility for providing information and assistance to CO customers. The Chief Operating Officer of CO contracted with the Smithsonian Institution Office of Policy and Analysis (OP&A) to assess how two I&RD Sections, the Public Information Office (PIO) and Records Research & Certification (RR&C), might improve customer service. This report addresses customer service at RR&C.

The OP&A study team collected data from several sources. It observed and evaluated customer interactions with RR&C by telephone, email, and in-person, using a rating instrument widely used in industry, as well as the experience of OP&A "mystery shoppers." The study team interviewed CO senior managers, RR&C staff, a diverse group of RR&C customers, staff in CO offices with which RR&C interacts regularly, and representatives of two contact centers at the US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) and of Convergys, a leading private-sector firm that provides contact center services for federal agencies and other organizations under contract. The study team also looked at tracking data from the I&RD performance reports database and from the OpinionLab CO website satisfaction survey, and reviewed literature on contact center best practices. An online survey provided additional customer feedback.

Conclusions

How Well RR&C Serves Its Customers

The picture of customer service at RR&C is mixed. RR&C provides quite adequate services but needs to achieve a higher level of quality. Specific areas that merit attention include:

- **Accuracy and completeness of answers.** The study team is concerned by the number of customers expressing reservations about the information they received, and both interviewees and the study team identified instances of incorrect information. The study team sets a very high standard for accurate information, since incorrect information can have serious repercussions and is highly correlated with customer satisfaction. This issue is best addressed with systematic monitoring of specialists, and feedback and refresher training as needed.

  The study team concluded that RR&C specialists could offer more complete answers, anticipating and addressing likely follow-on questions. One metric for completeness

is first-call resolution (FCR), defined as the customer having received enough information before hanging up that a repeat call will not be necessary. Although a priority best practice at most contact centers, it receives little attention within RR&C. Implementing this practice will require a capability to track whether customers are calling back in connection with an earlier call.

- **Timeliness.** RR&C rated well for timeliness. Complaints by some customers about slow services merit follow-up, however, to determine to what extent RR&C misses timeliness standards and to improve performance.

- **Variability of responses.** Different staff answered the same questions differently. For example, some staff walked customers through the online records search process, while others said customers needed to pay for a search they could not perform on their own. There is also a need for better guidelines and monitoring of which Section or office answers what types of questions and when to transfer a call. Being a one-stop shop is a disservice if it results in incorrect information.

- **Fees and accessibility.** Dissatisfaction surfaced around the fees RR&C charges, with customers finding them high overall and relative to the time some searches take. The fee structure and estimation process were confusing to some customers. RR&C might want to assess whether the fees prevent potential customers from using its services and if a more equitable and less confusing fee system can be designed.

- **Friendliness.** The weakest area of RR&C's customer service was empathy, with significant variability in specialists' demeanor and tone, which sometimes came across as rude. Here, too, customer service would benefit from routine monitoring, feedback, and coaching as needed.

- **Calls transferred to other offices.** The study team could not gather information on what happened when calls were transferred to another office, for example, whether the customer reached the other party and got a satisfactory response. A true customer service focus means that CO-wide customers should be able to reach a live person and get accurate, complete, timely, and professional service. This may require adoption of a CO-wide customer-centric focus and implementation of a more high-end Customer Relations Management (CRM) system than CO has now. A system that maintains a full record of all customer contacts such that repeat calls on the same question can be identified and that delivers a complete history of a customer's interaction with CO each time an agent answers a call, and that is seamlessly linked to the current Siebel application, would be a very significant advance for customer service at CO.

The Quality of Quality Assurance at RR&C

Based on the study team's own findings and the issues raised by customers, RR&C's customer service would benefit from stronger quality assurance. Some fundamental quality assurance tools, such as written standard operating procedures, a training manual, refresher training, and a clear set of metrics against which to measure performance or to guide staff in their work appeared to be missing. In addition, RR&C does not have a systematic means of obtaining customer feedback.

Two general comments about quality assurance are warranted. First, quality assurance is only as good as leadership and management want it to be and how effectively they communicate to staff that it should be. That standard needs to be reinforced with accountability for performance at all levels. Second, RR&C has a captive audience, and most customers are adequately satisfied with the services they receive. The study team would argue, however, that government agencies have an obligation to serve customers to the best of their abilities and resources. The CO will have to decide how far it wants to push for high-quality customer service.

Customer Feedback System. Customer feedback is a key element of a quality assurance system. The study team fully endorses the CO'S plan to implement an ongoing customer survey as one measure of the quality of customer service. The ideal is to integrate those data with data on the interactions of individual customers derived from the CRM system.

Technology. Once CO determines what level of customer service it wants to achieve, it will need to develop a technology plan to support that decision. One consideration will be to explore which functionalities can be added into the upgraded Siebel system that would best serve customers and staff of RR&C and support quality assurance. Large investments in technology, however, are probably best decided after seeing how much improvement is accomplished by more basic non-technology improvements. That said, functions that are available through existing technology or planned upgrades and that are relatively easy to activate are worth pursuing in the near term.

The study team had a sense that ITS and, to a lesser degree, CTO are inadequately supportive of customer service and quality assurance. It wondered if the key parties, including CTO and ITS, that interact directly with customers or support quality customer service are functioning effectively as a team. This point merits further study.

Office Environment. RR&C's facilities and equipment could use upgrading in terms of quantity and operability, especially the lockers, copiers, and printers. The main office could offer a more comfortable and inviting seating area.

Recommendations

Senior CO Management

- Develop a CO-wide vision and guidance for superior customer service that make leadership's commitment and expectations clear, define a standard of excellence, and establish a culture of accountability for results.

- Define the roles of the different divisions and sections of CO in responding to customers' requests for service, and ensure they have the training and resources to carry out those roles.

- Provide guidance on quality standards for customer service that CO offices should follow in developing their own performance standards and expectations, so that customers receive the same quality of service no matter where they go in CO. Customer service guidance should address at least: timely access to a live agent; accurate and complete responses to queries; first-call/email resolution where possible and, if a service request is transferred, notification of the customer to whom the request is being sent; monitoring of transfers and responses to make sure they are completed within a reasonable period of time; and professional, courteous treatment of customers.

- Establish a team approach to the provision of quality customer service that involves all staff who interact with customers or support the offices that do so—contact centers, legal offices, technology and IT support offices, RRP, and senior management.

- Implement a specialized response system for dealing with customer inquiries and service requests based on their focus: eCO and other technology-related issues to CTO; status update questions to RAC; examination-related questions to the RRP divisions; records-related questions to RR&C; and general information and problem resolution questions to PIO.

- Define and implement a technology plan that supports implementation of exemplary customer service and quality assurance.

- Adopt a customer-centric focus built around a comprehensive CRM that encompasses the records in the current Siebel CRM, but adds a CRM capacity for tracking and maintaining records on all customer interactions with CO. At a minimum, the system should maintain a record of all customer contacts with every CO Division/Office/Section; track customer interactions that require follow-up,

identifying when, how, and by whom follow-up was to have occurred and what happened; initiate customer satisfaction surveys online or via IVR after each transaction; and produce regular reports of the state of customer service throughout CO, including levels of satisfaction, the number of open service requests by CO division, and statistics on the flow of work by division.

I&RD

- Develop a plan for implementing the CO-wide vision for superior customer service with respect to PIO and RR&C, and facilitate improved interaction with other offices.
- Ensure that RR&C is managed to optimize customer service and assure quality.
- Establish and implement a robust quality assurance system within I&RD.
- Implement a reporting system for customer service that supports quality assurance.

RR&C

Improving customer service.

- Upgrade the Reading Room to better accommodate visiting customers.
    - Upgrade the computers, microfilm machines, and copying equipment for customer use, assuring that customers always have access to working equipment.
    - Provide working lockers for customers.
- Implement customer service-related upgrades to Siebel, such as an improved search function.
- Review the RR&C fee structure to determine if the level of fees is appropriate relative to the duration and complexity of the service provided and if the fee structure can be simplified.

Quality assurance.

- Establish and implement a robust quality assurance system.
    - Define clear standards and expectations for the elements of superior customer service and professional behavior, to include:

        - Accurate and complete information, the latter defined as anticipating and providing information that will be of value to the customer in making decisions and eliminate the need for further contact on the same matter.

        - Timely response to requests for service, including first-call/email resolution.

        - Interactions with customers that include: a greeting that opens with a friendly salutation (such as good morning), the name of the office and agent's name, and an offer to assist the customer; a request for a name, telephone number, and/or email address in case the call gets disconnected; referrals to the CO website and information on its use; and a closing that leaves the customer feeling that the RR&C specialist was genuinely pleased to have been of help and that the customer was important to both the staff member and CO.

    - Establish baseline metrics for each element of a customer interaction, based on customer feedback (see below), productivity data, and internal assessments of customer service, and develop a performance measurement plan.

    - Implement a formal training program that addresses new hire, refresher, and professional development training, supported by a training manual and scheduled time for staff participation.

    - Supervise staff on a regular basis.

        - Conduct periodic formal and informal monitoring, feedback, and follow-up coaching and training, linked to the annual performance evaluation process.

        - Conduct periodic mystery shopping to ensure superior customer service.

    - Implement a system for collecting customer feedback to track satisfaction.

        - Survey customers, either via IVR or online, asking a small number of questions that should include ratings for overall satisfaction and the accuracy and reliability of the information and services received.

        - Offer the survey following every customer interaction.

        - Periodically supplement the ongoing survey with longer, in-depth studies of customer satisfaction.
        - Implement a CRM system with a customer contact monitoring system.
    - Ensure that an effective performance evaluation process is in place that:
        - Is based on clear, measurable performance standards and expectations for the information specialist and technical assistance positions.
        - Offers a transparent rating system.
        - Delivers an explanation to staff of how their ratings were determined, guidance on what they need to do to achieve higher ratings, and a plan of action for improving performance.
        - Has a transparent incentives program that is clearly tied to performance.
    - Ensure that time is made available to implement and participate in quality assurance.

About This Study

Purpose and Scope

Within the US Copyright Office (CO), the Information and Records Division (I&RD) is responsible for providing information and customer service through the CO website and interaction with CO information specialists. Sections within I&RD handle the bulk of the interactions with clients. Such interactions include:

- Responding to requests for copyright information in general;
- Providing information on copyright registration claim procedures;
- Assisting in resolving problems with copyright registration claims;
- Producing and distributing CO forms and publications;
- Handling requests for records-related services, such as document searches, certification of copies of registered copyrighted works (called deposit copies), and inspection of registered copyrighted works;
- Maintaining the CO website; and
- Storing, preserving, and providing access to deposit copies and related correspondence.

Four I&RD Sections provide these services: Copyright Information (more commonly known as the Public Information Office, PIO); Records Research & Certification (RR&C); Records Management (RMS); and Publications. RMS receives, maintains, and preserves records of registrations and recordations. The Publications Section maintains and fills requests for CO forms and information, as well as CO publications and notices. RR&C is discussed in detail in this report, while PIO, which serves as the public face of CO and is primary source of information for the public, is the subject of a separate report.[1]

In the spring of 2010 the Chief Operating Officer of the Copyright Office contracted with the Smithsonian Institution Office of Policy and Analysis (OP&A) to assess the quality of

[1] Copyright Office, Library of Congress "Customer Service at the Public Information Office, US Copyright Office," Office of Policy and Analysis, Smithsonian Institution, September 2010.

customer service at PIO and RR&C and to provide recommendations for improving customer service in both Sections, thereby furthering Output 2 of the Copyright Office's Public Services strategic goal, "Improved ability of users and owners to engage in mutually beneficial copyright transactions."

While the Copyright Office has a captive market, in that it is the only place at which to register copyrights and get access to records relating to registered copyrights, it is still committed to providing quality customer experiences. That is its obligation as a federal agency, but more important is that by fostering and supporting the creativity of Americans, CO is contributing to the creation of jobs and economic returns.

Methodology

The scope of the study called for data collection from several sources:

- Observation and evaluation of customer interaction with RR&C staff through three modes of contact:
    - *Reviewing telephone calls and rating information specialist-customer interactions.* The OP&A study team recorded, reviewed, and rated telephone calls between RR&C staff and customers that came into RR&C in different two-hour segments over the week of July 19, 2010. At least two team members reviewed and rated 32 calls. In the case of a conflict between the ratings of the two reviewers, a third person listened to the call and served as tiebreaker. To achieve as much consistency as possible in how the different reviewers rated the calls, the OP&A study team developed a rating instrument based on the RATER scale, [2] which is widely used in the contact center industry (Appendix A). The study team adapted the rating instrument to be consistent with what it learned about performance expectations for RR&C staff. That is, it assessed interactions with customers against RR&C standards and expectations, and not against best practices for contact centers.[3] The RATER instrument looked at five aspects of customer service—*Responsiveness* (whether the agent addressed the customer's questions); *Assurance* (whether the agent answered all questions sufficiently

[2] Five RATER dimensions were identified by Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry (1990), based on research that measured ten aspects of service reliability. Also see Zemke (2003).

