

CHRIS NEWTON



As one of the founders of the social media engagement firm Radian6 and as its chief technology officer, Chris Newton's expertise lies in creating systems that can process huge amounts of information. With more than 10 years of hands-on experience, Newton has established himself as a well-respected serial entrepreneur and a successful inventor. And he is on to something big.

Founded in 2006, Radian6 was created with the idea that companies need to listen to people on the social web in order to effectively participate in the dialogue. For many organizations, intelligence

about online conversations is critical. According to the Radian6 analysis, traditional media are bound by deadlines, which by their very nature dictate when messages can be delivered. It's a very different story for social media, since online sources of information operate 24-7, posting information as soon as it is received. There are no deadlines, no space restrictions and no rules. Information is edited by users themselves.

"We're an entrepreneurial company with deep business experience, and we've created our platform with our customers' needs at the core," Newton says when asked about Radian6's focus. "We're

passionate about listening to our customers and community; and about making the social web as integral a part of our business as we believe it should be of yours."

"Whereas traditional media are enslaved by space and time, social media are decentralized and real-time. They always contain more information than they need, and that forces public relations, communications and advertising professionals to tailor their messages specifically to the space available, whether it's a blank page or an available time slot."

In 2001, Newton was completing his degree in computer science part

time at the University of New Brunswick (UNB) when he followed the example of Bill Gates and left the university to start Q1 Labs, a security intelligence firm, which today has its corporate headquarters in Waltham, Massachusetts, and branch offices around the world.

When asked about his early days as an entrepreneur, he says, "UNB was incredibly important in getting my first company started. They supported me and agreed to give me a leave of absence to pursue my startup goals. This gave me the safety net I really needed at the time. "UNB provided me with space for



my first employees and assisted me in countless ways. In those early days, without UNB's support there could not have been a Q1 Labs. Dave MacNeil was the director of computing services at UNB, where I worked at the time. Dave and Greg Sprague were patient and disciplined mentors and provided me with endless support."

Newton has not looked back since, but as he sees it, much of his success is due to his circle of supporters and associates.

"My original business partner was Brian Flood who partnered with me to build Q1 Labs. Brian was continually pushing forward and was a relentless force. Gerry Pond, chairman of Mariner

Partners Inc., has been that driving force for Radian6, providing me with help and leverage at every turn. Without Gerry, everything would have been much more difficult, if not impossible.

"An important lesson I've learned in my business is that the extended network of people we've been associated with has been a spectacular form of investment," he says. "Find the right people and they will stick with you for years. That's been a great help in terms of continuity and focus. I might have been able to create my companies anywhere, but in New Brunswick I found support, knowledge and passion. I think that's the definition of world-class." 

