# VOICE SERVICES

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# Understanding the negative impact of traditional phone systems

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Your traditional telecoms system could be killing your business – find out how a next generation phone system can give you competitive advantage

Informed business decisions rely on having accurate, timely information to hand. Finance, sales and support all produce useful data to assist with strategic decision-making, but this data may not always provide the full picture. It is these gaps that can mean mistakes creep into the planning process.

The solution is to identify other sources of information that can be used to support these business metrics.

One source of valuable insight is your business communications system.

Gaining access to valuable data about the use of your corporate telecoms can enable you to accurately assess business performance in terms of customer service delivery, sales and potential areas of missed opportunity, to assist with future strategic planning.

## Have calls been answered?

The ultimate goal should be for businesses to ensure that all incoming calls can be answered. However, we understand that this isn't always achievable, therefore provisions should be made to continue to service these customers whose calls are unable to be answered at the time.

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# Statistics show that customers hate leaving voicemail messages. In fact 69% of people that call a business will simply hang up rather than leave a message.

For the minority of customers who do record a voicemail message, an unreturned call is even more frustrating. It is crucial that all messages are followed up in a timely manner or your business risks losing those customers too.

## How long until a call is answered?

Rather than putting calls through to a mailbox, some businesses may choose to place incoming calls in a queue until an agent becomes available to answer. For the best customer service, the waiting time needs to be kept to a minimum or you risk customers abandoning the call before they get through.

Having visibility of these statistics in real time allows operations managers to see a number of useful metrics, including:

- Average call waiting time
- Call abandonment rates
- Average call duration

These figures can be further broken down to reveal departments, teams or individuals that would benefit from further training or assistance to improve service delivery in these areas.

## Customers rank speed of response, speed of resolution and staff friendliness as the three most important aspects of customer service -- Zendesk

### How successful are marketing campaigns?

Defining marketing campaign sucess always comes down to one single metric – how many new leads were generated? A good reporting system will allow operators to "tag" incoming calls using a specific account code. This code can then be used to denote several things depending on your needs, particularly whether the call is in response to a specific marketing campaign or call to action.

Using tags to categorise calls in this way makes it simple to generate reports that can be used to calculate overall marketing campaign success. These figures can be integrated with other feedback data to give a complete view of campaign responses and conversions, assisting with future resource and budget planning.

### How many calls were lost?

Just because a customer rings off before speaking to an agent does not mean that their business should be lost entirely. Using call reporting, managers can see a list of calls that were abandoned, along with the originating telephone numbers. This data can then be used to call the customer back, make apologies for the problems they had in getting through, and to try and follow up their query to a satisfactory conclusion.

The Institute of Customer Service (ICS) delivered its annual UK Customer Service Index (UKCSI) in July 2014, which highlighted the fact that customer satisfaction levels were at their lowest across all sectors since 2011.

Again, this information can be used to reduce lost sales and to identify individuals or departments that are not meeting service level expectations.

The combination of hosted telecoms and call reporting offers significant benefits for businesses. They have valuable data at hand to make informed business decisions, with the added benefit of having no need for any additional hardware or software to be installed on site. Everything is run from the cloud, keeping management and expenditure low without reducing the effectiveness of the solution.

## Takeaways:

Remaining with your existing traditional phone system could be putting your business at a significant disadvantage. Without access to valuable call reporting facilities gained with next generation alternative solutions, making effective operational decisions to improve business performance is much more difficult.

A hosted phone system can help businesses gain valuable insight about customer communications, including:

• Better planning for resource allocation
• Assisting with budgeting for future peaks in demand
• Improving the levels of customer service provided
• Helping to understand marketing campaign success
• Delivering additional insight that will help inform future business strategy
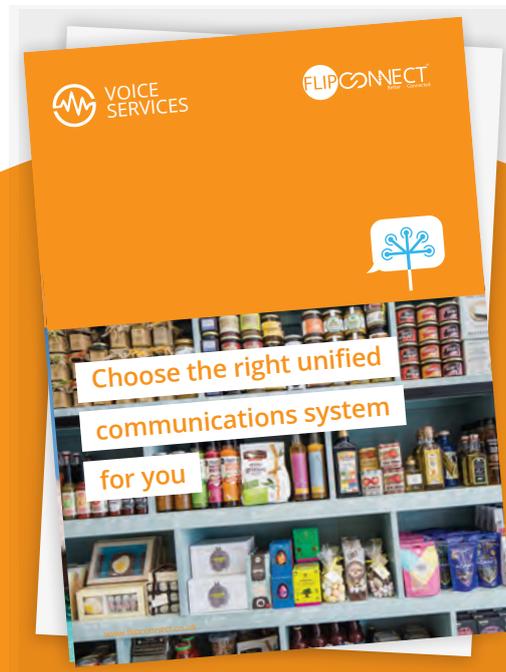
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