[3] "A contact center (also referred to as a *customer interaction center* or *e-contact center*) is a central point in an enterprise from which all customer contacts are managed. The contact center typically includes one or more online call centers but may include other types of customer contact as well, including email newsletters, postal mail catalogs, website inquiries and chats, and the collection of information from customers during in-store purchasing. A contact center is generally part of an enterprise's overall customer relationship management." http://searchcrm.techtarget.com/definition/contact-center. Accessed August 30, 2010.

so that the customer knew what steps to take next); *Tangibles* (the agent's response was easy to understand); *Empathy* (the agent's response was professional and courteous); and *Reliability* (the customer came away feeling that the information provided was accurate). OP&A reviewers noted the customer's tone, for example, whether the customer seemed angry or confused. The final step after rating each element of the interaction was to assign an overall rating.

- *Review and rating of email responses to customer inquiries.* The study team reviewed and rated 41 emails sent out by RR&C to customers during various days in June, again using the RATER instrument and following the same procedures as described above for telephone calls. However, it also looked at the timeliness of RR&C responses.

- *Monitoring interactions with walk-in customers.* A study team member sat near the reception desks in the main office of RR&C and in the CO Reading Room, which is part of RR&C, observed exchanges between customers and RR&C staff, and rated them using the RATER instrument. In this case, only one team member gave a rating.

- "Mystery shopping," which involved OP&A staff and interns interacting by telephone with RR&C staff using prepared service request scenarios. The scenarios were reviewed by RR&C, which also provided the correct responses against which to measure the performance of staff.

- Interviews with:

  - The Copyright Office Chief Operating Officer, senior managers of I&RD, and 13 RR&C staff members who agreed to be interviewed.

  - External customers who requested services of either or both PIO and RR&C. Of the 47 interviewees, 11 were frequent users such as lawyers; and one was a representative of the US Department of Justice.

  - Current and former staff of offices with which RR&C interacts regularly: Office of the General Counsel (OGC); Associate Registrar for Policy and International Affairs; Registration & Recordation Program (RRP); Copyright Technology Office (CTO); and representatives of the Library of Congress Information Technology Services (ITS).

  - Two exemplary contact centers—the Patent and Trademark Office's Inventors Assistance Center and Trademark Assistance Center—and a

private-sector firm, Convergys, that provides contact center services for federal agencies and other organizations under contract. These three organizations were selected because of their reputations for superior customer service and the similarity of their services with those offered by PIO and RR&C (see Appendix B for the highlights on best practices at these three organizations).

- An online survey to gain additional customer feedback, to provide a basis for establishing baseline customer satisfaction indexes for patrons of PIO and RR&C, and to test a customer feedback instrument that I&RD could use on an ongoing basis (Appendix C). The survey covered four modes of contact with PIO—telephone, email, postal mail, and walk-in customers. Information specialists in PIO and RR&C were to ask telephone and walk-in customers to participate in a customer satisfaction survey by accessing a URL that would take them to the survey questions; customers communicating with RR&C by email received a return email with the URL link.

- A review of secondary literature on contact center best practices (see see Appendix D for the bibliography).

- A review of statistical tracking data from the I&RD performance reports database that includes correspondence, on-site service, telephone calls, records searches, and certification preparation.

Data collection took place between April 14, 2010 and August 30, 2010. The study team analyzed the data, generated conclusions and recommendations, and prepared this report.

Organization of the Report

The next section presents the OP&A study team's conclusions about the quality of customer service and quality assurance in RR&C, followed by recommendations for improving both. Background information on RR&C, such as the work it performs and its staff structure, is presented next, followed by a look at what customers and PIO staff said about the quality of customer service in RR&C and what the study team found. That section is followed by the findings related to quality assurance at RR&C. Appendices contain: a copy of the customer service rating instrument (Appendix A); a compilation of key best practices to emerge from the literature review on contact centers and meetings with the US Patent and Trademark Office's Inventors Assistance Center and Trademark Assistance Center and with Convergys (B); a copy of the online survey instrument (C); and a bibliography of the literature reviewed for the study (D).

Conclusions

How Well RR&C Serves Its Customers

The findings from the two sources of customer feedback—interviews with customers and the online survey—produced a mixed picture of customer service. Looking across what interviewees said, the survey results, and the study team's own findings, it seems that RR&C is providing quite adequate services but needs to do more to achieve a high level of quality. Customers did not attribute all the problems to RR&C; they were able to distinguish between things that were within RR&C's purview and those that pertained to CO as a whole.

Specific areas where RR&C could strengthen quality include:

- **The accuracy and completeness of answers.** Based on the size of the sample of interactions the study team reviewed and its level of expertise, the study team cannot reliably quantify to what extent inaccurate information is given out. It is concerned, however, at the number of survey respondents who had reservations about the information they received, and both interviewees and the study team identified instances of incorrect information. The study team sets a very high standard for accurate information, since that is the core service CO provides. Disrespect is unpleasant, an incomplete answer troublesome, but incorrect information can have far more serious repercussions. Moreover, it is highly correlated with customer satisfaction. The errors detected by the study team are cause for concern because they of necessity involved relatively basic questions and information, given the study team's low level of knowledge. RR&C staff should not be making errors at that level. This issue of inaccurate responses is best addressed with systematic monitoring of all information specialists, followed by feedback and refresher training as needed.

  Providing customers with complete answers is also important. Customers do not know what they do not know and must depend on RR&C specialists to fill in those gaps. The study team came away feeling that RR&C specialists could do more to anticipate and address likely follow-on questions, and could be more attentive to clues that customers provide about concerns they have beyond the immediate questions they ask.

  One metric for completeness is first-call resolution (FCR), defined as the customer having received enough information before hanging up that a repeat call will not be necessary (transfers are included as part of the first call if the customer does not

hang up at any time). The literature on best practices talks a great deal about the importance of FCR, rating it as a very high-priority goal of contact centers. FCR has been widely adopted as a best practice because it not only serves customers well, but also results in significant cost-savings by heading off repeat calls. The study team never heard anyone at RR&C use this term or emphasize this best practice beyond a general statement that RR&C should be a one-stop shop. Implementing this practice will, however, require a capability to track customers over time to see if they call back for something related to an earlier call (see the discussion on Customer Relationship Management [CRM] systems below).

- **Timeliness.** RR&C came out with high ratings for timeliness in both the survey responses and OP&A observations. Some interviewees complained, however, about slow services, including expedited services. Their comments merit follow-up by RR&C to determine to what extent services fail to meet its standards and to find ways to ensure greater timeliness.

- **Variability of responses.** There was evidence of variability in how staff responded to similar customer questions. For example, some staff walked customers through the online records search process, while others gave minimum assistance, stating that anything further would amount to a request for a RR&C search for which there would be a charge. Some staff transferred matters falling under PIO to that office, while others tried to answer the questions themselves, sometimes incorrectly, and in some instances ended up transferring the matter to PIO. Staff performance would benefit from guidance on these types of matters.

  The study team believes it is important to have better guidelines and monitoring of which Section or office should answers what types of questions and when it is appropriate to transfer a call. While the study team understands the desire of CO contact centers to provide customers a one-stop shop, it is a disservice to them if it results in incorrect information. If other offices like RR&C are to answer basic questions, it is important that they receive the same training as PIO and are monitored to assure quality.

- **Fees and accessibility.** Dissatisfaction surfaced around the fees charged by RR&C. Some customers found RR&C's fees high overall and relative to the amount of time a search took. Some customers also found the fee structure and estimation process confusing. RR&C might want to assess whether the search fees are preventing some people from using its services and if a more equitable and less confusing system can be designed.

- **Friendly service.** The weakest area of RR&C's customer service was empathy, with significant variability in specialists' demeanor and tone. Occasionally RR&C staff came across as abrupt, impatient, unfriendly, and even rude. Customers did not always feel as if they were important to the specialist and therefore to CO. The study team thought it important that RR&C open conversations with telephone customers in a consistent manner that gets the interaction off on a good footing; there was too much disparity in this aspect of customer service. Here, too, customer service would benefit from routine monitoring of staff-customer interactions, with feedback and coaching as needed.

- **Calls transferred to other offices.** One aspect of customer interaction with RR&C/CO about which the study team could not gather information was what happened when calls were transferred to another office, such as CTO or PIO. At present, RR&C has no way to tell if the other office responded to the customer at all or within a reasonable amount of time, and if the customer received a satisfactory response. For CO to be truly customer service-focused, it will need to require essentially the same standard of customer service in other offices that it requires of RR&C—customers should be able to reach a live person and get accurate, complete, timely, and professional service no matter where they go in CO. At the very least, transfers need monitoring to ensure that customers are called back within a reasonable period of time and given good information. This may require adoption of a CO-wide customer-centric focus and implementation of a more high-end CRM system than CO has now. A system that maintains a full record of all customer contacts such that repeat calls on the same question can be identified and that delivers a complete history of a customer's interaction with CO each time an agent answer's a call, and that is seamlessly linked to the current Siebel application, would be a very significant advance for customer service at CO.

The Quality of Quality Assurance at RR&C

RR&C interviewees seemed satisfied with the training, supervision, and performance evaluation in the Section, and did not note serious issues with job satisfaction or morale. The issues raised by customers in the interviews and survey responses, and identified by the study team, suggest to the contrary that RR&C would benefit from stronger quality assurance. Moreover, the study team did not receive some fundamental quality assurance tools, such as written standard operating procedures, a training manual, and a clear set of metrics against which to measure performance or to guide staff in their work, and was left to conclude that these materials did not exist. Although staff were satisfied with RR&C training, none indicated that there was any regular training for personnel other than new

hires, for example, refresher training. In addition, RR&C does not have a systematic means of obtaining customer feedback.

These factors suggest that RR&C could improve customer service by strengthening its quality assurance. Based on the small sample of interactions the study team observed and reviewed, and given that it had a low level of expertise on the content that RR&C staff handle, it cannot state to what extent these issues occur nor propose a metric for satisfactory answers. That would need to be part of strengthening quality assurance.

Two general comments about quality assurance are warranted. First, as the literature points out, quality assurance is only as good as leadership management wants it to be. If leadership does not signal its commitment to exemplary customer service, imbue the organizational culture with that value, plan systematically for the implementation of exemplary customer service, and hold all staff, including managers and supervisors, accountable for quality assurance, other staff will not take it as seriously as they need to.

First, on the matter of accountability, it was not clear whether RR&C management received and reviewed regular reports of quantitative and qualitative metrics needed to determine the various aspects of the quality of customer service. As I&RD and RR&C develop a set of performance expectations and standards, it likely will need to define which data and reports will be needed to assess quality. Fortunately, IR&D has a robust database to mine. In the same fashion, the study team was not aware if general "dash board" reports were produced for I&RD and CO management to show the current, prior, and projected status of RR&C.

Second, RR&C has a captive audience, and most customers are adequately satisfied with the services they receive (although some are not knowledgeable enough to know when they have not been served well). From that perspective, CO could choose not to invest further in quality assurance, beyond easy, low-cost tweaks to the system. Depending on other demands on scarce resources, this may make sense. As a matter of principle, however, the study team would argue that government agencies are obligated to serve their customers to the best of their abilities, although within reasonable limits relative to other demands for resources. Still, the study team acknowledges that there is a case for minimal intervention in RR&C. This means that CO needs to decide how far it wants to push for high-quality customer service and be prepared to support whatever decision it makes.

Customer Feedback System

Customer feedback is viewed within the contact center industry as a key element of a quality assurance system, and will need to a part of RR&C's. There is clearly recognition on the part of CO of the need for customer feedback, given that one deliverable of the study is a

tool for collecting customer feedback. Although the number of responses to the survey at the time of this writing was low, the study team believes that a customer survey, delivered online or via interactive voice response (IVR) (neither requires participation by RR&C staff, which can deter customer participation) is a viable and core element in measuring RR&C customer satisfaction. Optimally, the survey would have only a small number of questions, of which the most important ask customers to rate their overall satisfaction and the accuracy and reliability of the information and services they receive. It is important to offer customers an opportunity to complete the survey for each interaction with RR&C. The other advantage of a survey is that the data can be used to set baseline metrics as performance standards once a sufficient number of responses has been received. The ideal is to integrate the results of the customer satisfaction survey with records of the interactions of individual customers in the CRM (see below). It is also useful periodically to conduct longer, in-depth web-based surveys of RR&C customers.

