IMPROVE YOUR CUSTOMER SATISFACTION WITH BETTER CALL MANAGEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

This report looks at the importance of customer satisfaction for a business and how this can be facilitated through better call management.

The report summarises different techniques which can be used to achieve a better customer experience highlighting the benefits of presenting a local numbers to customers, as opposed to 08 numbers or withheld numbers, and how cloud telephony can have a positive impact on call management in your business.

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Customer experience = Customer Satisfaction?

Customer satisfaction has become the most important factor of a customer's buying decision; as the likes of price or product differentiation have become less recognisable between each company. As you focus more on customer service, you will start to notice an increase in customer loyalty – and a growth in positive engagement around your brand.

The top complaint recorded via customer satisfaction surveys is bad customer service, this starts from the very first touchpoint a customer has with the organisation.

Every decision made by the customer comes down to their emotional thinking. Whether they realise it or not, the way they are treated throughout the whole customer journey from start to finish is going to determine whether they buy from you. This is why your customer journey should be front and centre of your customer service strategy.

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1. MAKING THE RIGHT FIRST IMPRESSION

Consider that running a successful marketing campaign means taking advantage of several factors from the timing of contact to the tone of voice. Even before any of this the first thing a customer comes into contact with is your phone number, or in some cases lack of it.
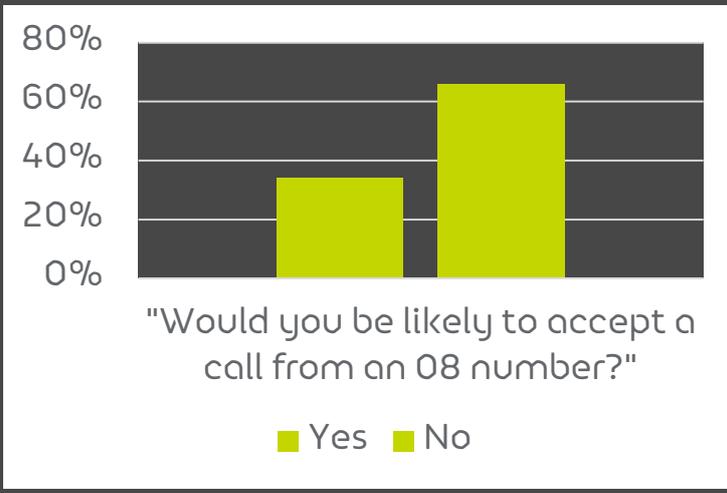
Many companies still mask their 'Caller Line Identification' (CLI) number presenting a 'number withheld' or 'anonymous' caller which creates an air of distrust between you and the customer, many of whom are often too put off to even answer, creating a barrier before you have even had the chance to attempt and resolve their query.

Presenting a number as a caller identifier is definitely a better stance than none at all but it's also important to consider what that number means to the recipient. For example, 084 or 087 numbers are widely known to be expensive to call by customers, deterring the caller from making contact - customers are more likely to engage with a local number.

A local number offers a familiar area code which the customer is more comfortable answering and dialling. It also extends a level of comfort as the customer is safe in the knowledge the call will be charged at a local rate.

"A study showed that out of 2,000 people, around 71% stated they were unlikely to, or would not, accept a call from a withheld number. 66% said they would act the same way for 08 numbers. 75% said they were likely to, or would, accept a call when a local number is displayed."

"Would you be likely to accept a call from an unknown number?"

■ Yes ■ No

"Would you be likely to accept a call from an 08 number?"

■ Yes ■ No

"Would you be likely to accept a call from a local number?"

■ Yes ■ No

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2. DIRECTING THE CALL EFFECTIVELY

So you've got a local number for your customer service line and your customers feel comfortable calling in and receiving calls – what next?
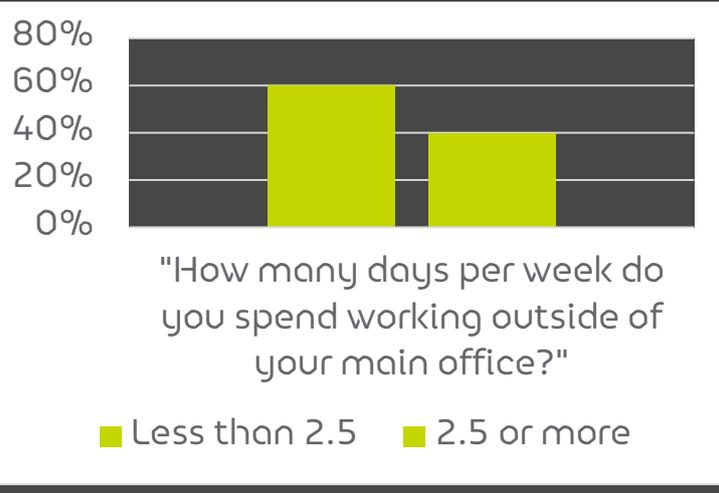
The most common challenge facing any contact centre team remains getting customer calls through to the relevant person or department with the expertise to solve customer queries quickly and efficiently.

The need to ensure that calls are routed to those with the skills and expertise to meet the callers' requirements is the top concern for management of inbound calls which has prompted the rise of the 'virtual agent'. In this set up calls are delivered to a skillsets profile, a 'virtual agent', and in turn to available agents who are logged into the skillset ready to answer calls offering a means to deliver a great customer experience.

"Research from Regus shows that 40% of UK workers spend at least 2.5 days per week working outside of their main office, while a third of UK employers are offering their staff more flexible working options."

Cloud telephony solutions provide the means to create flexible contact centres, where telephony systems live in the cloud and can be accessed from any desktop or mobile device. Agents can be located anywhere and logged into the skillset profile to create a highly effective hunt group. Progressive contact centres can benefit from the use of widely available cloud solutions to take advantage of a wide pool of skilled staff and the capability to scale and manage resources in response to call volumes in real time, using an online web management portal.

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Chart 1

	80%	
	60%	
	40%	
	20%	
	0%	

"How many days per week do you spend working outside of your main office?"

■ Less than 2.5   ■ 2.5 or more

Chart 2

	80%	
	60%	
	40%	
	20%	
	0%	

"Do you offer your staff flexible working options?"

■ No ■ Yes

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Conclusion

It's important to consider the customer journey alongside how calls are managed in order to set your contact centre up with the most effective route to great customer service by offering positive engagements every step of the way, from the first impression of presenting a recognisable number to directing calls to the person best placed to answer the caller query first time.

This will all have a positive effect on your brand perception and will result in customers being more inclined to purchase from your brand and to ultimately stay loyal to your brand.

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