



# Customer Communications Trend Report 2023



# Introduction

In this report, we'll deep-dive into the state of business communication trends from customers' perspectives, and the important lessons for customer-centric businesses committed to improving service.

Amid ongoing technological changes and the rise of the hybrid working culture, two channels have proven themselves to be a stalwart in the world of communications – phone and email.

According to our latest research, when it comes to consumers contacting businesses, the phone and email are king with over 60% of people naming them as their preferred methods of communication.

Ultimately, we want real conversations with real people. And although digital platforms are on the up, nothing quite beats the human touch - no matter if it's verbally over the phone or written in an email.

This report explores the motivation behind calls to businesses and offers practical advice to those looking to gain a unique perspective on their customer experience and use it to differentiate themselves from competitors.



## The data

Moneypenny commissioned a report conducted by insight-driven research specialists, Censuwide, who surveyed 2,000 UK and US consumers between 1<sup>st</sup> June and 6<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

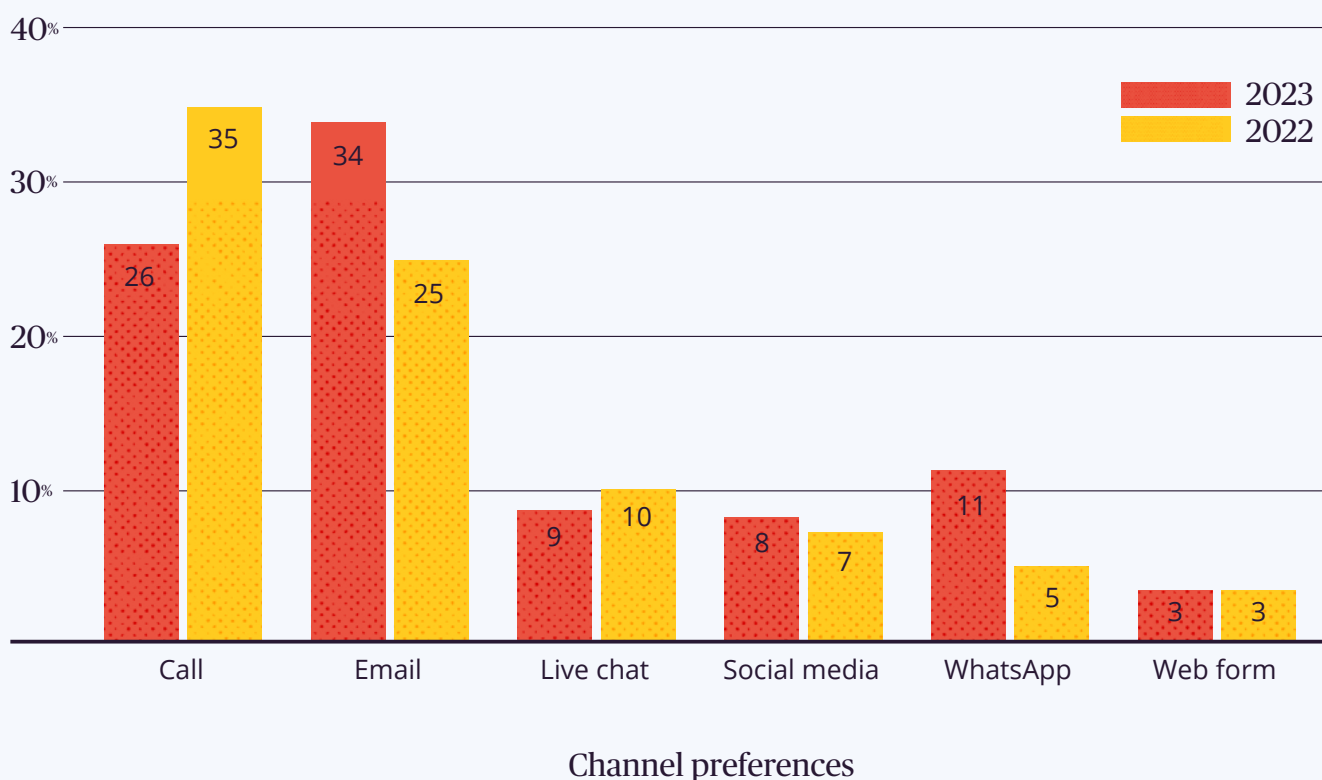
Respondents included an even split between Gen Z (aged 16-26), Millennials (aged 27-42), Gen X (aged 43-58) and Baby Boomers (aged 59-77). Unless otherwise stated, all graphs are sourced from the Moneypenny Censuwide Customer Communications Global Trend Report 2023.