Technology

The OP&A study team is aware that CO is implementing upgrades to key technologies, most notably Siebel, Avaya, and Outlook. Of particular note are the improved speed and reliability that Siebel 8.1 already seems to be providing, and the potential for an upgraded search functionality. It is not clear at this point what additional functions and capabilities of the upgrades will be introduced. As decisions are made, it is important that management pay attention to what would best serve customers and staff of RR&C and support quality assurance.

It seems to the study team that ITS and, to a lesser degree, CTO are inadequately supportive of customer service and quality assurance. Certainly, the study had difficulty reaching people in ITS and CTO. The study cannot say if its perception is accurate, as this issue was beyond the scope of the study. Nevertheless, it wonders if the key parties, including CTO and ITS, that interact directly with customers or support quality customer service are functioning effectively as a team.

If CO were to choose to make RR&C an exemplary contact center, it will want to explore the type of sophisticated CRM system employed at the Trademark Assistance Center. Such a system may, however, be more than CO wants to invest. The study team thinks that once CO determines what level of customer service it wants to achieve, it will need to develop a technology plan that supports that decision. In addition, there are more basic non-technology improvements to be made before the full benefits of significant technology upgrades can be realized. The study team thus believes that technology decisions are best left until the non-technology improvements are in place, their impacts can be determined, and a plan is in place. That said, there is no reason not to pursue functions, such as a faster

and easier search, where they are available through existing technology or planned upgrades and are relatively easy to activate.

Office Environment

RR&C's facilities and equipment could use upgrading in terms of quantity and functionality, especially the lockers, copiers, and printers. The main office could offer more comfortable and inviting seating areas.

Recommendations

Senior CO Management

- Develop a CO-wide vision and guidance for superior customer service that make leadership's commitment and expectations clear, define a standard of excellence, and establish a culture of accountability for results.

- Define the roles of the different divisions and sections of CO in responding to customers' requests for service, and ensure they have the training and resources to carry out those roles.

- Provide guidance on quality standards for customer service that CO offices should follow in developing their own performance standards and expectations, so that customers receive the same quality of service no matter where they go in CO. Customer service guidance should address at least: timely access to a live agent; accurate and complete responses to queries; first-call/email resolution where possible and, if a service request is transferred, notification of the customer to whom the request is being sent; monitoring of transfers and responses to make sure they are completed within a reasonable period of time; and professional, courteous treatment of customers.

- Establish a team approach to the provision of quality customer service that involves all staff who interact with customers or support the offices that do so—contact centers, legal offices, technology and IT support offices, RRP, and senior management.

- Implement a specialized response system for dealing with customer inquiries and service requests based on their focus: eCO and other technology-related issues to CTO; status update questions to RAC; examination-related questions to the RRP divisions; records-related questions to RR&C; and general information and problem resolution questions to PIO.

- Define and implement a technology plan that supports implementation of exemplary customer service and quality assurance.

- Adopt a customer-centric focus built around a comprehensive CRM that encompasses the records in the current Siebel CRM, but adds a CRM capacity for tracking and maintaining records on all customer interactions with CO. At a minimum, the system should maintain a record of all customer contacts with every CO Division/Office/Section; track customer interactions that require follow-up,

identifying when, how, and by whom follow-up was to have occurred and what happened; initiate customer satisfaction surveys online or via IVR after each transaction; and produce regular reports of the state of customer service throughout CO, including levels of satisfaction, the number of open service requests by CO division, and statistics on the flow of work by division.

I&RD

- Develop a plan for implementing the CO-wide vision for superior customer service with respect to PIO and RR&C, and facilitate improved interaction with other offices.
- Ensure that RR&C is managed to optimize customer service and assure quality.
- Establish and implement a robust quality assurance system within I&RD.
- Implement a reporting system for customer service that supports quality assurance.

RR&C

Improving Customer Service

- Upgrade the Reading Room to better accommodate visiting customers.
    - Upgrade the computers, microfilm machines, and copying equipment for customer use, assuring that customers always have access to working equipment.
    - Provide working lockers for customers.
- Implement customer service-related upgrades to Siebel, such as an improved search function.
- Review the RR&C fee structure to determine if the level of fees is appropriate relative to the duration and complexity of the service provided and if the fee structure can be simplified.

Quality Assurance

- Establish and implement a robust quality assurance system.
    - Define clear standards and expectations for the elements of superior customer service and professional behavior, to include:

- Accurate and complete information, the latter defined as anticipating and providing information that will be of value to the customer in making decisions and eliminate the need for further contact on the same matter.

- Timely response to requests for service, including first-call/email resolution.

- Interactions with customers that include: a greeting that opens with a friendly salutation (such as good morning), the name of the office and agent's name, and an offer to assist the customer; a request for a name, telephone number, and/or email address in case the call gets disconnected; referrals to the CO website and information on its use; and a closing that leaves the customer feeling that the RR&C specialist was genuinely pleased to have been of help and that the customer was important to both the staff member and CO.

- Establish baseline metrics for each element of a customer interaction, based on customer feedback (see below), productivity data, and internal assessments of customer service, and develop a performance measurement plan.

- Implement a formal training program that addresses new hire, refresher, and professional development training, supported by a training manual and scheduled time for staff participation.

- Supervise staff on a regular basis.

    - Conduct periodic formal and informal monitoring, feedback, and follow-up coaching and training, linked to the annual performance evaluation process.

    - Conduct periodic mystery shopping to ensure superior customer service.

- Implement a system for collecting customer feedback to track satisfaction.

    - Survey customers, either via IVR or online, asking a small number of questions that should include ratings for overall satisfaction and the accuracy and reliability of the information and services received.

    - Offer the survey following every customer interaction.

        - Periodically supplement the ongoing survey with longer, in-depth studies of customer satisfaction.
        - Implement a CRM system with a customer contact monitoring system.
    - Ensure that an effective performance evaluation process is in place that:
        - Is based on clear, measurable performance standards and expectations for the information specialist and technical assistance positions.
        - Offers a transparent rating system.
        - Delivers an explanation to staff of how their ratings were determined, guidance on what they need to do to achieve higher ratings, and a plan of action for improving performance.
        - Has a transparent incentives program that is clearly tied to performance.
    - Ensure that time is made available to implement and participate in quality assurance.

Background

About the Records Research & Certification Section

RR&C searches and provides records-related reports for customers, and maintains the card catalogue of CO registration records, including correspondence. It provides copies, including certified ones, of copyrighted materials both registered and in process, documents submitted for recordation, and correspondence. In addition, RR&C arranges for the retrieval and inspection of copyrighted materials. RR&C maintains a Reading Room where the public can conduct its own searches of the CO records catalog. Staff members are available to assist with the searches and other records-related needs.

The most frequent service requests are searches of copyright records, copies of registered works, certification of documents, and retrieval of deposits copies. People who call in requesting searches are transferred to the CO Reading Room (x76850), and those requesting copies of copyrighted works go through the Section's main office line (x76787). During operating hours, some calls are placed on hold and answered in the order received if agents are busy with other customers. There is no telephone queue.

RR&C is open to the public Monday-Friday, 8:30 am-5:00 pm (EST). CO staff are available to help customers during those times. RR&C's main telephone lines provide recorded information 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and information can also be found on the CO website. The Section also receives service requests by fax.

Fees for Services

RR&C charges a fee for many of its services. Regular searches, certifications, and retrievals of non-electronic CO materials are provided at a cost of $165 per hour, with a two-hour minimum. There is also a non-refundable fee of $115 to estimate the cost of a search; it is applied to the search fee if the customer requests a search. Written estimates are to be provided within 10 business days. Copies of CO records cost $.50 to $100 depending on the medium of the deposit copy (paper, slide, audio/videocassette, and other). In the case of audio/videocassettes, CO charges additional fees of $20 and $25, respectively, beyond the first 30 minutes of the material.

The fee for expedited searches is $445 per hour; the fee for expedited certification and copying services is $265 per hour. The turnaround time for expedited services is handled on a case-by-case basis depending on the size of the request and the current workload.

Customer Contacts with the Records Research, & Certification Section

In fiscal year 2009, RR&C answered 19,161 phone calls, had 8,516[4] walk-in visits, sent out 4,900 letters, responded to 3,572 email inquiries, and copied 2,081 deposits. The Section also received and completed 1,411 requests for regular and expedited photocopies, retrievals, and certifications. As of the end of July in fiscal year 2010, RR&C had answered 13,750 phone calls, sent out 2,250 letters, responded to 1,880 email inquiries, had 667 main office and 4,044 walk-in visits,[5] copied 1,233 deposits, and received 134 search estimate requests. The Section also received and completed 459 regular and 292 expedited requests for photocopies, retrievals, and certifications.

Structure and Staffing of the Records Research, & Certification Section

RR&C has a staff of 19, most of whom worked elsewhere in CO before joining the Section. A GS 13 Section Head manages the office, reporting to the Chief of I&RD. A GS 12 supervisor who reports to the Section Head manages daily contact with the public and oversees the Senior Information Specialists (a second Supervisor position is unfilled). There are three GS 7/9/11 Senior Information Specialists, five GS 8 Technicians, two GS 4/5 Administrative Specialists (creating a standalone GS 6 position is under consideration), one GS 1 Work Study person, and five GS 11/12 Metadata Specialists. As needed, the Section Head and Supervisor perform the tasks of the specialists. The Information Specialists maintain the Reading Room, answer questions from the public, and conduct searches. The Technicians assist the public with the card catalogs, handle expedited requests, write search reports, provide prices for copies, and carry out other tasks. The Administrative Specialists "do everything"—take care of customer contacts by phone, walk-ins, and emails regarding registration, searches, copies, and catalog information, and more. The Work Study staff member assists with certificates and filings. RR&C hired the Metadata Specialists recently to work on the Copyright Records Digitization Project.

Interactions with Other Offices

RR&C interacts frequently with three offices:

- **PIO.** Most of the interaction involves transfers of calls between the two offices. As noted, RR&C does not routinely transfer calls that fall under PIO's responsibility because, according to interviewees, they don't like having to transfer a customer and because, in the case of PIO, the customer will go into a telephone queue. PIO is

[4] Walk-ins at RR&C's main office and the Reading Room.
[5] I&RD did not break out main office and Reading Room visits before fiscal year 2010.

concerned, however, that RR&C staff do not have the same training that PIO staff have and may not always give out correct information.

- **CO legal offices.** According to RR&C, it obtains and organizes materials that customers request for court cases. It often needs to consult with OGC on the request, for example, to get an interpretation of language. A particular challenge RR&C faces in its records research and certification for court cases is coming up with certifiable images of the deposits and electronic applications entered into Siebel, because, according to an interviewee, "there is nothing on those items we can use to verify that it came from CO … if it's just a copy, with no watermark, etc., there is nothing on the item that CO can verify." A further issue RR&C interviewees cited is that they sometimes cannot get hold of desired materials because RMS cannot locate them.

  When the OP&A study team asked legal staff if RR&C responds to requests for service in a timely manner, interviewees said "absolutely." They also talked about having "a very good relationship" with most RR&C staff. At the same time, they highlighted areas where RR&C could do a better job.

  - One concern was that RR&C is not necessarily as careful as it needs to be in returning materials that have been retrieved—"things go missing, and we do not know where they are." There was a sense that RR&C was too complacent about the missing materials.

  - On occasion, OGC has had problems with deposits for litigation: "one party gets it [the deposit], and another party comes in and requests to look at the deposit, only to discover that two versions have been given out, two certified, different copies are given out," which causes "real problems." In addition—and more of a CO-wide issue—some information needed for litigation "cannot be provided because it never makes it into Siebel. The apparent reason, according to one interviewee, is that it is difficult to import some documents, for example, PDFs, into Siebel.

  - The procedure for handling different materials relating to a copyright is disjointed so that it is difficult to reconstitute a deposit.

  - A related issue had to do with the challenge of finding correspondence entered into Siebel. At one point CO adopted new guidelines proposed by OGC to allow correspondence in Siebel to be identified more easily, and things worked better for awhile. However, at some point it became evident that RRP was putting correspondence into places without OGC knowing the

correspondence was in the system or where to look for it. Similarly, it is important to OGC that materials are properly linked so that it can retrieve the records when a claimant appeals a denial of a registration certificate. One interviewee noted that there is one service record (SR) number for the original application and one SR number for the appeal, and these SR numbers are not necessarily linked, so that potentially very relevant correspondence cannot be found. Interviewees stressed that there needs to be standardized procedures so that everyone knows what to do. OGC was not sure how these situations arose but concluded that better quality control is needed.

An additional point made by interviewees is that contact information on copyrights is not always up-to-date, something that customers regularly complain about. The reason is that updating contact information is done voluntarily, and the $100 amendment fee serves as a significant disincentive. Interviewees pointed out that CO cannot claim to be the office of public record if it does not offer up-to-date information.

