

# New survey shows how companies are using COVID as an excuse to not answer the phone

*US Companies leave us hanging on the telephone. New survey shows companies are using Covid as excuse for poor customer communications*

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- A new survey suggests that an increasing number of companies are using the COVID pandemic as an excuse for poor communications with customers. The survey of 1,000 US adults, by leading communications company [Moneypenny](#), shows that 83% of people believe that 11 months into the pandemic, an increasing number of companies are stating that there will be a delay in answering phone calls, or engaging in live chat, due to unusually high call volumes caused by the pandemic.

However, what is surprising is that people seem understanding of the situation, as 61% said they believe phone delays are acceptable due to COVID. This contrasts with 55% of a further 1,000 adults surveyed in the UK who believe such delays are inevitable. Middle-aged US consumers seem more accepting of delays than older ones: 76% of 35-44 year olds said phone answering delays are acceptable, compared with 54% of the over 55 year olds.

There were also clear regional differences in acceptance levels: 64% of those in the South said phone answering delays are acceptable, compared with 59% in the Midwest.

[Call answering](#) waiting times

The survey also indicates the average length of time US customers have to wait for their call or Live Chat request to be answered:

- 24% said they have to wait 1-5 minutes
- 25% have to wait 5-10 minutes
- 18% have to wait 11-20 minutes
- 12% have to wait 21-45 minutes



-6% have to wait 45-60 minutes  
-19% typically give up waiting altogether

The youngest customers are most likely to give up waiting for their call to be answered: 22% of 16-24 year olds, compared with 16% of 35-44 year olds.

Businesses with longest call waiting times

When asked which types of companies and organizations are the worst for

answering calls, or for not being able to get through to them, utility companies and doctors were most frequently mentioned – 28% each, followed by phone companies and banks – 26% each, then insurance companies – 24%. Those that were mentioned least, were legal companies – 9% and property companies – 7%.

There were some startling differences between the regions: utility companies were mentioned as the worst for answering calls by 31% of those in the Northeast and 29% in the South. In contrast, doctors came out worst in the Midwest – 28%, while banks were cited as the worst to get through to in the West – 29%.

Group CEO of Money Penny, Joanna Swash, believes companies are not doing enough to resolve waiting times: "It's interesting that legal and property companies were least likely to be mentioned for poor answering times as we know from our clients in these sectors that they prioritize good customer service. However, the survey shows that the pandemic is too often being used as a scapegoat for companies delivering unbelievably poor communications, and consumers should not accept this as inevitable. Even with reduced staff through redundancies and furloughing, there are so many cost-effective solutions available to ensure customer calls and live chat can continue, so it's not good enough for companies to do nothing and reduce service levels. As businesses open, there is a real danger that customers will move to a competitor because of poor service levels."

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