## 2022 vs. 2023

Although a whole year has passed, the data from 2023 still reflects a similar pattern to that of 2022; phone and email remain the two most popular communication channels when it comes to consumers choosing how to contact a business.

While digital channels (such as social media, live chat and WhatsApp) have their place and offer an ideal alternative to consumers that are more comfortable with online communication, it's crucial that businesses don't neglect the more traditional platforms as, evidently, they are still in demand.

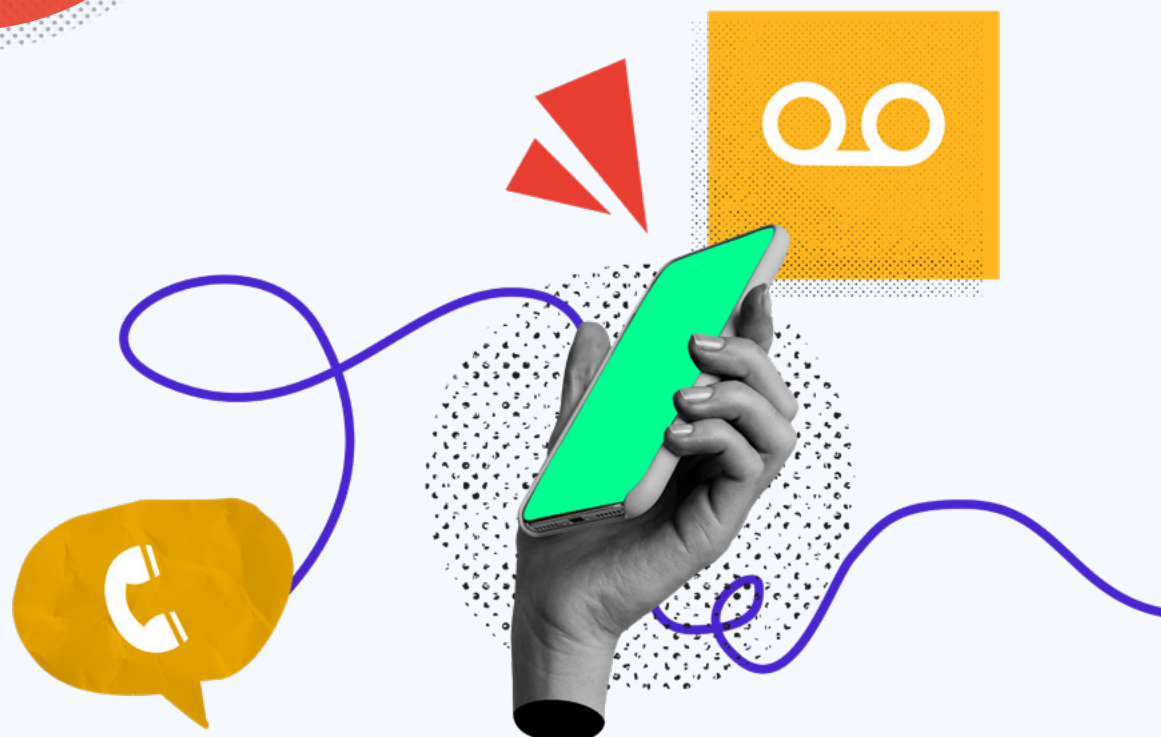
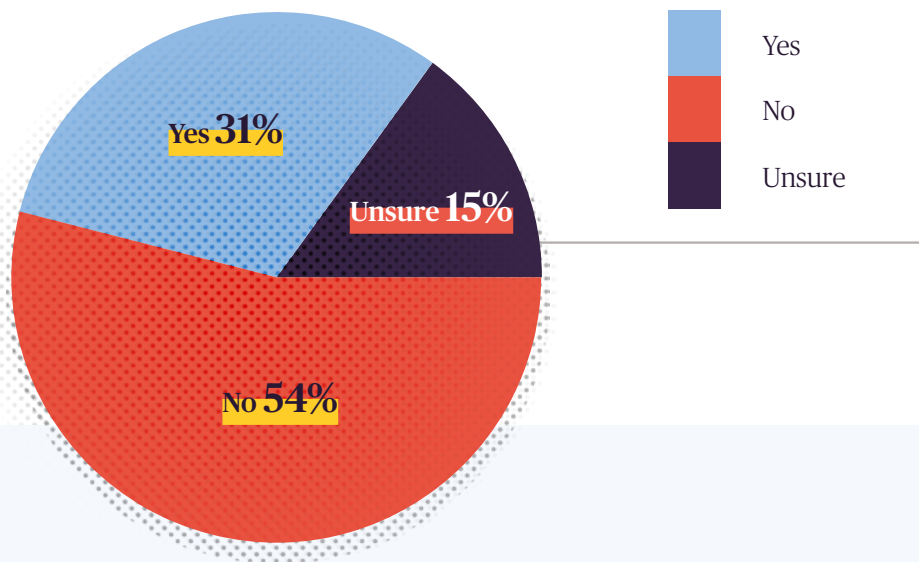
**We asked: When contacting a business, what is your preferred method of communication, if any?**