- **RRP.** RR&C may ask RRP to review materials for it, a process that is not always easy or quick. Again, the net effect is that RR&C cannot always respond to requests for information in a timely manner. In addition, some RRP divisions do not want to take phone calls from RR&C, as it disrupts the workflow.

RR&C's Operating Environment

Before looking at what customers and staff said about the quality of customer service at RR&C and what the OP&A study team found, it is important to be aware of two elements of the environment in which RR&C operates—the Siebel system and the CO website. These two elements, over which RR&C has little control, impose constraints on how it functions and have affected its workload, and to some degree negatively impacted the timeliness of its responses to customers. In addition, retrieval of deposits and other documents is sometimes impeded by the absence of a good tracking system within CO and sometimes by the inability of other offices to locate the desired material.

Siebel

In 2008 CO implemented a CRM application, Siebel. Implementation proved challenging, and one outcome was a very significant backlog in RRP's review of copyright registration claims, to the extent that it took two years or more for customers to receive their certificates or letters denying their claims. During that period, it was very difficult for customers to ascertain the status of their applications on their own. That had a spillover effect of increasing the number of status update requests RR&C receives—and the number

of frustrated or angry customers. Although RR&C is supposed to refer status update requests to PIO, staff sometimes choose to handle them internally. The process of searching for claims in Siebel, as well as other tasks requiring use of Siebel, are generally described by CO staff as time-consuming, cumbersome, and unreliable because of Siebel's slow interfaces, number of screens to be navigated, and considerable amount of time when the system is down. In addition, as implemented by CO, Siebel only offers two search fields. If customers don't have the requisite information for those fields, or if something was initially entered incorrectly into Siebel, the search can be very challenging and lengthy. The problems with Siebel are exacerbated by what interviewees described as inadequate staff training when Siebel was introduced. The result is that looking up the status of claims and other work on Siebel is excessively time-consuming and stressful for both staff and customers.

The recent upgrade to Siebel 8.1 has apparently made the system faster and more reliable. In addition, as an earlier study showed, there has been a steady increase in online registrations, whose status the copyright registrant can check online. These factors may speed up work involving Siebel.

CO Website

The CO website, although not part of this study, arose frequently enough in both customer and staff interviews, and clearly has had a negative impact on the volume and nature of calls RR&C receives, to bear mention here. Although some customers were complimentary of the website, finding it easy and informative, a more common theme to emerge from customer and staff interviews—one that matched the experience of the OP&A study team—is that the website is difficult to use. Specific complaints included:

- The website is hard to navigate to get to needed information. RR&C staff reported receiving calls from customers who said they could not find what they were looking for.

- The language on the website is hard to understand because it is geared toward people with specialized knowledge about copyrights and uses CO jargon. A RR&C interviewee noted that

  > *The circulars on the website are not user-friendly. It is loaded with legal language. If you can't understand it, then you need a place to go to get answers. The law is critical, but you have to be able to understand it so the average citizen can fill out the claim correctly.*

- The search function on the website can be a challenge if the searcher doesn't know CO terminology. If the customer isn't aware if the right term to search on, for example, "deposit copy," the search will fail.

- The website has contradictory information, such as on CO fees.[6]

[6] For example, at one place in Circular 4, "Copyright Office Fees," the hourly search fee is $165, whereas at another place it is $165 per hour with a two-hour minimum, making the minimum fee $330. The "Frequently Asked Questions" site states that "ninety percent of Form CO filers should receive a certificate within eight months of submission" and 90% of paper form filers "within eighteen months of submission." Information at http://www.copyright.gov/register/index.html states that "Ninety percent of Form CO filers should receive a certificate within eight months of submission" and "Ninety percent of paper filers should receive a certificate within eighteen months of submission."

Findings: The Quality of Customer Service

Against that backdrop, this section of the report looks at the quality of RR&C customer service. It begins with the feedback provided by customers in the OP&A study team interviews and survey. It then describes what RR&C staff thought about their customer service, and ends with a summary of what the OP&A study team came away with from its observations in the RR&C main office and Reading Room, review of telephone calls and emails, and mystery shopping calls.

What Customers Said

Interviewees

Nearly all interviewed customers expressed a high level of satisfaction with RR&C overall. When asked about RR&C staff specifically, interviewees described them as "wonderful," "absolutely fantastic," and "as really seem[ing] to enjoy what they do," especially in the case of the front desk staff in the main office. Customers also noted the helpfulness of RR&C staff. One customer, for example, was pleased with the hands-on/hands-off approach a specialist used in one interaction—after demonstrating something, the specialist said to the customer, "Now, you try." Another customer was impressed that, as she filled out a form, the specialist remained attentive the entire time, even though the customer suggested the specialist probably had other work to do.

There were a few criticisms along with the predominantly positive feedback from interviewed customers.

- **Service fees.** One of the main complaints of RR&C customers was the high cost of RR&C's services, particularly when compared to the amount of time it took to get the requested material or to the amount of time the service actually took. One customer raised an equity issue. If customers do not live in the Washington, DC area, they are at a disadvantage: they have to pay the fees because they can't visit the Reading Room and do the work themselves—"If I lived in DC, I could walk into the office, talk to someone, have what I need in five minutes, and walk out the door. From [where I live], it's like pulling teeth, and I don't want to call a lawyer there to do it." This customer also objected to the two-hour minimum fee for searches, noting "I'd prefer to spend [the money for] one hour for something that should only take ten minutes than pay for a full two hours. There's a discrepancy there."

- **Slow services.** Some customers were disappointed with how long RR&C took to process their search and copy requests, particularly given what they had to pay. The

delays were particularly frustrating in the case of expedited services. However, when asked how long it took to complete the work, most customers simply stated, "Oh, it took a *long* time." Another customer noted a time when she needed to inspect deposit copies for a client. Although she requested expedited service to retrieve the copies, it took somewhere between one and two months to get them. Some customers assumed the turnaround time was not the fault of the specialists, but of policy outside the staff's control. For example, in reference to the target turnaround times, one person stated,

> *Well, given what I have to get, I understand that for certified copies it takes ten to fifteen business days on a rush. However, I don't know the background for why there is a policy that suggests that non-rush items will take longer.*

- **Lack of empathy.** Customers sometimes noted a difference in attentiveness and tone across the specialists. One person said, "Some are friendly. Some are not" and "Sometimes, they seem like they do not really want to help you." This same customer noted that when she asked for help with a printer that had run out of toner, the staff member responded that it was the customer's responsibility to ensure the printer was working properly.

- **Other issues.**

    - Several customers voiced concern about the wait for copiers in the Reading Room, which in any event were outdated models that often were not working. A few customers mentioned that typically only one copier was operational, causing long lines and delays that sometimes necessitated excessive hours in the Reading Room.

    - RR&C staff did not always have expected knowledge. For example, RR&C staff were not able to help them find something on the CO website.

Survey Responses

In addition to interviews with customers, the OP&A study team, as noted, conducted an online survey of customers. As of this writing, 83 customers had accessed the URL, and 68 completed the survey, for a completion rate of 82 percent.[7] Because of the low number of responses to date, the findings from the survey cannot be considered substantively

[7] RR&C staff were asked to notify customers of the survey and to request their email addresses to which a link to the survey URL could be sent. The study team does not know how many customers were actually informed of the URL, but was told that all staff were not routinely soliciting customers' participation and contact information. Thus, the study team cannot estimate the percentage of customers who chose not to participate in the survey.

significant. Nevertheless, they can be considered suggestive, especially as they are consistent with the general customer satisfaction research literature and the points that emerged from the interviews and the study team's observations.

Who responded. Of the survey respondents, 19 reported having done business with RR&C, and six reported transactions with both PIO and RR&C. (Another 20 survey respondents who said they did not do business with either Section were excluded from analysis.[8]) Respondents who transacted business with both divisions were asked to evaluate their experience with either PIO or RR&C, and 21 did so for the latter.

PIO had more first-time customer interactions than RR&C, and a larger percentage of PIO customers were served by telephone. Conversely, a larger percentage of RR&C customers walked into the Section than was the case with PIO (Tables 1 and 2).

Table 1
Self-Reported Frequency of Customer Contact with PIO and RR&C Annually
(percent)

Frequency	PIO	RR&C	PIO & RR&C Combined
First time	55	43	50
1 to 5 times per year	34	48	40
More than 5 times per year	10	10	10

Note: Percentages may not total to 100% due to rounding.

Both internet searches and the CO website played a substantial role in directing customers to PIO and RR&C. Forty percent of RR&C customers came to RR&C via the CO website, and 30 percent via web searches (Table 3).

PIO and RR&C customers were different in regards to how they described themselves. PIO customers were most likely to say they were creators of material (69%), while larger percentages of RR&C customers said they were legal professionals or self-described "Other" (Table 4).

[8] It may be that a substantial number of customers were not aware of the name of the Section with which they were transacting business, or forgot it before doing the survey.

Table 2
Method of Customer Contact with PIO and RR&C
(percent)

Contact Method	PIO	RR&C	PIO & RR&C Combined
Telephone	45	38	42
Email	38	33	36
Walk-in	10	24	16
Postal mail	3	0	2
Fax	0	5	2
Other	3	0	2

Table 3
Where Customers Got Information About Contacting PIO and RR&C
(percent)

Source of Contact Information	PIO	RR&C	PIO & RR&C Combined
CO website	55	40	49
Web search	31	30	31
Other	31	20	26
Local library	0	5	2

Note: Respondents could select more than one response.

Table 4
Self-Description of Customers, PIO and RR&C
(percent)

Self-Description	PIO	RR&C	PIO & RR&C Combined
Creator	69	50	61
Legal professional	7	25	14
Authorized agent	14	0	8
Publishing professional	3	0	2
Potential user of copyrighted work	0	5	2
Other	7	20	12

The reasons customers gave for contacting PIO and RR&C were broadly distributed, but very few customers contacted either office to correct errors in CO communications (Table 5).

Table 5
Reasons for Customer Contact with PIO and RR&C
(percent)

Reasons	PIO	RR&C
Because I could not find information on the Copyright Office Website	14	n.a.
I could not understand the language and information on the Copyright Office website	14	n.a.
To follow up on communication from the Copyright Office	9	10
To correct error in a Copyright Office communication	3	5
To register a claim to copyright for a new work	12	n.a.
To obtain information on how to register a copyright	19	n.a.
To check on status of my registration claim	25	n.a.
To obtain information on copyright fees	6	n.a.
To check registration status of someone else's copyright	3	n.a.
To obtain a certified copy of my copyright registration	n.a.	21
To conduct a search of Copyright registrations	n.a.	26
To pay for a service provided by RR&C	n.a.	10
To obtain information on conducting a registration search	n.a.	16
To obtain information on getting a certified copy of my registration certification	n.a.	21
Other	28	21

Note: Respondents could select more than one response.
n.a. Not asked for that office.

How they rated their contacts with RR&C. On a five-point scale (Delighted, Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Dissatisfied, and Very Dissatisfied), 40% of respondents said they were Delighted with their most recent contact with RR&C (Table 6). Many world-class contact centers set a target of more than 90 percent of customers marking the top rating. The percentage marking the top two ratings for RR&C was 60%. Almost a third said they were Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied. In response to another question whether RR&C customers thought they got good value considering the fees charged, somewhat under two thirds said it provided them with excellent value: 61% Excellent; 17% Good; 17% Fair; and 6% Poor.

Table 6
How Customers Felt Overall About Their Most Recent Contact with PIO and RR&C
(percent)

Satisfaction Ratings	PIO	RR&C	PIO & RR&C Combined
Delighted	46	40	44
Very satisfied	21	20	21
Satisfied	14	10	12
Dissatisfied	7	15	10
Very dissatisfied	11	15	12

Respondents gave more favorable ratings when it came to some specific aspects of their contact with RR&C than they did for their overall satisfaction (Table 7). (The service aspects presented in Table 7 come from the general literature on customer satisfaction.) For example, a very high percentage of respondents chose the highest ratings on the two timeliness questions; this was also the case for being treated with courtesy and respect. In the case of the other empathy questions, the percentage was in the high 70s. The two aspects of customer contact with RR&C that received the lowest percentage of the top ratings were:

- Telephone tree message very easy to understand and navigate (40%).
- Delighted about accuracy and reliability of information (44%).

