

Call Answering



You're bonkers, you're being totally BONKERS...if you don't pick it up.

If I were to pick up my phone and call your business right now, who would answer the phone?

Now, if your immediate reaction was "our receptionist" that's great, but what happens when he or she is on the phone and everyone else in the office is on a call?

Does the phone simply ring out waiting to be answered? Or, worse still, would I be subjected to the tone of business death: the engaged tone? Nothing says 'we're a small local business that doesn't care about our customers' more than said customers being inflicted with a dead phone line.

The Problem

OK then, let's revisit the original question. What would happen if I were to call your business right now? Probably one of the following:

The call is answered within 3 rings

That's excellent. Top marks. It would be even better if your team are happy and ready to deal with customers' questions.

The phone rings and rings and rings and rings and then finally one of your team answers

Ok so at least you've answered the phone in person but impatient callers could have hung up and called your competition.

The phone rings and rings then goes to voicemail

Not bad but you could be better. Using a call answering service to make sure all your calls are answered by a real person is a much better solution.

The call goes straight to voicemail

This just screams, 'I'm a small business with one phone line', telling the caller you're on the phone and there's no one else to take their call.

The line is engaged

This is shocking... How are you still in business? No, seriously. If you're only able to answer one or two calls at a time then you're seriously limiting your growth by missing out on potential new business.

No answer at all

This is a quick way to go out of business! If you don't get this sorted, then you might as well give up now!

Call David Ruddle on 01323 458133 if you would like to discuss marketing your business with thebestof Eastbourne

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TOP TIP



TUESDAY!



The Stats

How do we know all of the above? Well after trying to get in touch with several businesses over the course of a few weeks, we were presented with all 6 of the scenarios above.

Out of the 30 businesses we called here's a breakdown:

- 23 answered the phone
- 6 of them within 3 rings
- 17 within 45 seconds (*still way too long if we're honest*)
- 2 rang and rang then went to voicemail
- 1 call went straight to voicemail
- 1 call had an engaged tone
- And 3 didn't bother to answer the phone...it just rang and rang and rang...until even the ringing gave up on itself and rang out.

Only 6 of the 30 (*just 20%!*) have a realistic chance of getting some business as they're 'Johnny-on-the-spot' when answering the phone.

You can stick your head in the sand, say 'It won't happen in our business' and do nothing, or you can be a smart business owner and take action to make certain all your incoming calls are answered in the correct way.

The Fix

There are several businesses out there who can help you fix the issues above:

- By having call tracking numbers you can monitor how many calls you're receiving and, more importantly, how many you're missing.
- A flexible telephone system allows you to route calls to the right place at the right time.
- Employing a call answering company to take your overflow calls means all your calls are answered by a professional receptionist, showing your customers that you really care and because they feel like they've conversed with someone in your business it will massively decrease the chance they'll hang up and find another number to call.

They're so affordable, and a whole lot less expensive than losing a customer.

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