# Are voicemails on the way out?

According to our research, it's looking that way! Over half (54%) of people say they choose not to leave a voicemail when calling a business. With many businesses juggling a busy lead pipeline with a lack of internal resource, consumers may feel it's not worth leaving a voicemail as it doesn't guarantee them a call back at all.

**We asked: When you make a call, would you leave a voicemail?**

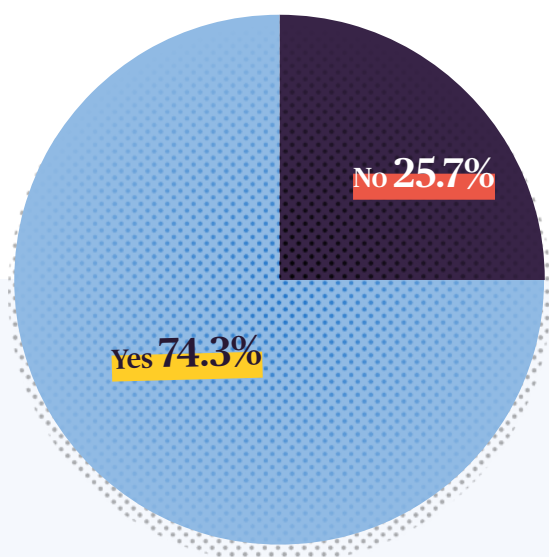


# Don't bury your phone number

Have you ever found yourself browsing through a business's website, trawling page after page just to try and find a contact number? We've all been there.

You can have the best website in the world, but if you're not signposting your number clearly throughout your content, you're ultimately at risk of losing valuable business.

**We asked: Do you feel frustrated when a business doesn't provide a contact number on their website, or makes it hard to find?**



## Businesses, take note!

47% of websites have a contact number that is difficult to find  
(Money Penny Digital CX research, 2023)