Further analysis was carried out using cross-tabulations of respondent ratings for the different aspects of the contacts listed in Table 7 with the customers' ratings for overall satisfaction. The following aspects are significantly correlated with customers' overall

Table 7
How Customers Felt About Different Aspects of
Their Most Recent Contact with PIO and RR&C
(percent of customers selecting the most favorable rating option)

Interaction Aspect	PIO	RR&C	PIO & RR&C
Waited a reasonable time to talk with a representative	80	100	88
Waited a reasonable time before a representative was able to help	89	94	91
Telephone tree message very easy to understand and navigate	58	40	53
Delighted with cleanliness, comfort, and layout of physical facilities	100	75	86
Completely treated with respect and courtesy	88	95	91
Communication was easy to understand and useful	74	79	76
Completely responsive in answering questions	82	84	83
Cared about customer as an individual	71	79	74
Completely sensitive to customer's needs	74	79	76
Treated questions as very important	73	74	73
Delighted about accuracy and reliability of information	52	44	49
Questions handled in a professional manner	82	79	80
Answers never conflicted with earlier answers from CO	44	n.a.	n.a.

n.a. Not asked for that office.

satisfaction ratings and can be considered a statistically significant[9] predictor of customer satisfaction for this sample of surveyed RR&C customers:

- Communication was easy to understand and useful.
- Responsiveness in answering questions.
- Cared about customer as an individual.
- Sensitive to customer's needs.
- Treated questions as important.

Even though the number of responses was small, the study team used logistic regression[10] to explore the relationships further. The rating of one aspect of customer service emerged as the most important predictor of the level at which customers in this sample rated their satisfaction: "How did you feel about the accuracy and reliability of the information you received?" That is, although other aspects are also significantly correlated with overall satisfaction, the accuracy and reliability aspects are the most important statistically.

What RR&C Staff Said

When asked how well RR&C does in satisfying its customers, staff were overwhelmingly of the opinion that more than 90% were satisfied. One person noted that staff use pattern paragraphs in responding to customer emails to ensure accurate and consistent information. Another explained that staff let telephone or walk-in customers know what information RR&C needs in order to provide services.

Staff also identified some challenges they faced in delivering quality customer services.

The Effects of the CO Re-engineering

Many staff expressed dissatisfaction with the results of the CO re-engineering, particularly two aspects—the merger between RR&C and the CO Card Catalog and Reading Room, and the Siebel system (the latter was discussed above). With respect to the merger, the main sore point was the failure to clarify RR&C's resulting responsibilities and duties. Many interviewees thought the Section Head and Supervisor bore the brunt of the situation, describing them as overburdened and overworked because they now had to manage the equivalent of two offices. A team-oriented restructuring of the staff that was to have

[9] Based on the chi square statistic.
[10] Dichotomized satisfaction (Delighted and all other categories) was regressed on the different aspects of customer service in Table 7.

lightened the workload of the managers so that they could spend more time on supervision never occurred, according to some interviewees.

Staff also thought the merger negatively affected customers. Issues ranged from the public not being adequately informed of the Section's name change from "Certs & Docs" to "Records Research, and Certification," to the loss of RR&C staff who chose to retire or left for other reasons, creating a less manageable workload and eroding RR&C's knowledge base.

Staffing Issues

Interviewees mentioned the need for additional staff, particularly to help process search requests faster. Some said that when people retire, "we don't replace them." One person noted that "An additional Team Leader and/or technician would help increase the work flow." There was concern about the administrative position at the front desk, which seemed to be treated as an entry-level clerk position without much potential for advancement. However, the front desk staff are often the "front line" of RR&C. There was concern that the desk staff position is graded at the wrong level and therefore not designed with retention in mind. The current position descriptions do not adequately reflect the actual and complexity of the work that the front desk staff perform and that the positions should be re-graded to a higher level.

What the OP&A Study Team Found

As noted, the OP&A study team reviewed all modes of interaction with customers and the statistical data compiled for each mode. This section of the report presents the main points that emerged.

Telephone Calls

The OP&A study team got the sense that relationships between repeat customers and the front desk staff in the main office, whom customers knew well, were cordial. At times, callers began their telephone conversations by asking if they were speaking with a specific specialist, and when the specialist was known to a caller, the two chatted before getting down to business. The study team observed that the specialists were extremely polite and friendly in their interactions with customers, with very few exceptions. It also noted that the specialists returned two calls to customers in a timely manner and provided needed information.

In terms of information provided, the study team found instances of what it considered to be incomplete answers. For instance, staff did not always refer customers to places on the

CO website where they could find information, such as on current fees or how to conduct their own online records searches. The study team also found inconsistencies in how RR&C staff demonstrated correct use of the online card catalog search functions. Upon occasion, as noted, they differed in the extent to which they helped customers having trouble with online searches. A case in point was a caller who could not get the system to recognize a document number. The specialist did not go online to try to help the customer or confirm the document number. In ending the call, the specialist suggested, "Maybe play around with it [entering the caller's number into the search engine], because if I do it, it will be a search." The call concluded with an angry-sounding caller saying, "I'll see what I can do."

As noted, the OP&A study team did some mystery shopping at RR&C. According to the shoppers, the specialists provided consistent information on the methods used to find registration records. Typically, they told the mystery shoppers who inquired about records searches that they could be done online for free for works published after 1978. For works published before 1978, the mystery shoppers could request searches by RR&C at a cost of $165/hour, with a two-hour minimum per search. The option of visiting the Reading Room was also presented consistently.

There was less consistency when it came to the amount of information that specialists in the Reading Room and at the main office front desks provided the mystery shoppers who were looking for assistance in finding particular authors or works in the system. The specialists at the front office desk were noticeably more explicit in explaining the expected costs of a RR&C search of the registration records, exactly where to go on the website for specific information, how to put the search terms into the online search field, and how many results to expect. Some even followed up on the telephone contact with an email within 24 hours, providing the fees associated with the search request and contact information for a specific specialist. Some specialists also provided the copycerts@loc.gov email to the mystery shopper or solicited the shopper's email address. In contrast, staff in the Reading Room provided only basic information about how to locate the webpage for the search, select accurate search criteria, and what the fees were for CO record searches.

Emails

The emails received by RR&C mostly asked for search request estimates. RR&C staff used standardized text/pattern paragraphs to answer customers' questions. Most emails ended with a signature and the specialist's contact information. Staff answered almost all emails within five days of receipt, and usually within two days. Some of the emails appeared to have been personalized for specific customers.

Walk-ins

The OP&A team study team thought the level of friendliness, courtesy, and professionalism of the specialists was satisfactory and consistent across the board. Specialists quite frequently took the initiative to help customers fully understand what steps they needed to take during and after their visits.

On the other hand, the OP&A study team did not find RR&C's facilities to be adequately customer-oriented. For example, the main office reception area where walk-ins conduct their business was sparsely furnished and not inviting. All but one locker in the Reading Room were broken.

Findings: Quality Assurance at RR&C

The study team looked at how RR&C carries out quality assurance, focusing on four aspects: training; supervision, including performance monitoring and feedback; performance evaluation; and job satisfaction, the latter aspect because it is generally held that dissatisfaction with the job often results in lower quality of service.

Training

According to the findings on best practices, contact centers place a premium on training over the career of staff. RR&C interviewees expressed that new hires received adequate training and monitoring in which they "shadowed" experienced staff or management, and were provided with work manuals. However, the OP&A study team never received a training or work manual. One interviewee suggested that a manual would not help because of the specialized nature of each request. Many RR&C hires had had previous experience in other CO divisions, and interviewees commented that this meant they needed less training. There was no mention of refresher or other training beyond that provided in regular biweekly staff meetings.

Supervision

The literature on best practices in contact centers and what the study team observed at the two exemplary contact centers make clear that monitoring of staff and feedback are critical to quality assurance and a primary tool of supervision. Based on the interviews with staff and the study team's observation of office operations, it did not find evidence that RR&C undertakes regular performance monitoring, although it has the management to support a strong supervision and monitoring program. For example, current telephone equipment does not readily support automated remote call recording or unobtrusive listening in by the Section Head or Supervisor. Staff also noted that the managers are overburdened with increased responsibilities and a backlogged workload and have little time for supervision.

Performance Evaluation

The Section Head and the Supervisor carry out performance reviews of RR&C staff. Employees noted that they have individual development plans, which they draft along with their supervisors. The plans specify training to support employees in achieving the goals in their plans. The supervisors also monitor progress to see if employees are developing as they would like. Interviewees expressed that they get "sufficient" feedback. One explained, "Our Section Head and our Assistant Section Head do inform us about our job

performances." Another noted, "I feel like the feedback from my Supervisors is good, and from our Division Chief and Assistant Division Chief."

Job Satisfaction

Most world-class call centers recognize that employee satisfaction is a primary predictor of productivity and efficiency, and the OP&A study team asked staff what they liked best and least about their jobs and what would improve working conditions. With regards to the best aspects of their job, some staff members noted the diversity of the searches that are requested and the increase in their own personal knowledge as a result of searches. Other staff cited their interactions with customers, particularly when they meet and go beyond the customer's expectations. Said one person, "I feel that I am providing a service that is really important to the public." Staff also commented that the day-to-day challenges brought variety to the job, and that that was important. It should be noted that there is very little turnover among RR&C staff.

The least liked aspects of the job were difficult customers who do not understand the function of CO or who seem "out of touch with reality." Staff also mentioned lingering disappointment that they were not consulted during the re-engineering. Some thought they were feeling the brunt of "a gap in communication between CO office Heads and Division supervisors." Complaints about Siebel and the need for more staff also came up.

Findings: Best Practices in Contact Centers

Following is a summary of the main points about best practices for contact centers that came out of the literature review and the interviews with two US Patent and Trademark Office contact centers and with Convergys. Additional information is provided in Appendix B.

Leadership

- A contact center is only as good as its leadership.
- A strong, overt commitment to customer service and first-call resolution (FCR) is clearly in evidence.
- Leadership is a behavioral model for employees.
- The future of the contact center is assessed regularly.
- There are regular reviews of ongoing initiatives and exploration of new ways to improve the quality of service.
- Employees are supported and given opportunities to develop.

Culture and values

- Customers are viewed as whole people rather than as sets of discrete questions.
- Resolving customer problems/issues on first contact (FCR) is strongly emphasized.
- The center is mission-focused, and the values and culture are consistent with the mission.
- Accountability is emphasized and valued.
- Employee growth is encouraged.

Goals

- Attention is paid to efficiency in operating the contact center and performing other core tasks (cost-effectiveness).
- Customer satisfaction means making things easy for customers, being available when customers need service, and providing staff with ready access to all information necessary to answer customers' questions.
- Employee satisfaction is critical—happy workers are more productive and more likely to exhibit professional behavior.

Technology

- Centers have a robust CRM system in place and use it in many ways.
- Centers ensure they have a strong, comprehensive, and up-to-date knowledge base (e.g., scripts and pattern responses).
- Centers adopt appropriate technologies and implement timely updates.

Process

- The focus is on making customer service easy for customers and on meeting their principal needs—assuring the accuracy and reliability of the information provided.
- Ideal service-level objectives are set, such as operating metrics for quality assurance.
- Innovation and improvement are pursued on an ongoing basis.
- Skill-based routing is employed to send specific types of calls to the employees who have the appropriate general or specialized knowledge (referred to as multi-tiered contact centers).
- Interactive voice response systems (IVR), the web, and other self-service options are used as much as possible to eliminate calls that do not need to go to agents.
- The reasons for customer contacts are assessed to determine if process modifications can reduce the number of contacts.
- Teleworking is used to provide flexibility in scheduling of staff to meet customer loads.

- All customer contacts are recorded.

- Customers are surveyed via IVR, web, or other means to get their assessments of center performance.

People

- The main criteria in hiring staff are good customer service attitude and skills and a belief in the value the contact center's work.

- Clear behavioral expectations of staff are defined, with specific metrics for the center as a whole and employees, including attendance and behavior (especially with teleworking).

- Staff and center performance are evaluated regularly, with monitoring and performance assessments used as primary tools for quality control.

- Continual professional growth is supported—employees who do not meet behavioral expectations are coached, and all employees get regular training on current service procedures and up-to-date knowledge and skills.

- Performance descriptions demonstrate managers value the employees.

- Employees are encouraged to come up with innovative process improvements and are rewarded for them.

- Outstanding employee performance is rewarded in meaningful monetary and non-monetary ways.

