

Actionable insights

GET THE INFORMATION YOU NEED TO DRIVE PERFORMANCE

Email. Phone. Online chat. Video chat. Social media.

In our omnichannel world, how do consumers really want to communicate with businesses? And is the answer different across generations? These were just some of the questions that a recent worldwide benchmark consumer study by DMG Consulting* set out to answer. Some of the findings may surprise you:

Talking with a customer service representative (CSR) remains the easiest way for consumers to address sensitive and challenging situations

Generational differences are shrinking

Voice calls continue to be critical to delivering an exceptional customer experience

People choose different channels to communicate with their parents (phone), siblings and friends (text) and co-workers (email)

For contact centers, this represents an opportunity to analyze interactions between consumers and CSRs for insights into how to operate more efficiently and more effectively.

HERE IS AN OVERVIEW OF KEY HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE SURVEY.

TOP WAYS TO COMMUNICATE

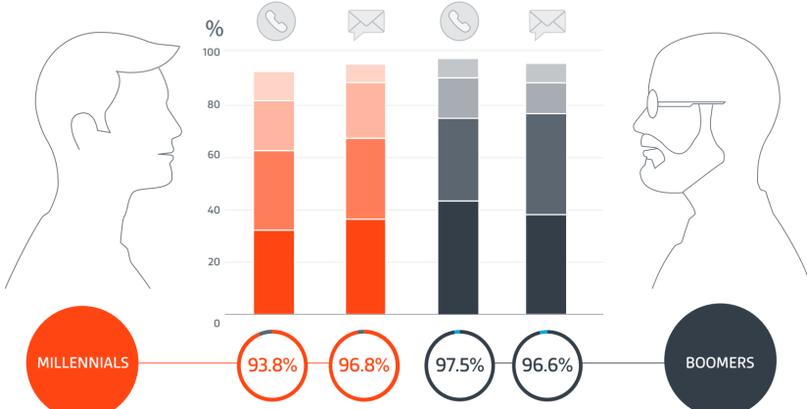
Overall, consumers overwhelmingly prefer to communicate with businesses by either email or phone.

Two clear leaders



THE GENERATION GAP IS CLOSING

The preference for calls and email was consistent across the generations, with both boomers and millennials opting for these channels.

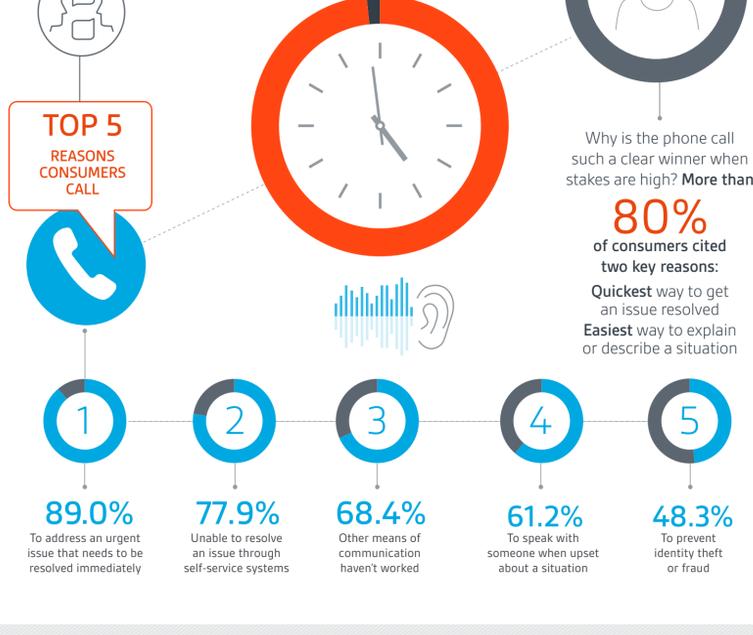


WHERE THE PHONE CALL EXCELS

In serious situations, or when there is a time-sensitive issue,

98.5%

of respondents said they would call to have it resolved.



Why is the phone call such a clear winner when stakes are high? More than 80% of consumers cited two key reasons: Quickest way to get an issue resolved. Easiest way to explain or describe a situation.

PLANTRONICS RECOMMENDS: CHOOSE THE RIGHT HEADSET

In an urgent situation, such as a missing credit card, customers need to hear and be heard. That's why it's essential to equip CSRs with enterprise-grade, noise-canceling headsets like the Plantronics EncorePro Series. Available in multiple wearing styles with soft leatherette ear cushions and an extendable boom, EncorePro headsets help keep CSRs comfortable so they can focus on the caller.

CONSUMERS' PATIENCE IS LIMITED

Even consumers who are comfortable with self-service or digital communications will quickly pick up the phone if they don't get the help they're looking for.