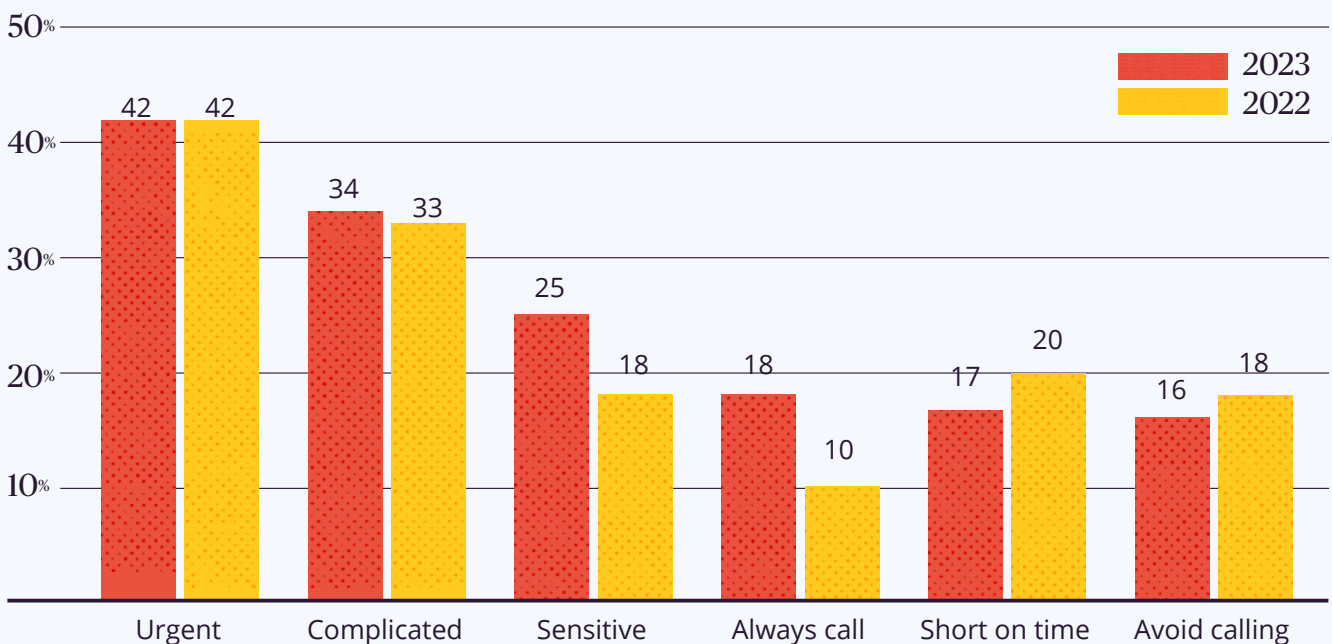


# Why are people picking up?

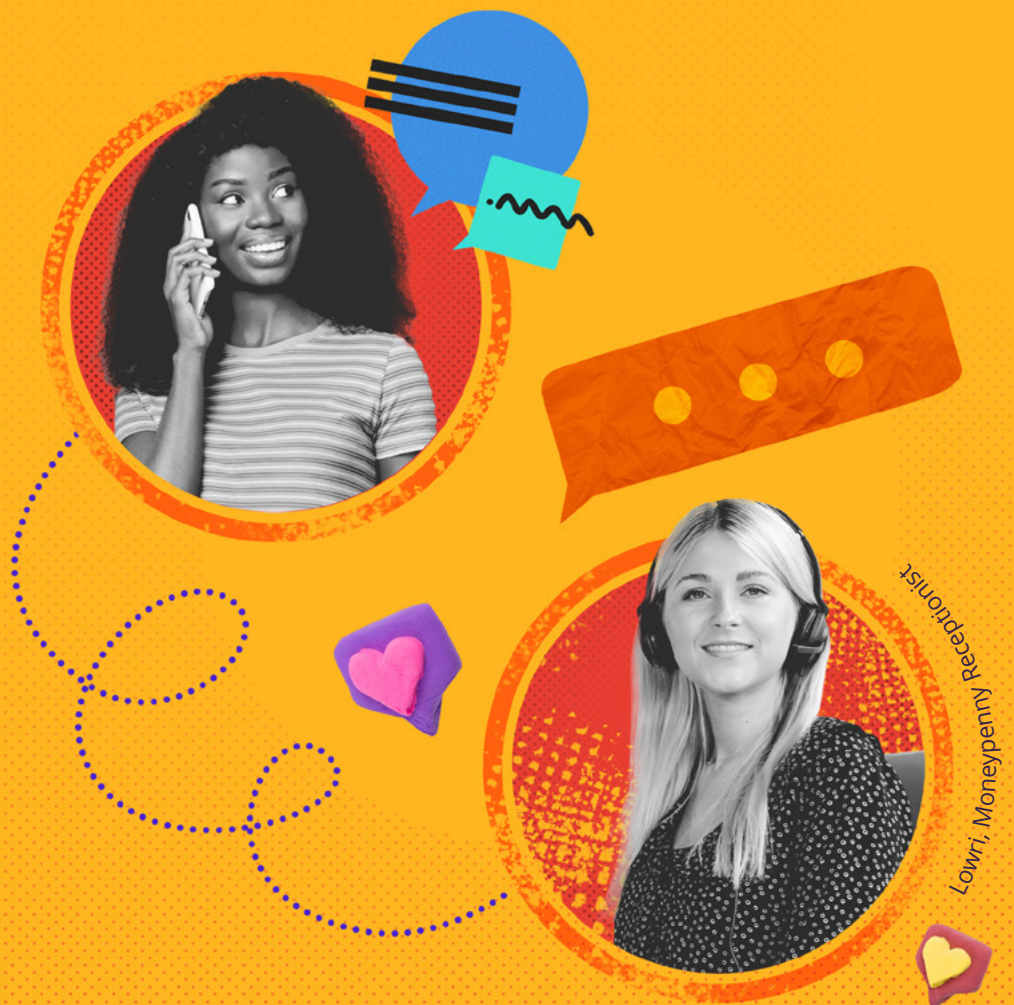
Since our 2022 report, the main drivers for calling a business remain the same - consumers are still most likely to call if they have an urgent, complicated or sensitive query. What does this tell us? That calls still matter, if not more now than ever before. 64% of people spend longer on the phone to businesses than they did three years ago. And this is significant, given the number was just 45% in 2022.