Appendix A. RR&C Customer Service Rating Instrument

Interaction Rating Instrument

Date:_____ Communication Reviewed: _____ Start Time:_____ End Time:_____

ID: | **Topic:**

Responsiveness
+1 0 -1
☐ ☐ ☐

Assurance
+1 0 -1
☐ ☐ ☐

Tangibles
+1 0 -1
☐ ☐ ☐

Empathy
+1 0 -1
☐ ☐ ☐

Reliability
+1 0 -1
☐ ☐ ☐

Timeliness
+1 0 -1
☐ ☐ ☐

Overall Rating
+1 0 -1
☐ ☐ ☐

Caller tenor

Guidelines on Expected Behavior by RATER Element

Responsiveness

-1 → CO response did NOT address the question(s) being asked OR
CO response did NOT acknowledge/respond in a timely manner come

0 → CO response addressed the question(s) being asked

+1 → CO response addressed the question(s) being asked and anticipated follow-ups

I. Prompt service to customers
II. Readiness to respond to customers' requests
III. Willingness to help customers

Notes:

- Telephone contacts are the first priority (2-hour time slot given to each agent for responding to email inquiries)
- Telephone contacts-speed to answer time not to exceed 30 seconds (0:30)
- Email contacts-no more than five (5) working days to respond to emails

Assurance

-1 → CO response did not sufficiently answer all questions; customer does not have enough information to know what steps to take next; customer follow-up likely

0 → CO response sufficiently answered all questions at correct level of detail for customer to know what steps to take next, if needed

+1 → CO response provides information that leads to a better understanding of copyright law and procedures

I. Agents instill confidence in customers
II. Agents make customers feel safe in their transactions
III. Agents are knowledgeable/have knowledge to answer customer questions

Notes:

- Agents are responsible for the security of submissions (secure deposit copies, fees, and applications in appropriate manner)
- Agents provide detailed replies
- Agents demonstrate initiative, resourcefulness, perseverance, and sound judgment in locating and offering appropriate information

Tangible

-1 → CO response was NOT easy to read; may NOT be understood by customer (too much jargon)

0 → CO response was relatively easy to read and understand

+1 → CO response was very easy to read and understand

I. Visually appealing facilities
II. Agents are neat and have professional appearance/conduct
III. Visually appealing materials associated with the service
IV. Convenient business hours

Notes:

- Agents should be prompt and always maintain professional conduct (no inappropriate socializing)
- Agents should behave professionally and consistently demonstrate courtesy, tact, respect, patience, and empathy toward all customers
- Agents always use complete sentences and agent's name or initials are always listed in written correspondence
- Agents use correct grammar and spelling in all written correspondence; all written correspondence is polite, brief, and concise
- Responses do not indicate legal advice or opinion
- The initial inquiry is sent back with the response (written correspondence); for example, an email response from agent should always contain the initial inquiry email from the contact
- If the question/inquiry from the contact is unclear, the agent seeks more information
- When forwarding the service request (via telephone or email) to another Section/staff member, the agent notifies the customer of the forward and to expect a slight delay

Empathy

-1 → CO response was NOT professional

0 → CO response was professional (respectful, courteous, and treated customer as someone important)

+1 → CO response suggested the agent cared about the customer as an individual and empathized with customer needs (customer invited to email agent back if needed)

I. The agent gives the customer individualized and personal attention
II. The agent deals with the customer in a caring fashion
III. The agent attends to the best interest of the customer

Notes:

- The agent consistently demonstrates effective public relations skills (e.g. patience, tact, flexibility, and courtesy)
- The agent provides quality service (helpfulness, desire to provide accurate information)
- The agent answers inquiries in a polite and respectful manner

Reliability

-1 → CO response did NOT provide customer feeling that response was reliable OR Answers were different from those received earlier from the CO

0 → CO response provided customer feeling that response was accurate/dependable

+1 → CO response provided customer feeling that response was accurate and anticipated and answered other questions that might arise

I. The agent delivers services as promised
II. The agent shows dependability in handling the customer's service problems
III. The agent performs the services correctly the first time
IV. The agent provides the services at the promised time
V. The agent keeps customers Informed about when the services will be performed

Notes:

- The agent demonstrates initiative, resourcefulness, perseverance, and sound judgment in locating and offering appropriate information

All responses to customer should be:

- **Professional**
- **Accurate**
- **Courteous**
- **Timely**

Appendix B. Selected Best Practices from the Literature Review, US Patent and Trademark Office Contact Centers, and Convergys

Best Practices in Contact Centers from the Literature

This compilation of key best practices for contact centers comes from the literature review (see the bibliography in Appendix C). Primary sources used in developing this compilation are Anton and Belfiore (2009); Anton and Gustin (2000); Bergevin, Kinder, Siegel, and Simpson (2010); Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry (1990); and Zemke (2003).

Leadership

- Contact centers, like any organization, are only as good as their leadership, and how management views the contact center has a great deal of influence on its success.
- It is important that leadership express a strong, overt commitment to customer service, is committed to improving it, and provides a behavioral model for employees.
- Leadership should support and develop employees. Leadership should also instill and ethos of accountability.

Culture and Values

- World-class companies see customers as whole persons rather than sets of discrete questions.
- Top contact centers today emphasize resolving customer problems/issues on first contact (first call resolution, FCR). FCR is the highest correlated metric to customer satisfaction, and two-plus calls account for 15% of the average annual budget. For every 1% improvement in FCR, there is a 1% improvement in customer satisfaction. Most centers view FCR as the most important metric and make sure that all employees are aware of why it is important. Call centers with high employee satisfaction also have high FCR. The call center industry's average to resolve a customer's inquiry or problem is 1.4 calls.
- Managers above the supervisor level are held accountable for FCR, and employees receive regular feedback on their FCR performance. A critical element in assessing

FCR is the ability to track customers and reasons for contacting the center so as to know when someone calls back about the same matter.

- Frontline agents should feel supported and encouraged. Agents will only be able or willing to change their behavior if they have support and guidance from above in the form of training, coaching, and even revised incentive programs. At the best contact centers, everyone, from senior leadership to the classroom trainers, is dedicated to the agents' success. Contact centers encourage employee growth.

Goals

- Top companies strive for efficiency and cost-effectiveness in operating contact centers and performing core tasks. They set goals for customer and employee satisfaction.

- To support customer satisfaction, companies aim to make interactions easy for customers, to be available when customers need it, and to have ready access to all information necessary to answer customer questions.

- Employee satisfaction is also an important goal because happy workers are more productive and most likely to be professional.

Contact Center Metrics

Customer-focused.

- Overall customer satisfaction: % in top rating

- % calls resolved on first contact as rated by the customer (FCR)

- World-class FCR rating: 80% or higher (only 5% of the call centers benchmarked by the company SQM are above that rating)

- % additional calls made to achieve resolution (10-15% for world-class call centers in most cases)

- % of accuracy audits that pass

- % of calls that result in a complaint

Operational.

- Agent adherence to work schedule
- Service level/number of inbound [and outbound calls made] per agent per [unit of time]
- Average time in queue
- Average abandonment rate (guideline benchmark = 3-8%; best practice = 3-5%; in many situations a consistent abandoned rate of less than 2% likely indicates low staff utilization)
- Average time before abandoning (time in seconds that the customer waits in the queue from the time the call is answered by the system until abandonment, obtained from ACD)
- Talk time (time spent speaking to customers on inbound calls)
- Average talk time
- Average speed of answer (ASA)
- Amount of time to fully resolve query, including call backs, research or internal calls
- Average after call work time (time spent after call to complete the case and update the system)
- Percent of calls transferred
- Time the agent is available (amount of time the agent is waiting for a call, although in practice they should be using that time to catch up on reading, emails, etc.)
    - Should be less than 10% (or less in a very large center)
- Time spent on activities other than responding to customers

Technology

- Top contact centers adopt appropriate technologies and implement timely updates that assist their agents in delivering high-quality customer service.

- Top contact centers have Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems that maintain records of all interactions with customers and that can efficiently and effectively track the performance of the agents individually and the contact center as a whole. Agents have access to customer information at the time of each interaction in order to understand the person's relationship and history with the organization. Contact centers make use of the customer database in the CRM system in many ways to improve customer service and support quality assurance.

- Agents have access to an up-to-date, searchable knowledge base of scripts and pattern responses that allow for a consistent, accurate standard of service.

Some major hardware choices to benchmark:

- Automatic call distributor (ACD).

- Voice response unit (VRU).

- Interactive voice response unit (IVR).

- Computer-telephony integration (CTI).

- Predictive dialing.

- Headsets.

- Reader boards.

- Call type screen pop-up (the agent receives a FCR screen pop-up script guideline for resolving the customer's call).

- Call wrap-up resolution (allows agents to capture call resolution outcomes and provide FCR and call resolution reporting).

- Knowledge management (agent uses an online knowledge management tool as a resource to resolve customer calls).

- Virtual hold (when agents are not available, customers can leave a message on a voice menu and they are called back in sequence in which they called).

- Verification self service (for verification or status update, the customer can either go online to get information or receive an email or IVR call providing real-time verification or status update information).

- Knowledge expert availability (agents can rapidly identify knowledge experts' presence and availability to assist in resolving customer issues in real-time).
- Customer Relationship Mgmt (CRM) (agents have access to all customer information).
- Roaming knowledge experts (knowledge experts can assist customer service representatives or customers for resolving calls via presence-based or wireless phone technology).
- Broadcast messaging (use phone and email broadcast messaging to provide customers with information, verification, and status updates).
- Unified agent desktop (reduces the number of applications and makes it easier for the agent to navigate to the appropriate screens to handle the customer's call)
- Live chat (consider in addition to live calls. Most chat solutions offer some level of collaborative browsing, and agents can quickly and easily escalate a troubled chat to a voice call).
    - Chat is often used by a different audience from voice: 8-10% of chat sessions are initiated by a net new audience that has never engaged with a company before, and the audience tends to be younger—between 25-30 years old. Requires agent with specialized typing and writing skills.

Some major software choices to benchmark:

- Automatic number identification (ANI).
- Dialed number identification service (DNIS).
- Computer-assisted telephone (CAT) survey.
- Automated e-mail software response.
- Skill-based routing.
- Agent-monitoring software.

Process

- The best contact centers continuously monitor the impact of their processes on efficiency and effectiveness. They set ideal service-level objectives and operating

metrics for quality assurance based upon services that customers find user-friendly and meet their principal needs, particularly with respect to accuracy and reliability.

- Through analysis of data collected by CRM systems, centers assess customers' reasons for contacts and determine process modifications that can reduce contacts. For instance, increases in calls for certain information or services may lead to the creation of new fields in the CRM or adoption of new scripts by agents. Centers that know which basic information requests are most frequent utilize interactive voice response systems (IVR), the web, and other self-service options to stop calls that do not need to go to agents.

- Centers use skill-based routing to send calls of employees with appropriate skills (multi-tiered contact center).

- Contact centers use teleworking to provide flexibility in scheduling of staff to meet customer loads.

Human Resources

- The primary criterion when hiring agents is good customer service attitude and skills and belief in the value of a contact center's work. People either have or don't have superior customer service attitude and skills; you can't train them to have it. You can train them on specific knowledge and how to apply it.

- Management demonstrates that employees are valued by managers; monitor and assess performance for quality control; reward outstanding employee performance in meaningful ways (monetary and non-monetary); and support continual professional growth.

- Staff have clear performance expectations.

- Contact centers place a premium on training. In addition to training new staff, they periodically train all employees on current service procedures and update their knowledge and skills. They hold regular team meetings and briefings where information and experience is shared and ideas are discussed.

- Staff are encouraged and rewarded for innovative process improvements.

Supervision

- Supervision is not treated as a secondary or as-needed responsibility. First-line supervisors should be spending between 70- 85% of their time on agent

coaching/development. Of this, approximately 20-25% is devoted to agent monitoring. Supervisors do not have time built into their schedule for handling contacts, although they are expected to handle escalated calls and to help with other calls if they have time. (Contact centers identify lack of time as the greatest challenge to regular monitoring).

Monitoring.

- Monitoring results are used as a career development tool to keep agents performing at their best. Most agents see monitoring as a standard part of the contact center environment and believe monitoring and coaching offer positive reinforcement for modifying their behavior to better serve customers. Agents frequently take an active role in discovering what they could have done better.

- For monitoring to be effective, buy-in must begin with the agents themselves, and employees need to understand the company's goals and expectations. Managers should provide clear guidelines on how the results of monitoring are used in performance appraisals.

- Front-line management should be dedicated to agent development, and monitoring is seen as a primary responsibility of supervisors/managers. According to Purdue University data, 85 percent of all contact centers monitor agent-customer interactions. Monitoring and coaching are not treated as "an as available" task—more than 90% of the supervisor's time should be spent with and among the team.

- It is best to have a dedicated quality assurance team whose primary responsibility is to monitor 5-10 contacts for each front-line agent each month to identify skill gaps.

- Agents must receive regular feedback following monitoring to help them achieve optimal performance levels; they should be praised for good work and be helped with coaching and refresher training as needed. Skill deficits are seen as training opportunities, and specific training modules should be available for almost every skill deficit discovered.

- Follow up on the monitoring and feedback by tracking specific behavior changes in the areas needing improvement.

