

LIVE RECEPTIONIST SERVICES

Connecting with Your
Prospects and Customers





The Widening Customer Experience Gap

American businesses talk a good talk about the importance of customer experience. Yet many don't walk a good walk. More than 90 percent of marketing budgets are spent trying to get a customer to call; however, only six percent is actually spent on the operations for handling the call.¹

It makes sense that growing numbers of customers are feeling frustrated. Sixty-seven percent report they hung up on a customer service call they placed because they could not get a real human on the phone. And it gets worse for those seeking to make a purchase: 78 percent have bailed on completing a transaction because of a poor engagement experience.²

The average consumer spends **1.2 years** waiting on hold—
phone and live web chat—
during their lifetime.⁵

Company executives
spend **60 hours** waiting
on hold every year.⁶

It isn't a surprise that customer satisfaction continues to spiral downwards. Those reporting issues grew from 39 percent in 2003, to 45 percent in 2011, to 54 percent in 2015. Sixty-six percent indicate they experienced rage as a result of a customer service issue.³

When asked to provide a list of things that companies can do to create better great experiences, a resounding 73 percent cite valuing their time as the number-one activity.⁴ Our takeaway: companies that fail to provide prospects and customers with multiple engagement options and moreover make them to wait for for assistance and answers to their questions place themselves at a competitive disadvantage.

5 Things Brands Can Do to Deliver Outstanding Customer Experiences⁷

1. Make the transition between engagement channels and devices smooth.
2. Focus on preserving context—namely, do not make prospects or customers to repeat information when they move from one engagement channel to another.
3. Utilize customer data to deliver a better omnichannel experience.
4. Find and train the right customer service agents—individuals who are professional and are knowledge experts. And for small businesses, agents who can seamlessly transition between the different engagement channels.
5. Invest in self-service capabilities as an initial entry point for prospects and customers seeking to solve the problem themselves.



Repercussions of Disappointing Prospect and Customer Experiences

The consequences of disappointing prospect and customer experiences are dramatic. For prospects, 45 percent of them will abandon an online purchase if they cannot find a quick answers to questions.⁸ Here, companies must provide prospects with multiple engagement options and the ability to transition between each of them. And when they want live human engagement, you need to avoid putting them into wait queues—whether phone or live web chat.

In the case of prospects who elect to engage with you over phone, you have about 60 seconds to make that connection—40 percent of callers hang up after 60 seconds, and 34 percent of those never call back again. Think the caller will simply

leave a voicemail message instead? Think again! Sixty-five percent of callers simply hang up.⁹

When it comes to live web chat, the length of time isn't much longer: digital impressions occur in less than 90 seconds.¹⁰ When you fail to meet these engagement expectations,

they want human interaction in other situations. For example, over half of millennials prefer to talk or chat with a live customer service agent than to use channels that don't involve a human.¹³ Portability between different engagement channels is a requisite as well: 60 percent of customers interact through multiple channels irrespective

When Beginning a Customer Service Interaction, What Channel Do You Use the Most?¹¹

Phone 36% Live Web Chat 33% Email 25% Online Support Portal 5% Social Media 2%

prospects bolt. This can quickly add up to thousands of dollars in lost business if you're a small business.

For customers, you must respect their time and provide professional customer service agents who are knowledge experts. Great customer service is designed to answer their questions or solve problems quickly and painlessly, and it starts with empowering them to do so. Sixty-seven percent actually prefer to answer their questions via self-service over direct interaction with humans.¹²

While prospects and customers seek self-service in certain scenarios,

of device and location.¹⁴ Nearly half of all call centers admitting they are unable to manage the end-to-end workflow of interactions and information between prospects and customers.¹⁵

Disappointed customers will let their feet do the walking: 81 percent will change suppliers due to customer service (with 18 percent instantly and 21 percent within a day).¹⁶ There is also a much greater likelihood on the part of the customer to advocate or complain about their respective experiences. Indeed, research shows customers are 58 percent more likely to tell others about their experiences today than five years ago.¹⁷

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