There's a strong emotional rationale behind how an individual chooses to get in touch. And with the phone, it's increasingly because they have complex needs that require a blend of expertise, empathy and discussion that simply can't be met any other way.

## We asked: What, if anything, would make you pick up the phone?



We may be making fewer calls, but the ones we do make demand more **care** and **attention** than ever before.



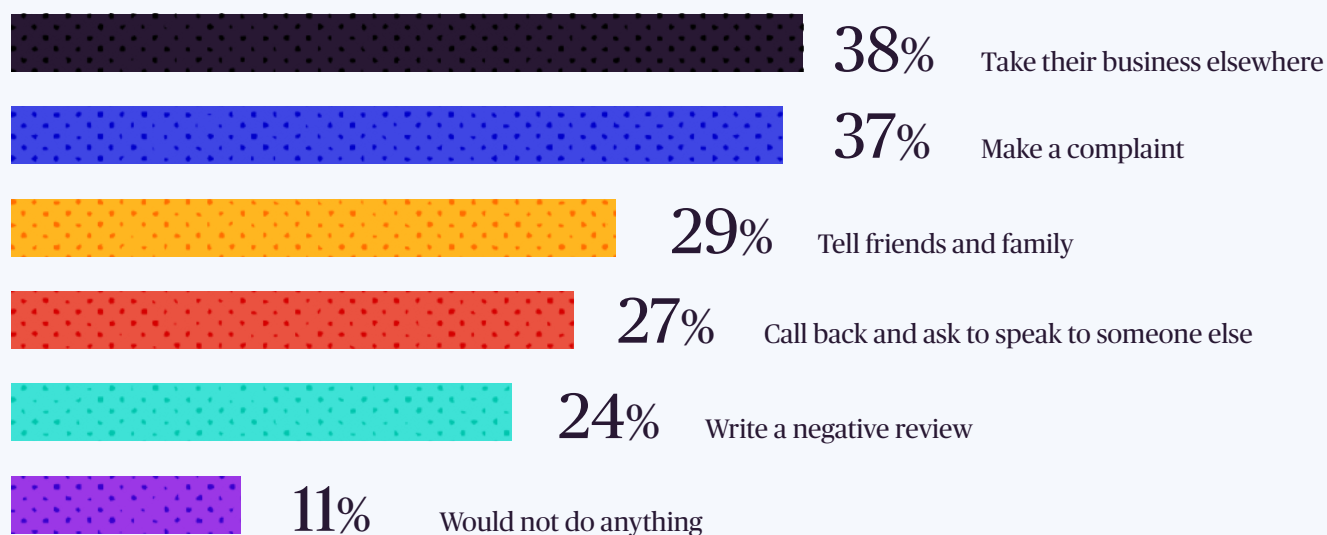
Lowri, Moneypermy Receptionist

# The bad call effect

So we're picking up the phone less, but when we do it's because our issue is urgent, sensitive or complicated.

It's perhaps not surprising then that when a caller has a negative experience, the impact is now far greater than it would have been three or four years ago.