- Today's most advanced contact monitoring systems allow supervisors to monitor telephone calls, email correspondence, and Web chat sessions. Web-enabled monitoring is no more time-consuming than call monitoring, but the criteria are usually different. For example, writing skills are critical in these situations.

- Monitoring should be conducted using
    - Methods that are unobtrusive and non-reactive and that conversations selected for analysis must be representative of all the calls taking place in the center.
    - Some type of rating or scoring sheet with the behavioral and other expectations so that the customer service representative can easily see what areas are satisfactory and what needs improvement, along with recommended training and coaching.

Methods of monitoring include:

- Voice.
- Shadow.
- Side-by-side (the best way to provide agents with immediate feedback).
- Remote listening.
- Third-party monitoring. The outside firm links into the organization's systems, much as its own supervisors do, observes the voice and data screens, and prepares reports. It can be used as an independent verifier to ensure that the internal quality assurance staff is meeting their goals or as the primary quality assurance staff.
- Mystery shopping/test calling.
- Issue escalation monitoring.
- Self-monitoring (agents listen to their calls and score themselves).
- Peer monitoring.
- Exception reporting system (identifies any unusual or unacceptable performance metric such as repeat contacts by customers).
- Customer feedback (positive and negative).

Behavioral expectations.

- Conversational quality.

- Welcome—introduction and tonality.
- Ask—how was information requested.
- Supply—how the information was given and received.
- Empathy and understanding, e.g., courtesy and patience.
- Pace and control
- Call completion.
- Clear and confident use of voice.
- Brand perception—the human touch.
- Key conversational skills.
- Speaking.
- Listening.
- Interpretive understanding.
- Adaptive control.
- Task competence.
- Information competence.
- Communication confidence.
- Emotional competence.
- Personal involvement.
- Politeness.
- Rewardingness.
- Approachability.
- Efficiency.

- Competence.
- Quality and speed of agent responses and listening skills.
- Positive communication.
- Empathy.
- Rapport building.
- Listening skills.
- Portrayal of the brand.
- Manage customer expectations.
- Take ownership of the customer inquiry.
- Demonstrate knowledge of procedures.
- Accurate typing and spelling.
- Accuracy of information provided.
- How up-to-date staff are with changes to processes or procedures.
- Sources of error, poor performance.
- IVR—ease of use and navigation.
- Organizations need to be careful of pushing average call time rather than concentrating on behavioral attitudes.

Customer Feedback

- Contact centers see customer feedback as an essential complement to internal quality control, since monitoring alone does not provide insight into how customers feel about their interaction with the contact center. Methods of obtaining customer feedback commonly used are:
    - Mail surveys. This method is suspect due to the inevitable time lag between the contact and receipt of the survey.

- Automated post-call IVR surveys, either immediately after the contact or within a couple of days, while the customer's memory of the contact is still fresh. Automated post-call IVR surveys offer immediacy, but the responses are captured and reported automatically, solely using technology. They may produce confusing results as callers don't always follow directions well.

- Outbound telephone surveys/interviews conducted by a live person. These are the most intrusive, leading to low response rates, are costly, but can permit follow-up questions.

- Web-based surveys.

Highlights from the US Patent and Trademark Office Inventors Assistance Center and Trademark Assistance Center and from Convergys

The OP&A study team visited and met with representatives of two contact centers at the US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)—the Inventors Assistance Center (IAC) (for patents) and the Trademark Assistance Center (TAC). It also met with a representative of Convergys, a major third-party providers of contact center services that runs centers for a number of federal agencies. Following are some of the key take-away points of relevance to this study.

US Patent and Trademark Office Inventors Assistance Center and Trademark Assistance Center

- Leadership. "You're only going to be as good as your senior management wants the call center to be. If they want an elite call center, they will give you the resources and funds and training to be that."

- Structure

  - The Patent side of USPTO uses a three-tier contact center system, with the Inventors Assistance Center (IAC) the 3rd tier. With2,500 calls a day, it is important to get the callers to the best place for information, and you don't want to expend the time of highly skilled staff on basic questions. The job of Tier 1 agents is to get the customer's name, number, and mailing address and fill out a form in the electronic system. Then they try to send the call out to the correct call center. When the system sends the call, it also sends the data.

  - The emphasis in hiring is to find people with good customer service skills because that is not teachable: "You can teach trademark law, but customer

service, you either have it or you don't. We rate that to be highest on the crediting plan, maybe a 20. Trademark may be just a 15. Use of call center tools may be another 15. We want someone who is familiar with the call customer service environment."

- Nature of the operation

    - The Trademark Assistance Center (TAC) has 25 workstations. Open 8:30 am to 8 pm, it handles snail mail, email, and phone calls and has a walk-in area. It provides information and problem resolution and handles publication requests. TAC gets 500-600 calls a day; the abandonment rate is less than 1%. TAC uses an open queue. There are no alternative work schedules, but all staff can telework ; they work two days in the office and three days at home. There is 100% functionality with the teleworking ("PTO is considered the role model for federal telework"). TAC uses five shifts, with more staff coming on as the mid-west and west workday begins. Staff answer the phones when not otherwise occupied. They use "canned" responses as appropriate. The goal with emails is resolution with the first response. Recently, TAC gathered a team of trademark information specialists, attorney liaisons, managers, and an outside vendor to review its 154 canned solutions. The result was 750 canned solutions that emphasized ease of understanding and minimal jargon. Feedback from customers has been positive. The manager of IAC, which doesn't use emails, said that he would be okay with canned solutions as long as the email included the canned question that the canned answer addressed. That way, IAC in on the record with how it interpreted the question.

    - IAC is open 8:30 am-5 pm. It provides information related to the highly complicated process of applying for patents. It has 4 workstations, down from 6 because of budget cutback. Almost all IAC's business is by phone; it uses an open queue. It gets 275 calls a day, or 5,500 a month. Because of the cutback in staff, the average wait time is 5-6 minutes versus a minute and a half before; the manager has seen waits of two and a half hours. The average call lasts five and a half to six minutes, with some running as long as 35/40 minutes. Because written information is legally binding, it does not accept or send information out by email (although acknowledges that it does not get full compliance with this policy). Because IAC uses part-time staff, it has great flexibility in deploying them, and staggers the number of workstations open based on the volume of calls over the day. IAC used to accept voicemails with a guaranteed same-day call back, but abandoned that service

when its operation was reduced to four work stations. IAC does not permit teleworking.

- Neither IAC nor TAC has time limits on the duration of calls. That pays off in the long run because the applications are much better: "You handle the call, manage it properly, giving the customer everything they need. The goal is to facilitate their filing the application or to give them the knowledge to decide whether to do so."

- Staffing

  - After trying contract staff and experiencing a high turnover that reduced the quality of service, TAC moved to federal employees. It has a 25-seat call center.

  - IAC experimented with various approaches and now uses retired part-time patent examiners and other experts such as former judges, who are hired and managed by a contractor. These staff are paid at a GS 15 level because they are highly knowledgeable and experienced—"the elite of the elite."

- Technology

  - A single 1-800 number with automated routing based on the prompts a caller selects, e.g., patent or trademark information. Pressing zero takes the caller to the USPTO-wide first tier call center. When the caller is transferred, there is some initial recorded information (e.g., a reminder about the information on the website and a suggestion that the caller use it first and then call back with remaining questions, general information on the hours of operation, and how to reach an operator), and then the call goes into a queue. Although the contact center telephone system has the ability to alert customers to the wait time, it is not used.

  - TAC uses a very sophisticated Siebel CRM system integrated with Interactive Client. It includes total call recording with easy retrieval and is able to maintain very comprehensive database on all calls. "When a person calls, it brings up the history of their business. It can tell you anything you want to know about the call—where it came from, to caller ID to when you called last, how long your call was, who you spoke to, what we sent you out, how long you were on hold." If a call is transferred, that history goes with the transfer. In the near future emails will be integrated into the history, with copies automatically going into the file. A large plasma screen in the work area

displays key quantitative information related to service levels so that the tasks can be adjusted as needed.

- Quality assurance

    - TAC describes its quality assurance program as "phenomenal." It has invested a lot in improving it in the last two years, including through technology and the UCCMS program available through the Siebel CRM/Interactive Client system.

    - Clear service level standards. IAC performance expectations and targets are spelled out in the contract; all contract staff have the same standards and expectations. IAC expects 92% of calls to be answered (it exceeds that), and 80% to be answered within 20 seconds. Since staff were cut back, wait times average 5-6 minutes. TAC has a target of 92% of calls answered, with 80% to be answered within 20 seconds. The standard for email responses is 2-3 business days. If an email is forwarded to someone else for assistance, the agent alerts the customer. Standards and expectations are clearly spelled out in the government position descriptions and performance plans. They include things like level of complaints and information disseminated accurately and efficiently.

    - TAC has extensive training. New hires' training now takes 6 months, down from a year. When a person is hired, he/she is paired up with a peer mentor. Every fiscal year there is quarterly refresher training: "We recycle them through so that if anything changes, everyone is on the same page, and they get the same information at the same time." Both IAC and TAC have very large and sophisticated training manuals, with modules for particular aspects of the work.

    - Supervision. All calls are recorded and all emails archived. "If we get a complaint call about an agent, we can go back and listen to it. Often the issue is that the person didn't get the answer he wanted." Almost every case has been resolved to TAC's favor.

    - TAC supervises staff closely, including through two team leaders who do not have supervisory authority. The manager spends 85% of her time running the center. At IAC, the contractor carries out the monitoring and analysis. The IAC manager does look at average call times from the same perspective that TAC does. The manager estimates that he spends less than 1% of his time on IAC (he is also a manager of another office).

- Monitoring. TAC monitors the quantitative statistics, including average call handle, even though there is no duration target. "We do look at average call handle time from the perspective of, if the ACH is 4 minutes and 30 seconds, and we have an agent who has ACH of 7 minutes, then that is a red flag, and then the manager and lead will sit with the agent and try to understand why it's taking longer to answer the calls. Usually it's a training issue." IAC does not monitor agents because of their level of knowledge and expertise, although the manager has the capability. A trigger for him that something might be wrong is if no one comes to him with questions; then he is concerned about complacency. He facilitates questions by having the staff lunch table outside his office.

- Customer feedback. Neither IAC nor TAC surveys customers for feedback. Their reasons are that the response rate is too low to be useful, and the respondents are biased toward customers with negative attitudes because they did not get the answer they wanted. In addition, respondents interpret questions differently, and senior management often doesn't know how to interpret the results. In 2007 TAC conducted mystery shopping, because of complaints it received from customers saying they received misinformation. It found out that was occurring.

- TAC has a very sophisticated data collection and analysis program used for quality assurance monitoring and to forecast staffing and other resource needs.

Highlights from Convergys

Convergys describes itself one of the top three call centers in the country. It handles about 4,000 seats in government call centers.

Imperatives for exemplary contact centers.

- Customer satisfaction

    - What the customer most wants is getting the right information within a reasonable amount of time that the center adheres to. Customers are willing to wait as long as the center meets those two criteria. But don't confuse wait times and customer satisfaction. Customers who hold for 10 minutes may not be happy.

- Quality of service—the actual interaction with the person. Was the agent friendly, helpful? Did he or she express a desire to help the customer? Was the answer correct and the best answer possible?

- One-stop shopping, defined as including transfers, is best practice. It is best for the customer and for the center—it saves money, makes for the easiest workflow, etc.

- The number one item is hiring the person with the right attitude because customer service is about attitude.

- The number two item is training.

- A robust Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool is the backbone of a successful contact center. CRM has three functions: it captures information about the customer; it manages or provides a structure for managing the workflow; and it provides the knowledge base of processes and procedures to be used and the correct responses to inquiries. It's what turns a group of people who answer calls into an actual contact center.

    - It provides the center with the critical capability to know who has called: it captures the person's name, telephone number, one or two identifying pieces of data, and a real address for mailing.

    - It collects and maintains notes and histories of customers' calls, which can shorten call times.

    - It allows assessment of why people call, the processes and procedures that result in calls, and other causes of complaints. Optimally, these data are compared to customer survey responses. That is the best foundation for improving quality.

    - It offers total call recording so that supervisors can retrieve a call to look into a customer complaint and use the call as a learning opportunity for the agent.

    - Great contact centers use a knowledge base for responding to calls. This is a paradigm shift from emphasizing subject matter expertise. The center invests in written documented answers, SOPs, etc. that are held in a searchable database. The center can then hire lower level, less experienced people to answer the questions. The investment goes into making agents experts in using the knowledge base to provide answers. It also puts the focus on providing consistent answers.

