



hiya

STATE OF THE CALL 2022

for Services



150B+ calls analyzed
1,800 businesses surveyed
12,000 consumers surveyed
1 report

hiya.com/state-of-the-call



State of the Call 2022 for Services

Customer service organizations were uniquely well-suited for the era of remote and hybrid business operations. Top-notch service—and the strong customer satisfaction and loyalty that it generates—has long depended on voice calls as its go-to means of communication.

As the world pivoted to increasingly remote, digital communication, customer service teams were essentially ahead of the curve. The more things changed, the more they stayed the same, at least in terms of solving customer problems and delivering excellent service.

Augmented by other channels and powered by the anywhere, anytime flexibility of cloud-based communications platforms, businesses are doubling down on voice calls for service interactions.

That's one of the overarching takeaways from a recent survey Hiya conducted as part of our [State of the Call](#) report series. This midyear check-in included nearly 2,000 business decision-makers responsible for communications platforms for their organization—approximately 300 apiece in the U.S., U.K., Canada, Germany, France, and Spain—and 12,000 consumers. It asked these professionals a range of questions about their communications use for customer service, including general customer service, scheduling, and notifications.

Voice calls remain the preferred method for customer service. They're fast, personal, and effective. Yet a growing spam and fraud problem is harming customer experience and trust—and in turn hurts legitimate service calls with declining call answer rates.

The phone is fundamental to excellent service. In this midyear report, we break down the top 5 trends businesses need to understand about service calls in 2022 and beyond—and what's needed to protect and optimize this critical communications channel.

Top 5 Trends

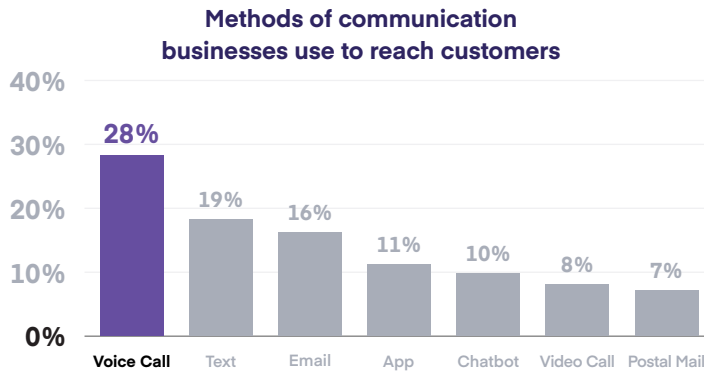
- ① **When it comes to excellent customer service, voice is still the go-to choice.**
- ② **Spam, scams, and fraud pose a growing threat—and they're making your customers wary of legitimate service calls.**
- ③ **Fraudsters are actively exploiting trusted businesses that make service calls, which makes the problem even worse.**
- ④ **The inability to connect with people via phone erodes customer satisfaction and loyalty—and ultimately the bottom line.**
- ⑤ **There's a proven solution: Adding caller identity increases connection rates.**

TREND 1

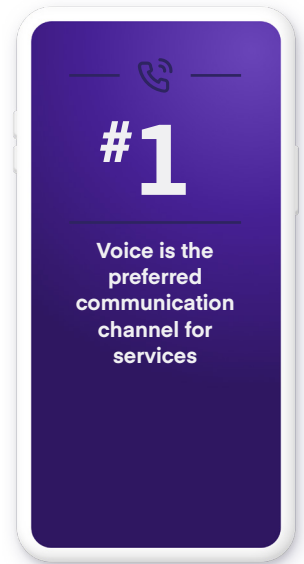
When it comes to excellent customer service, voice is still the go-to choice.

Customer service leaders certainly understand that customer experience depends on dynamic, omnichannel engagement. But there is no substitute for voice calls when it comes to delivering fast, quality outcomes.