## We asked: What actions do you take, if any, following a bad call experience?



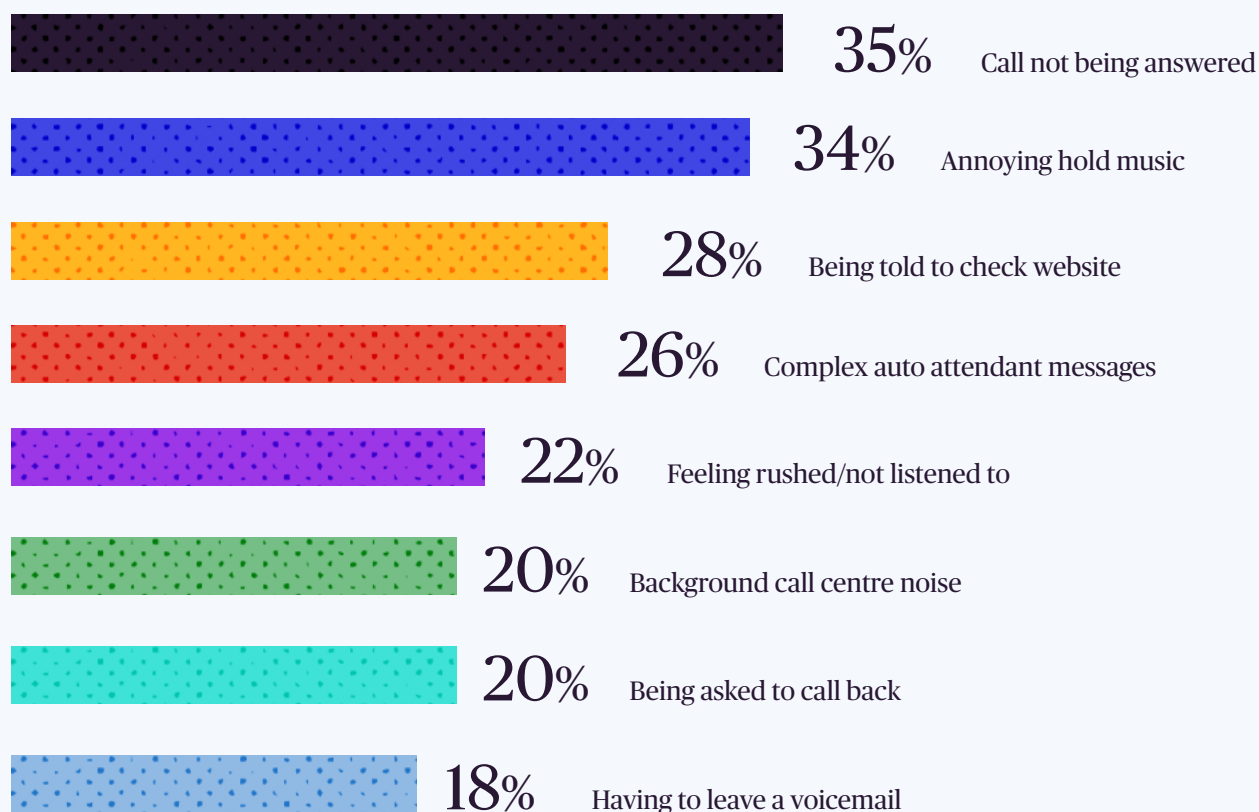
Our research shows that older generations are less likely to tolerate bad service. In fact, Baby Boomers are more than twice as likely to take action following a poor call than Millennials.



# What makes a bad call?

No business sets out to create a negative experience for their consumers. However, in moments of high stress, companies may slip into bad habits and unnecessarily frustrate their customers as a result.

## We asked: What frustrates you the most when calling a business?



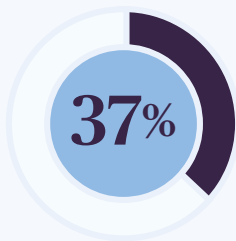
Looking at this from a generational perspective, Baby Boomers feel the most frustrated when their call isn't answered (48%) and by annoying hold music (48%), compared to Millennials (26% and 18%).

# The digital crossover

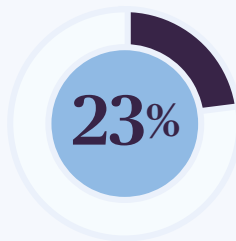
To succeed in delivering a great customer experience, businesses must deliver a consistent level of service across every single touchpoint – over the phone, online and in person. Traditional calls and digital channels must work together – not replace each other.

