

# Could the humble phone call be the future of digital CX?

 By [Rob Lith](#)

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Just a decade or so ago, a ringing phone going unanswered in a business didn't have anywhere near the potential for disaster that it does today. Callers would understand you may be busy or unavailable. They'd probably try again and get through later.

Today, a ringing phone is either a golden opportunity to capture a new customer or a glaring red-flag signalling that you're about to lose an existing one.

We live in a text-first society. If one of your customers has a problem they want to take up with you, your website is generally the first place they'll go. If it has a live chat function, they'll try that first. If you don't, or they receive no response, they are likely to resort to delayed-response text methods – including email and social media – which can take anywhere from a few minutes to a few days to be answered.



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A customer resorting to an actual voice call should be a warning that their patience is running thin, and some serious damage control is needed in order to appease them. And for this purpose, missing even one phone call could spell disaster for a business.

Similarly, a potential new customer will usually only resort to a phone call if they are serious about pursuing your goods and services. A Facebook enquiry or request for your online catalogue can signal a vague interest or weak intention, but a phone call is a sure-fire way to know they mean business and want to learn more about your offerings. In this case, too, you can't afford to let even a single call go unanswered.

## New telephony technologies

Rather than abandoning the century-old phone system, today's smart digital businesses are using new telephony technologies to make them more effective and customer-service oriented, to work seamlessly with digital communication methods rather than replacing them. Delegating the responsibility of answering phones to a PA or receptionist is simply not enough anymore.

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Calls need to be answered timeously, transferred appropriately, and offer the kind of personalised customer service that is fast becoming the key differentiator for so many businesses in the digital age.

PBX and VoIP systems for business are at the forefront of answering these needs, offering both hosted and managed options that make breathing new life into telephone systems in the workplace easier and more affordable than ever.

- They free up precious capacity for your receptionists, ensuring fewer calls are missed
- They are able to instantaneously capture and store customer details, as well as record calls for later reference and a better overall CX
- It becomes possible to automatically route calls to the best possible person to answer them, ensuring quick resolution of a customer's issues and increased likelihood of turning a lead into a customer
- Auto-attendance features provide a consistent and always-professional brand experience
- It can be procured and run entirely through the cloud and as a pay-as-you-use model, representing an affordable and maintenance-free way to digitise telephony for businesses of any size

Those businesses who neglect to use these technologies to their advantage cannot realistically claim that they are serious about improving their customers' experience.

And in an age where products and services – from foods to cars to technology – are becoming increasingly alike and ruthlessly competitive, getting serious about customer experience may be the most promising lifeline you have.

### ABOUT ROB LITH

Rob Lith is the director of Connection Telecom. ICT Industry aficionado and internet specialist, he has been involved in the industry for the last 20 years. Email him at [rob@connection-telecom.com](mailto:rob@connection-telecom.com)

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