Voice provides a personal connection without being intrusive, which in turn positively impacts customer experience. Businesses rely on the phone to provide the best possible customer service, whether it's responding to inquiries, scheduling appointments (or sharing an appointment reminder), or notifying that an order is ready. 28% of business professionals list it as their top communications channel for providing customer service, the clear leader among all options:



 **Services prefer voice**



While text/SMS messaging is becoming the top method of delivering notifications—such as prescription refill reminders or appointment reminders—the phone remains the preferred choice by a wide margin for general customer service and scheduling calls.

That's true across most countries and most industries, indicating widespread preference for voice-led customer service regardless of business characteristics. Moreover, it's not just a matter of status quo. Rather, voice usage for customer service has increased significantly in the past year, as have email and text messaging. During the previous year:

78% 

have seen an increase in their business's use of phone call

79% 

have seen an increase in their business's use of email

78% 

have seen an increase in their business's use of text messaging

TREND 1

The pandemic, continued supply chain disruptions, and other macro challenges have made excellent customer service more important than ever, with voice leading the way. In fact, with notifications—the only service call type where text outpaces voice—more businesses have seen an increase in usage of the phone in the past 12 months than any other type of service call:

85% 

increase in use of the phone
for notifications

75% 

increase in use of the phone
for customer service

74% 

increase in use of the phone
for scheduling

79% of businesses expect their use of the voice call for customer service to continue growing in the year ahead, too. 39% expect it to increase significantly.

TREND 2

Spam, scams, and fraud pose a growing threat—and they're making your customers wary of legitimate service calls.

From the data above, it seems like nothing but good news for phone usage and customer service in general. Customer service professionals are filling a vital need in their organizations using a diverse array of communication methods, with voice leading the way. And they can do so anytime, from virtually anywhere.

There are dark clouds looming on the horizon, however, that threaten to undermine the vital work of customer service teams: spammers, scammers, and fraudsters are more active than ever, and they're making it much harder for trusted businesses to connect with their customers.

In fact, these illegitimate calls have increased 35% since September 2021. In fact, mobile subscribers now receive an average of 14 unwanted calls monthly—that's nearly one call every other day!

This is a massive problem that's not going away on its own. These scam artists are becoming more sophisticated in their approaches, and that's making it harder for customers to distinguish spam or fraud calls from legitimate service calls. As a result, they're less likely to pick up the phone than ever, especially if they can't identify the caller.

38% of consumers say they never answer an unidentified call.

Just 10% of people say they always pick up the phone.

For everyone else (52%), it's essentially a coin flip: They sometimes pick up when an unidentified number calls, and sometimes they don't. Combined with the 38% of people who never answer unidentified calls, this puts most of your legitimate service calls at risk of going unanswered. This has enormous implications for customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, retention, and ultimately revenue and profits, as we'll see in the next trend.

TREND 3

Fraudsters are actively exploiting trusted businesses that make service calls, which makes the problem even worse.

Spam, scams, and fraud are getting worse because the bad actors who perpetuate them are now more likely to pass themselves off as legitimate businesses and exploit the hard-earned trust these brands have built with their customers.

They do this primarily in two ways: Hijacking a legitimate company's telephone number and using it to make calls to consumers, or masquerading as legitimate businesses as part of a scam.

These two tactics are already prevalent and do significant damage to consumer trust and business interests.

32%

of businesses making customer service calls have had their name used in scams by impersonators.

27%

of businesses have had their phone numbers hijacked by bad actors to operate scams.