**We asked: Generally, how satisfied/dissatisfied are you with your experience solving an issue via digital channels (e.g. chat bots, FAQs, troubleshooting forums)?**

**2022**

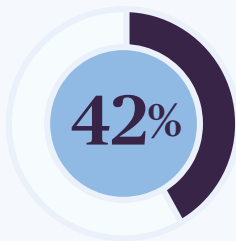


Satisfied

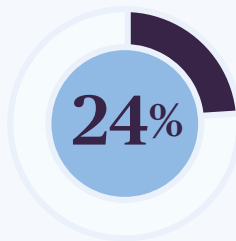


Dissatisfied

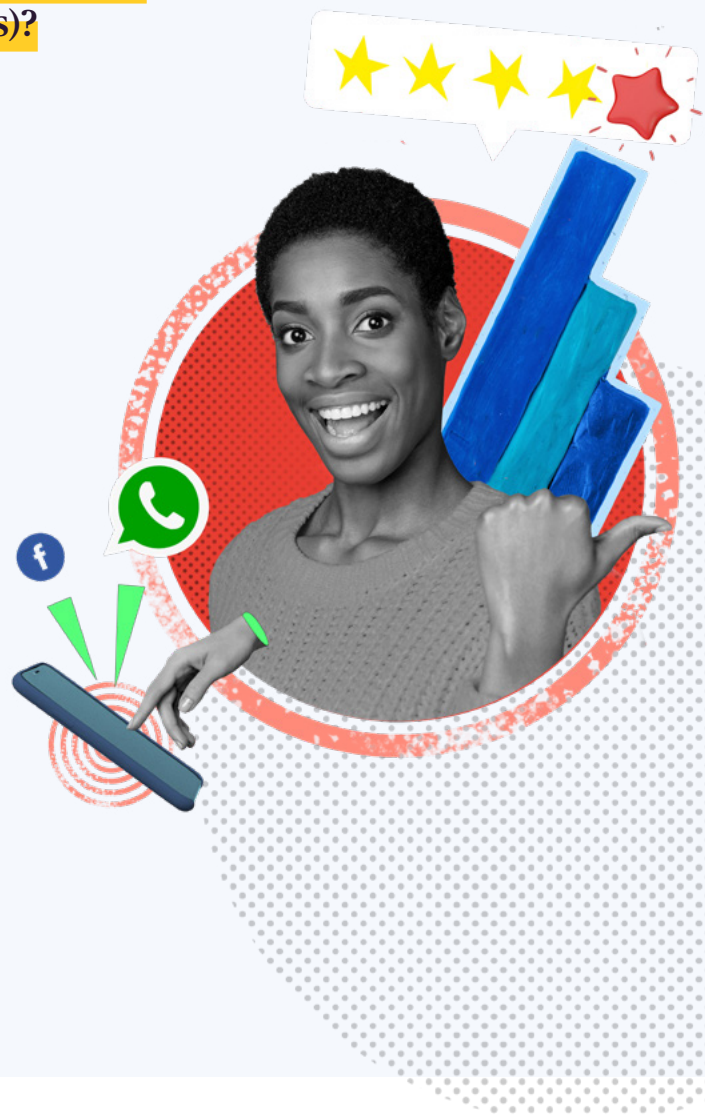
**2023**



Satisfied



Dissatisfied



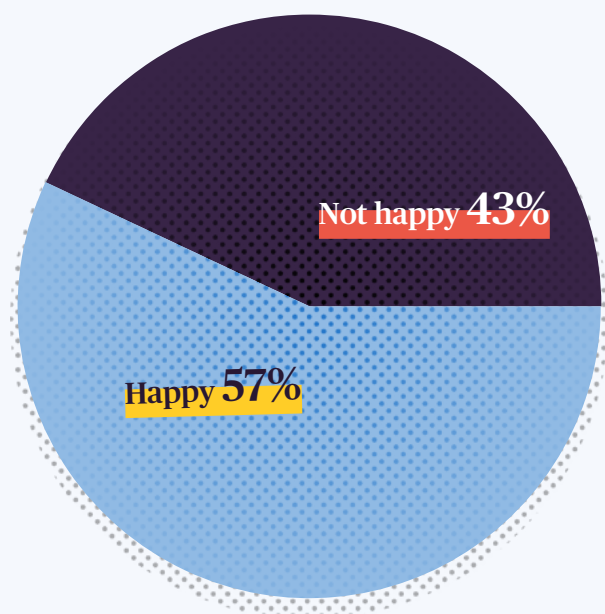
Generally speaking, younger age groups are happier using digital communication methods than older generations: 56% of Gen Z and 57% of Millennials are satisfied with solving a query via digital channels, compared with only 35% of Gen X and 24% of Baby Boomers.

