

NEWS RELEASE

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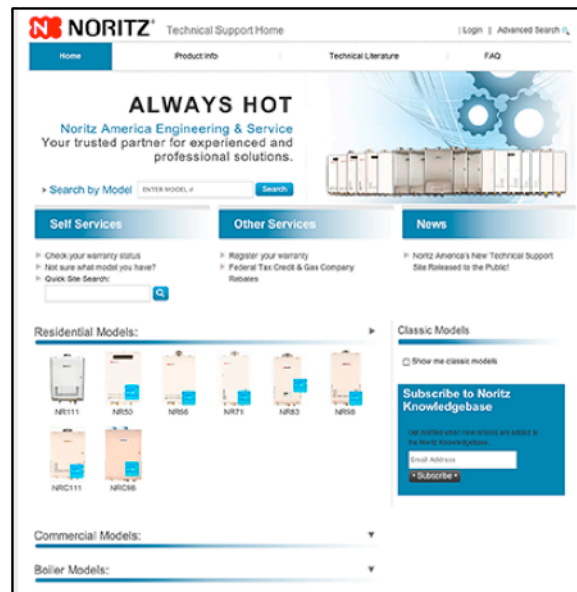
## Noritz Boosts Tankless Water Heater Service Quality with New Technical Support Web Site and In-House Call Center

Targeting both trade and consumers, two new customer-service initiatives aim to deliver technical data and product literature more quickly and efficiently, while addressing common questions about tankless water heaters.

FOUNTAIN VALLEY, CALIF. (NOVEMBER 29, 2011) — [Noritz](#) America recently unveiled two customer-service initiatives – a Technical Support Web Site (below) and an In-House Call Center (see page 3) – with the goal of delivering information more quickly and efficiently to customers, whether their preferred method is the telephone or online. Targeting both trades people and consumers, the web site went live on Nov. 1, while the new call center began operations inside the company’s Orange County headquarters on Nov. 28.

The origins of both initiatives can be found in the product application and installation questions that contractors and homeowners routinely ask Noritz sales and service personnel on a daily basis, according to Scott Isaksen, manager of Application Engineering, who led the multi-department team that developed the initiatives.

“We are always looking for ways to enhance the level of service we provide our customers,” Isaksen says. “The tech-support site is a readily accessible, easy-to-navigate place to locate Noritz product information and, most especially, answers to technical questions that arise again and again from our customer base. Meanwhile, the new call center will minimize waiting time and offer in-depth technical expertise to those contractors and homeowners who would rather get information over the phone from a live human being.”



Technical Support Web Site Home Page

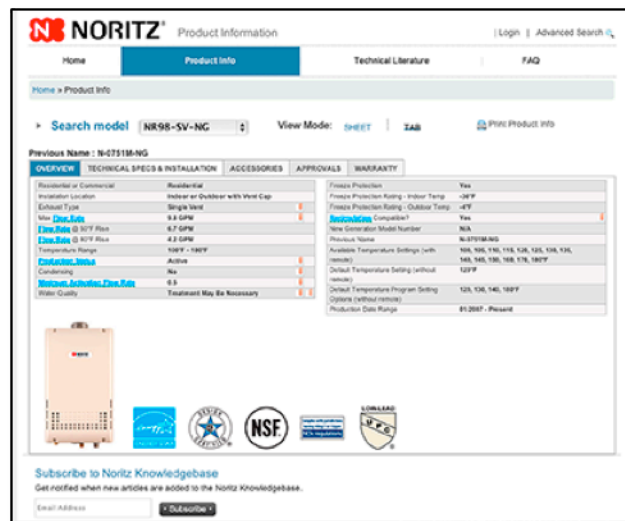
## Technical Support Web Site

A nine-month collaborative effort involving the Noritz engineering, information technology, marketing and service departments, the new [Technical Support Web Site](#) is accessible at [support.noritz.com](http://support.noritz.com). Once on the Technical Support home page, a visitor will find a variety of links, including access to Noritz’s new “Warranty Calculator” tool, as well as information on federal tax credits and gas-company rebates.

Most site visitors will be seeking technical information on specific Noritz products. These materials can be found via several different paths, such as the “Search by Model” window, or by clicking on one of the thumbnail photos depicting various tankless water heaters and boilers. The primary intent of these navigation aids is to smoothly guide the visitor to a “Product Info” page that provides answers to “90 percent of the questions a homeowner will ask or a contractor might encounter” about a given unit, according to Isaksen.

— For the trade, that Product Info data is displayed in its entirety on the screen and divided into five areas: Overview, Technical Specs & Installation, Accessories, Approval, and Warranty.

— For consumers, Noritz site designers have isolated the same information behind five different tabs to avoid overwhelming the average consumer with too much data on a single screen (inset graphic). Nonetheless, a consumer visitor may access the five segments individually or call them up all at once, whatever the preference.