- Surveying customers to get their feedback is essential.
    - The response rate depends to some extent on the customer—it is higher with government agencies than commercial companies, probably 15-20% response rates.
    - Survey results show a little bias on both ends—customers click either because they had a great experience or a bad one—but the responses still offer a pretty even spectrum.
    - Limit the survey questions to no more than a dozen.
    - Begin with questions soliciting feedback on satisfaction with the center as a whole, and then focus on the interaction with the agent.
    - Follow up with dissatisfied customers, including by having management contact them.
    - What increases the costs of surveys are the analytics that go around it, but those are critical.
    - In terms of survey delivery methods,
        - The best approach is to ask customers for an email address and then send the survey. The advantage is that customers can complete the survey when they feel like it.
        - In-person outbound calling is good, but costs more; an automated IVR can also be used. The disadvantage of phone surveys is that they may not get the customer at a good time, whether they are contacted at the end of the call or later.
        - Sometimes Convergys calls customers for a short period to see how that correlates with the web-based survey, and then implements that survey.

Other points.

- Tiered contact centers are effective. A tier one center provides general customer service and should be able to answer 80% of the calls. If it can't, something is wrong. The upper-level tiers are used for calls requiring specialized knowledge and problem/escalated calls.

- Service level or grade of service—essentially how long people have to wait to get an agent, measured in percent of calls answered in a period of time or the average speed of answer—is used to drive decisions on level of staffing and infrastructure. Sensitivity analysis shows that customers don't notice the difference between a 10- and a 30-second hold and rarely is their satisfaction negatively impacted by having to hold for a minute or two. In commercial companies, customers start to abandon the call at the minute and a half to two minute mark. But it depends what the person is holding for—they will hold indefinitely for health care-related calls, for example—and on whether they are a captive audience.

- Most Convergys clients have 1-800 number.

- Rather than have people wait, offer the option of leaving a telephone number for a call back—but make sure it is timely.

- Customers expect to be told how long the wait time is, but it doesn't affect their decision whether or not to wait.

- Referring people to call on another day or time of day is common practice.

- Opening a customer call with a greeting is a good practice. The people who don't care won't mind if that happens, whereas the people who do care will mind if it doesn't happen.

- Offer staff whatever non-monetary and monetary incentives you can.

- Behind the scenes is an efficiency measure—am I doing this in a cost-effective way? Average handle time is key—how long the average agent spends on the average phone call or email. Look at the times for the fastest half of the staff for benchmarking, and try to get the others down to that.

- One reason government agencies use vendors is to have greater flexibility to adjust staffing and to offer rewards and incentives for employees.

- Every government agency has citizen satisfaction as a primary goal. It's driven at the senior management level, especially if it's on their scorecards. Senior management sets a target for customer satisfaction that gets passed down to lower-level managers. The metric usually comes from a benchmark survey. Often supervisors are evaluated on their team's average score. If quality monitoring is aligned with customer satisfaction, agents who show good quality in internal monitoring should also have satisfied customers, and shows up in their individual quality scores.

Appendix C. Pilot Customer Feedback Survey Instrument

IRD Copyright Office Customer Satisfaction

You recently contacted the United States Copyright Office. Copyright's Information and Records Division contains the Public Information Office and the Records Research and Certification Section.

The Information and Records Division is committed to delivering the best possible service to customers, and would appreciate your taking a few minutes to answer the following questions. Please tell us how well we did in serving you.

Answering these questions is completely voluntary and is not linked to your business with the Public Information Office or the Records Research and Certification Section.

If you have any questions about this customer satisfaction survey, please call David Christopher, Acting Chief, Information & Records Division, at 202.707.8825 or send him an email at dchr@loc.gov.

Click on the "Continue" button when you are ready to go to the next screen.

When you contacted the United States Copyright Office, did you contact the Public Information Office or the Records Research and Certification Section? (Mark all that apply.)

☐ Public Information Office

☐ Records Research and Certification Section

☐ Neither

If **Neither** Is **Selected**, Then Skip To **End of Survey**

Display This Question:

If When you contacted the United States Copyright Office, di... **Public Information Office** Is **Selected**

And When you contacted the United States Copyright Office, di... **Records Research and Certification Section** Is **Selected**

Even though you transacted business with both the Public Information Office and the Records Research and Certification Section, we would appreciate it if you would evaluate your experience with only one of the two Copyright units.

Are you evaluating the Public Information Office or the Registration Research and Certification Division?

O Public Information Office

O Records Research and Certification Section

How often do you do business with this Copyright Office unit during a normal year? (Mark only one answer)

- O Never
- O It was my first time
- O 1 to 5 times
- O 6 to 12 times
- O 13 to 24 times
- O 25 or more times

How did you contact this Copyright Office unit most recently (today or your last contact)? (Mark only one answer.)

- O Telephone
- O Email
- O Postal mail
- O Walked in
- O Fax
- O Other

Where did you obtain information on how to contact this Copyright Office unit ? (Mark all that apply.)

- ☐ Copyright Office website
- ☐ Local library
- ☐ Web search (Google, Yahoo, Bing, etc.)
- ☐ 411 or information operator
- ☐ Other

In your most recent business with this Copyright Office unit , which of the following describes you? (Mark only one answer.)

- O Creator (Author, musician, artist, etc.)
- O Legal professional
- O Publishing professional
- O Authorized agent
- O Potential user of a copyrighted work
- O Other

Display This Question:

If Even though you transacted business with both the Public ... **Public Information Office** Is **Selected**

Or When you contacted the United States Copyright Office, di... **Public Information Office** Is **Selected**

And When you contacted the United States Copyright Office, di... **Records Research and Certification Section** Is **Not Selected**

Why did you contact the Public Information Office most recently? (Mark all that apply.)

☐ Because I could not find information on the Copyright Office website

☐ I could not understand the language and information on the Copyright Office website

☐ To follow up on communication from the Copyright Office

☐ To correct error in a Copyright Office communication

☐ To register a claim to copyright for a new work

☐ To obtain information on how to register a copyright

☐ To check on status of my registration claim

☐ To obtain information on copyright fees

☐ To check registration status of someone else's copyright

☐ Other

Display This Question:

If Even though you transacted business with both the Public ... **Records Research and Certification Section** Is **Selected**

Or When you contacted the United States Copyright Office, di... **Records Research and Certification Section** Is **Selected**

And When you contacted the United States Copyright Office, di... **Public Information Office** Is **Not Selected**

Why did you contact the Records Research and Certification Section most recently? (Mark all that apply.)

☐ To obtain a certified copy of my copyright registration

☐ To conduct a search of Copyright registrations

☐ To follow up on communication from the Copyright Office

☐ To correct error in a Copyright Office communication

☐ To pay for a service provided by the Registration Research and Certification Division

☐ To obtain information on conducting registration search

☐ To obtain information on getting a certified copy on my registration certification

☐ Other

Overall, how do you feel about your experience with this Copyright Office unit ?

O Very dissatisfied O Dissatisfied O Satisfied O Very satisfied O Delighted

Display This Question:

If How did you contact this Copyright Office unit most recen... **Walked in** Is **Selected**

Or How did you contact this Copyright Office unit most recen... **Telephone** Is **Selected**

Did you have to wait what you considered an unreasonable amount of time before a representative started to talk with you?

O Not applicable O Unreasonable time O Reasonable time

Display This Question:

If Did you have to wait what you considered an unreasonable ... **Unreasonable time** Is **Selected**

About how long did you have to wait?

O Less than a minute O 1 to 3 minutes O 4 or 5 minutes O 5 to 10 minutes O 10 to 15 minutes
O More than 15 minutes

Did you have to wait what you considered an unreasonable amount of time before a representative was able to assist you?

O Not applicable O Unreasonable time O Reasonable time

Display This Question:

If Did you have to wait what you considered an unreasonable ... **Unreasonable time** Is **Selected**

And How did you contact this Copyright Office unit most recen... **Walked in** Is **Selected**

Or How did you contact this Copyright Office unit most recen... **Telephone** Is **Selected**

About how long did you have to wait?

O Less than a minute O 1 to 3 minutes O 4 or 5 minutes O 5 to 10 minutes O 10 to 15 minutes
O More than 15 minutes

Display This Question:

If Did you have to wait what you considered an unreasonable ... **Unreasonable time** Is **Selected**

And How did you contact this Copyright Office unit most recen... **Walked in** Is **Not Selected**

And How did you contact this Copyright Office unit most recen... **Telephone** Is **Not Selected**

About how long did you have to wait? (Please explain. The text box will expand as necessary)

Display This Question:

If How did you contact this Copyright Office unit most recen... **Telephone** Is **Selected**

Was the telephone message detailing which number to push to reach different Copyright Office services difficult or easy to understand and navigate?

O Very difficult O Difficult O Easy O Very easy

Display This Question:

If How did you contact this Copyright Office unit most recen... **Walked in** Is **Selected**

How did you feel about the cleanliness, comfort, and layout of this Copyright Office unit's physical facilities?

O Very dissatisfied O Dissatisfied O Satisfied O Very satisfied O Delighted

Display This Question:

If How did you contact this Copyright Office unit most recen... **Walked in** Is **Selected**

And Even though you transacted business with both the Public ... **Records Research and Certification Section** Is **Selected**

Or When you contacted the United States Copyright Office, di... **Records Research and Certification Section** Is **Selected**

How did you feel about quality and maintenance of Records Research and Certification Section's equipment for public access to records, copying, printing, etc.?

O Very dissatisfied O Dissatisfied O Satisfied O Very satisfied O Delighted

Were you treated with respect and courtesy?

O Not at all O Somewhat O Mostly O Completely

Was the Copyright Office unit's communication with you (letter, email, telephone, or in person) easy to understand and useful?

O Not at all O Somewhat O Mostly O Completely

Was the Copyright Office unit responsive in answering your questions?

O Not at all O Somewhat O Mostly O Completely

Did you feel that the Copyright Office unit's representative cared about you as an individual rather than a number?

O Not at all O Somewhat O Mostly O Completely

Was the Copyright Office unit's representative sensitive to your needs?

O Not at all O Somewhat O Mostly O Completely

Did the Copyright Office unit's representative treat your questions as important?

O Not important at all O Not very important O Moderately important O Very important

How did you feel about the accuracy and reliability of the information you received?

O Very dissatisfied O Somewhat dissatisfied O Satisfied O Very satisfied O Delighted

Were your questions handled in a professional manner?

O Never O Some were O Most were O All were

Display This Question:

If When you contacted the United States Copyright Office, di... **Public Information Office** Is **Selected**

Or Even though you transacted business with both the Public ... **Public Information Office** Is **Selected**

How often did the answers conflict with answers that you may have received earlier from the Copyright Office website, Public Information Office, or other Copyright Office representatives?

O Not Applicable O Never O Sometimes O Most of the time O All of the time

Display This Question:

If How often did the answers conflict with answers that you ... **Sometimes** Is **Selected**

Or How often did the answers conflict with answers that you ... **Most of the time** Is **Selected**

Or How often did the answers conflict with answers that you ... **All of the time** Is **Selected**

Please explain.

Display This Question:

If When you contacted the United States Copyright Office, di... **Public Information Office** Is **Selected**

And When you contacted the United States Copyright Office, di... **Records Research and Certification Section** Is **Not Selected**

Or Even though you transacted business with both the Public ... **Public Information Office** Is **Selected**

Would you recommend the Public Information Office to friends or colleagues as a good way to handle questions about Copyright Office services or basic questions about copyright?

O Very unlikely O Somewhat unlikely O Not sure O Likely O Definitely

Display This Question:

If When you contacted the United States Copyright Office, di... **Records Research and Certification Section** Is **Selected**

And When you contacted the United States Copyright Office, di... **Public Information Office** Is **Not Selected**

Or Even though you transacted business with both the Public ... **Records Research and Certification Section** Is **Selected**

How good was the value of the service provided by the Records Research and Certification Section considering the fees charged?

O Excellent O Good O Fair O Poor O Not applicable

Display This Question:

If How did you contact this Copyright Office unit most recen... **Telephone** Is **Selected**

And Why did you contact the Public Information Office most re... **To check on status of my registration claim** Is **Selected**

If you had had a Copyright Claim Service Record number, would you have used Copyright's website to find out the status of your claim rather than calling the Public Information Office?

O Definitely would use the website if possible

O Probably would use the website if possible

O Would prefer to call the Public Information Office by telephone

O Not sure

How could this Copyright Office unit improve its customer service? (The box will expand as needed.)

Thank you for helping us improve the services of the Information and Records Division of the U. S. Copyright Office.

If you have any issues you would like to discuss, please call David Christopher, Acting Chief, Information & Records Division, at 202.707.8825 or send him an email at dchr@loc.gov.

If you would like a Copyright Office agent to contact you about any issues related to your recent contact, please leave your name and telephone number, email, or address.

Name

Telephone Number

Email Address

Postal Address

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