# One to watch: live chat

For businesses keen to improve and protect their customer experience, convert more leads and bring brand values to life, live chat is a solution that cannot be ignored.

This technology gives businesses the chance to show themselves as modern, accessible and relatable, whilst also providing a useful way for customers to get in touch without having to make a call.

**We asked: How happy, if at all, do you feel about using live chat to contact a business or solve a query?**



## Businesses, take note!

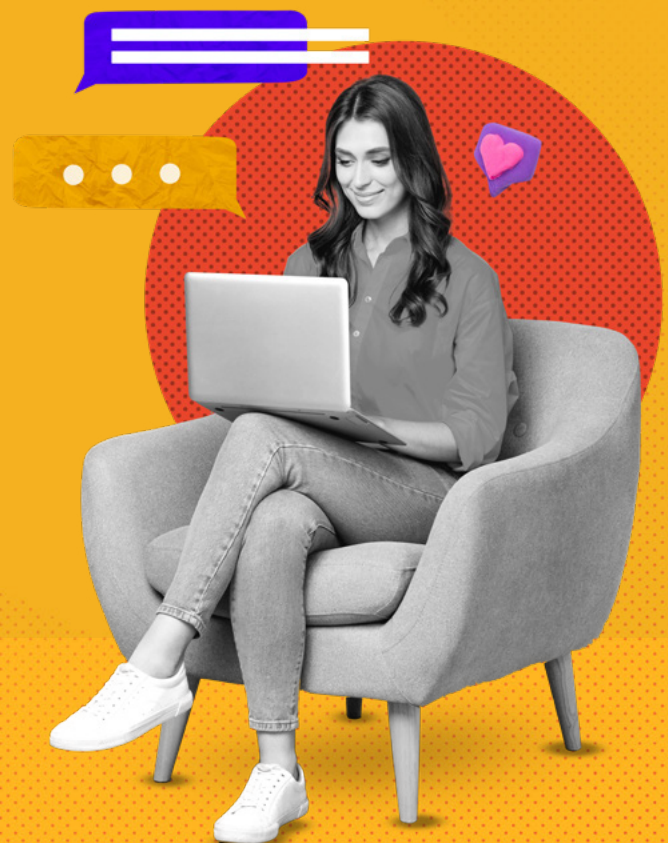
77% of consumers won't make a purchase on a website that doesn't offer a live chat facility.  
(Moneypenny Live Chat Academy research)

# Key takeaways

The telephone provides valuable human connection in a way that no other channel can. Short of speaking with someone face-to-face, a phone call is the best way to get a personal response, plus it gives businesses the opportunity to build rapport with prospects and maintain long-standing relationships with customers.

Consumer behaviour is changing, and while digital channels are increasing in popularity, inbound calls to businesses are increasing in importance. They come from a place of urgency, complexity and sensitivity and as such, your customers need you now more than ever.

- Don't neglect traditional channels - phone and email are still the most popular ways (over 60%) for consumers to contact you, so make sure that you're managing them both effectively.
- Remember, the demographic of your consumers play a part when it comes to communication channels. Have a think about what bracket your target audience falls into, and make sure you're leveraging their preferred platforms for maximum results.
- 42% of people are happy to have their query solved online, so complement your customer service with digital channels, such as live chat and social media, for a more well-rounded and slick experience.
- Don't be part of the 47% of businesses that make it hard for consumers to find their contact number online. Making them jump through hoops just to call you is never a good idea.



# Talk to the experts in exceptional caller experiences

Thousands of businesses rely on Money Penny to capture every call and live chat, and deliver first-class customer service on their behalf. If you'd like to know more about the ways we can support you, please get in touch.



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