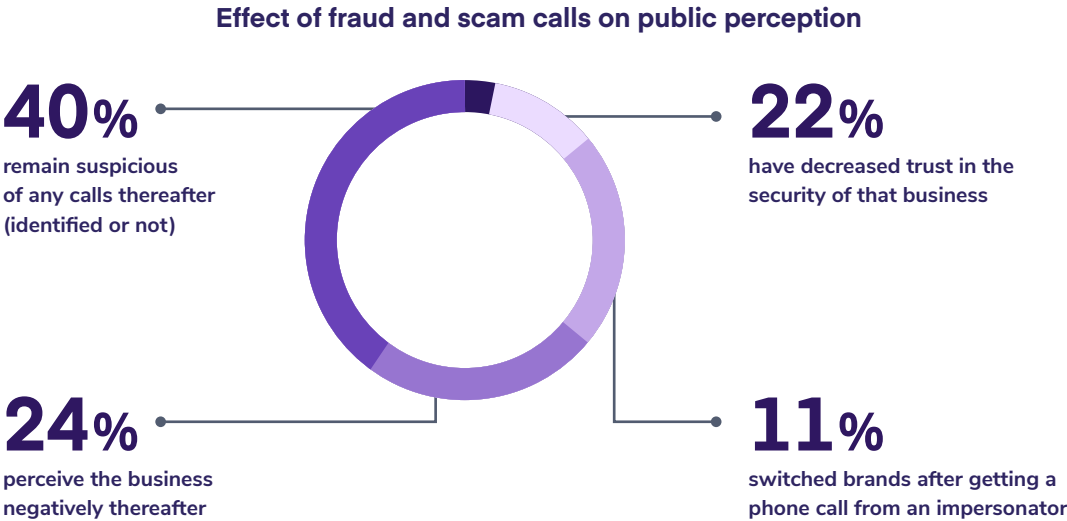
More so than any other call type, companies making service calls are the most likely targets for fraudsters to exploit. These bad actors don't just target the most well-known brands to perpetrate scams, they look for those that make calls to lots of customers. A consumer is far more likely to fall for a scam from a business they are familiar with than one they don't.

This is an enormous problem that customer service organizations must proactively address.

66%

of consumers say they know they have received a call from someone impersonating a legitimate business.

This has very damaging implications for businesses that make phone calls for customer service, scheduling, or notification purposes. Of those consumers who know they got a call from someone impersonating a legitimate business:



That’s a particularly urgent problem for businesses serving younger customers: GenZ and Millenials are 50% more likely to change brands after receiving a scam or spoofed call than preceding generations and 3x more likely to do so than Baby Boomers.

These are serious, lasting problems that—if left unchecked— will hurt customer outcomes and the business’s financial performance.

TREND 4

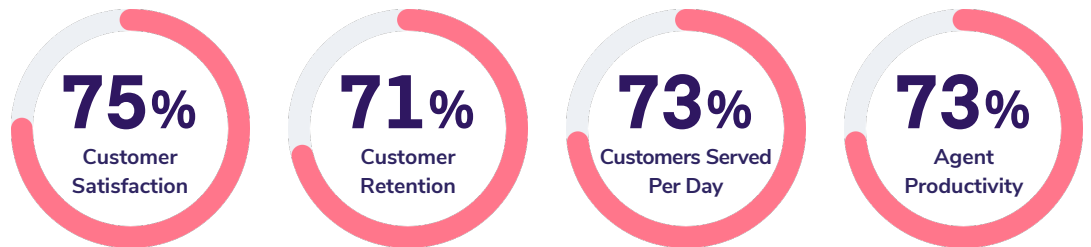
The inability to connect with people via phone erodes customer satisfaction, retention, and loyalty—and ultimately the bottom line.

Businesses continue to choose voice as their predominant communication method for customer service because it works so well. It's the fastest method of communication to resolve issues while providing a personal touch yet remaining unintrusive. But the problem of nuisance calls threatens the efficacy of the voice channel and leads to poorer outcomes for consumers and brands alike.

Customers are increasingly ignoring legitimate calls to avoid fraudulent ones, especially when those calls come from unidentified numbers. That directly negatively impacts customer satisfaction and revenue, because it makes it harder for service teams to quickly handle issues, schedule appointments, complete orders, and other needs.