Technical Support Web Site Product Info Page: Consumer

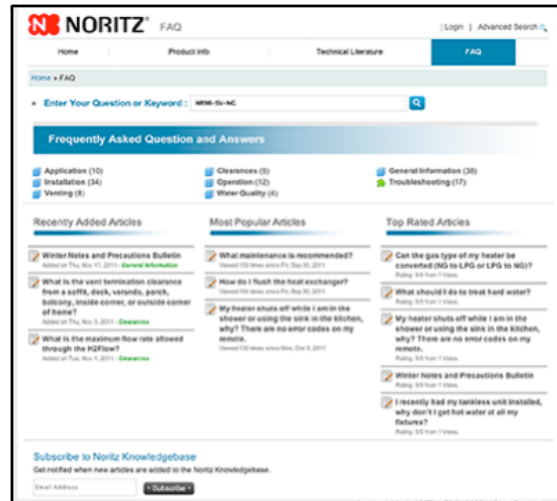
Regardless of the path chosen, the new site provides a host of user-friendly prompts to minimize missteps:

- **DOWNLOADABLE TECHNICAL LITERATURE:** The [Technical Literature](#) section of the site offers five different, downloadable items for each product: spec sheet, owner’s guide, installation manual, parts list and certification listings. To help a visitor drill down to the correct product, three different filters can be employed: “category” (residential, commercial or boiler); “technology” (condensing and non-condensing); and “generation” (items currently in production and older, “classic models” now out of production).
- **FREQUENTLY ASKED TECHNICAL QUESTIONS:** Also accessible from the menu bar on the home page, the [FAQ](#) section is much more than the customary, simple list of questions and answers. The page divides the questions into eight different categories, such as “Application,” “Installation,” “Venting,” etc., with the number of questions in each noted in parentheses.

In addition, a visitor can see which questions or “articles” are the most “Recently Added,” the “Most Popular” and “Top Rated.” The article pages themselves include areas for “Comment”; attachments and links to other, related articles; the ability to print, e-mail or export an article to a PDF; and a tool to rate the article on a scale of one to five (1-unhelpful, 2-below average, 3-average, 4-above average, or 5-excellent). As displayed, all articles are rated according to this system and include the number of visitors to date.

“We are actively seeking customer input on the helpfulness of our articles,” says Isaksen, “as well as specifics on how to improve them.”

- **SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE:** Each page on the new site also contains a link to a registration form, where the visitor can sign up to receive updated information as it becomes available. Customers, for example, can receive updates on individual FAQ articles, specification sheets, brochures, etc.; or they can subscribe to the entire Technical Support site to receive updates on the complete “Noritz Knowledgebase” as new information is produced.



Technical Support Web Site FAQ Page

- **“TROUBLESHOOTING” SECTION:** Containing even more in-depth technical information than the rest of the site, this area is specifically reserved for members of the Noritz PROCard customer-loyalty program. Formatted like the FAQ pages, Troubleshooting contains in-depth presentations on parts replacement and maintenance procedures, as well as how to diagnose various operational problems. Instructional documents and videos are also available for downloading.

In addition, Troubleshooting offers critical information on how to deal with error-code readouts when they appear on a water heater control panel. In “Searching with Error Codes,” the contractor simply enters the model number of the unit being serviced and the particular error code being displayed. A flow chart will then appear, outlining the proper sequence of steps to resolve the issue.

“When an owner calls, ‘Hey, what’s this number flashing on my tankless water heater?’ the service tech must respond knowledgeably and quickly to fix the problem in a cost-effective way,” says Isaksen. “We think this Troubleshooting section will greatly enhance that capability, providing further incentive to join our PROCard program.”

### In-House Call Center

The new In-House Call Center, reachable toll-free at 1-866-766-7489, is staffed by a full-time supervisor and three customer service agents who are available from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Pacific, Monday through Friday. However, this core quartet is expandable to as many as eight Noritz personnel during busier times of the year, usually the colder months of October through March, according to Isaksen.

Supplementing the headquarters team is a second, outsourced call center located on the East Coast. Active since 2010, this established call center has, with the opening of the headquarters operation, shifted from conventional, daytime hours to evenings and Saturdays.

The new in-house operation draws its personnel from the ranks of both existing staff as well as new employees. “We look for people with a knack for problem-solving – someone not afraid to get technical, but who also enjoys dealing with people,” says Isaksen. “An agent must be able to ask the right questions to get the caller exactly what he or she needs as quickly as possible.”

Four in five callers are trade professionals, often with challenging system design, installation or service questions. In such instances, the call-center agent moves immediately beyond Tier 1 Technical Support and refers the questions to a Noritz engineer. However, in locating the new call center in-house, Noritz expects the agents to obtain the needed technical information from their supervisor or staff engineers more quickly, while steadily expanding their own ability to answer customer technical questions directly.

“By having experienced managers on-hand to mentor the call center agent, we anticipate answering more customer questions on the spot, rather than making them wait for a callback,” says Isaksen. “We see this face-to-face coaching process as a faster educational path to agent self-sufficiency, which is what the current service environment demands.”

The call-center agents will also be able to further educate themselves by tapping the new Technical Support Web Site for product and application information. “The two innovations will feed off one another over time,” says Isaksen, “helping us to reach our primary objective, which is to service the customer with increasing speed and precision.”

**For more information on the new Technical Support Web Site, the In-House Call Center** and the full line of Noritz water heating products, visit [support.noritz.com](http://support.noritz.com). You can also call us at 866.766.7489 or e-mail us at [support@noritz.com](mailto:support@noritz.com).

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**Hi-res versions of photographs to accompany this release** are available for immediate download in .tif format by using this link: <http://www.noritz.oreilly-depalma.com/2011/Tech-Support.shtml>

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**NORITZ AMERICA CORPORATION**, a subsidiary of Noritz Japan, has corporate offices in Fountain Valley, Calif., as well as in Dallas, Atlanta, Chicago and Hawthorne, N.Y. Offering a full line of tankless water heaters to meet the hot water demands of residential and commercial applications. Noritz supports its products with a national network of skilled representatives and employees who are committed to providing the finest products and services to our communities by helping consumers live in a more comfortable, efficient and healthy lifestyle.

For more information on Noritz America and the entire line of Noritz’s ENERGY STAR<sup>®</sup> tankless water heaters, please call 866.766.7489. Or visit our website at [www.Noritz.com](http://www.Noritz.com)

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