How many times will a consumer attempt to contact a company before calling them?

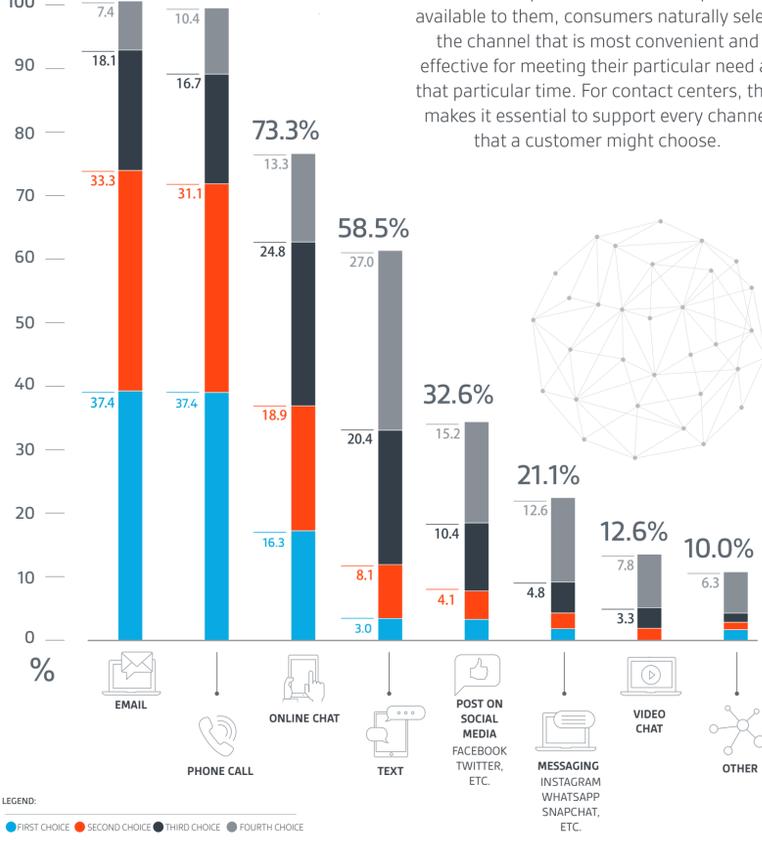


PLANTRONICS RECOMMENDS: MONITOR CALL QUALITY

When a customer calls, it's because they need help — now. Background noise, interference and audio disruptions can lead to frustration and a negative experience. With Plantronics Manager Pro, an additional software-as-a-service, you can analyze audio for clarity and track periods of overtime or silence. Plantronics Manager Pro gives you the actionable insights you need to ensure a consistent, positive voice experience every time.

IT'S AN OMNICHANNEL WORLD

With multiple communication options available to them, consumers naturally select the channel that is most convenient and effective for meeting their particular need at that particular time. For contact centers, that makes it essential to support every channel that a customer might choose.



PLANTRONICS RECOMMENDS: SUPPORT EVERY CHANNEL

When you know what devices and apps are being used and how, you can feel confident that CSRs have the technology and training they need to provide customers with a good experience. Plantronics Manager Pro can help. With this additional software-as-a-service, you can monitor device usage, push out new software or firmware from any browser, remotely configure headsets to ensure consistent audio quality, identify which third-party services are being accessed and more.

THE FUTURE OF CUSTOMER COMMUNICATIONS

New technology is emerging that has the potential to reduce contact center costs while improving the customer experience. It comes in the form of intelligent virtual agents (IVAs), or bots. IVAs use machine learning and artificial intelligence to create a self-learning solution that continuously improves itself. Voice-enabled IVAs have the potential to replace dated speech-enabled interactive voice response (IVR) technology. But are consumers ready for it?

For the most part, the answer is yes.

How likely are consumers to deal with an intelligent virtual agent?



VOICE IS HERE TO STAY

While emerging technology may be exciting and digital communications are essential, it's clear that for the most important issues, consumers will always call. Make sure their experience is a positive one by equipping your CSRs with industry-leading headsets and checking that they're being used as effectively as possible. The reports and analyses you get from Plantronics Manager Pro are your window into critical issues that can affect both employees and customers. Based on these insights, you can take action — from providing tailored training to deploying new hardware to reconfiguring software — and set your team and your customers up for success.

To learn more about our enterprise-grade headsets or Plantronics Manager Pro, visit www.plantronics.com.
To learn more about consumers' preferred channels of communication, read the full report at www.dmgconsult.com.



* DMG Consulting LLC, Consumers Channel of Choice: A Multi-generational Benchmark Study of Consumer Channel Preferences, February 2017. © 2017 Plantronics, Inc. All trademarks are the property of their respective owners.