In fact, the inability to effectively reach customers via phone is impacting multiple business objectives:

Percentage of respondents reporting negative impact as a result of inability to connect with customers by phone



Each of these measurements directly affects revenues and profits: Businesses making customer service calls nearly all say that they have been negatively impacted financially because of not being able to get through to customers via the phone:

92%

have been negatively financially impacted.

33%

saw significant financial impact.

No business can afford to ignore those impacts, which may only worsen if left unaddressed.

TREND 5

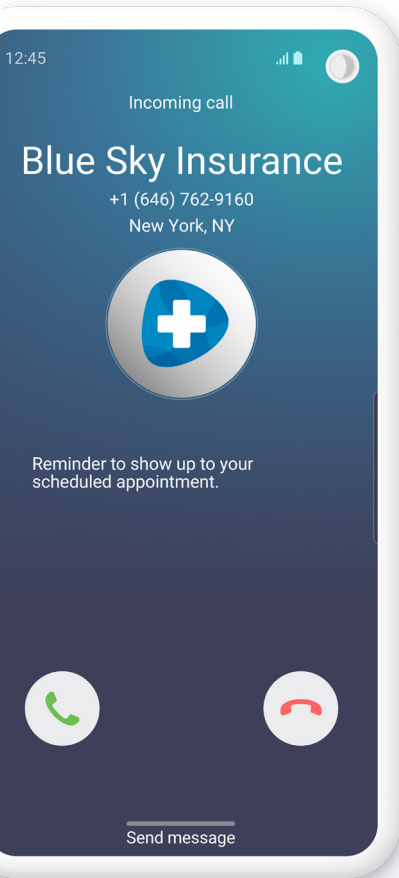
There’s a proven solution: Adding caller identity increases connection rates.

At the same time that businesses are making more phone calls than ever to customers, those customers are becoming less and less likely to answer the phone. Given the visible negative impacts on customer satisfaction and the business’s bottom line, something must be done.

The good news is that there’s an accessible solution: Adding caller identity to your outbound calls is proven to increase connection rates.

Asked about the best strategies for ensuring high call connection rates, 40% of businesses believe identity is the most effective way to increase call answer rates and provide higher quality customer service via phone. But the customer knows best. And when asked if they’d be more likely to answer the phone if a call was identified, it was overwhelming.

77% of consumers say they are more inclined to answer the phone if the name of the caller is displayed.



Consumers agree that identity is a critical factor in determining whether or not they’ll answer a call. Moreover, answer rates can as much as double with a branded caller ID solution.

Online food delivery company Just Eat saw its call [answer rates](#) grow within the first few months of using a branded caller identity solution, from 75% to 83%. Today, 87% of its calls are answered on the first attempt.

The spam and fraud problem is real—and its impacts cannot be ignored. Fortunately, the solution is well within reach.

Key Takeaways

The phone remains the most used communications channel for customer service because it works: Voice calls are reliable, personal, and fast, which boosts customer satisfaction and the bottom line.

But spam, scam, and fraud are threatening the customer experience—and business' bottom lines—because they make customers increasingly leery of answering their phones. That means they miss legitimate calls—including yours.

This has direct negative effects on agent productivity, customer satisfaction, revenue, and other key business indicators.

Businesses that make service calls of all types need to act to ensure their phone calls connect with customers.

A branded caller identity solution is rapidly becoming a must-have for customer service teams.

 **Discover how your business can get more calls answered with [Hiya Connect](#)**

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Learn more at hiya.com

Hiya is trusted by global businesses, carriers, and consumers to provide secure, engaging connections, and stop unwanted calls. Built on the world's leading Voice Performance Platform, Hiya connects businesses with their customers, helps carriers secure their networks, and protects people from spam and fraud calls. Hiya's SaaS applications, Hiya Connect and Hiya Protect, serve more than 200 million users, power services like AT&T Call Protect and Samsung Smart Call, and deliver voice performance insights to businesses across the globe.