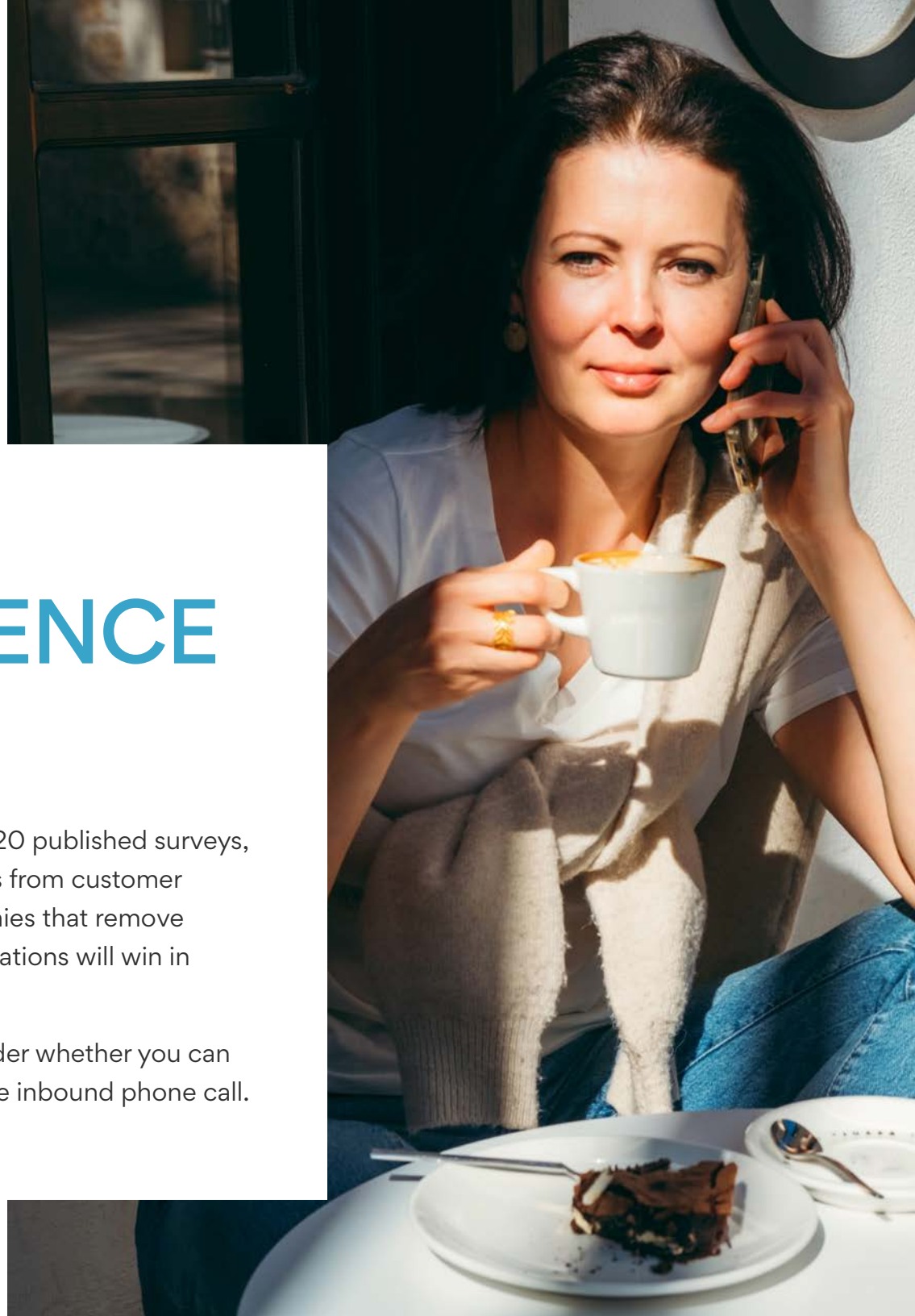




THE CALLER EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITY

At the start of 2023, Easy On Hold® analyzed more than 20 published surveys, crunched the latest statistics and compiled best practices from customer experience experts. They tell a compelling story: Companies that remove friction from customer touchpoints and have real conversations will win in 2023.

Flip through the stats and quotes in this report and consider whether you can improve your most popular customer contact channel, the inbound phone call.



Human to human. It's still our favorite way of interacting with a brand. The latest research shows that the telephone still dominates as your customers' preferred way to reach you. As the provider of caller experience technology and content for many of America's best-known brands, Easy On Hold® has developed strategies to turn your busiest customer touchpoint into a source of customer satisfaction.



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“Good CX is the difference between happy, loyal customers and one-time, dissatisfied customers. Companies who successfully implement a CX strategy achieve higher customer satisfaction rates, reduced customer churn and increased revenues.”

Shellie Vornhagen, CXO, Exemplifi ¹

The importance of good CX

Customer Experience (CX) can be described as **every interaction your customer has with your company or brand**. Similar terms used are Customer Journey and Customer Touchpoints. Each interaction presents an opportunity for success or failure, friction or satisfaction.

Good CX grows revenue

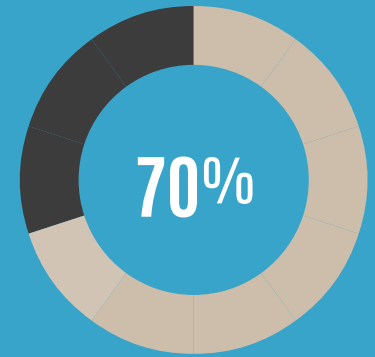
“Customer Experience leaders outperform the market,” concludes HubSpot in their 2022 [Customer Experience ROI report](#)⁵. How much more? Companies that prioritize customer experience grow revenue 1.7 times faster than those that do not. A [SuperOffice survey](#)⁶ concludes that 86% of buyers are willing to pay more for a great experience.

Bad CX is costly

Unhappy interactions can stall or stop sales. Surveys reveal that a shocking majority of consumers have stopped doing business with a brand due to poor service. Companies are finding it hard to catch up with growing customer expectations, as revealed in the [HubSpot State of Service in 2022 report](#)⁸. Further, customers are more likely to spread the word about their experiences with your brand.

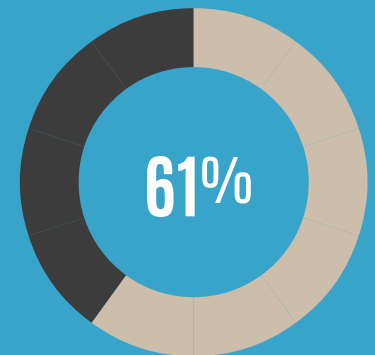
“Satisfied customers drive financials. The cause-and-effect link between customer satisfaction and financial performance is overwhelmingly strong.”

[Harvard Business Review, January 10, 2023](#)⁴



Make purchasing decisions based on quality of customer service

[Zendesk CX Trends 2023 Study](#)²



Would switch brands after ONE bad experience

[Zendesk CX Trends 2022 Study](#)³

The state of customer experience

“If your customers are unhappy, you might be in trouble. But if you’ve invested in their experience, you’re well-poised to grow from their success.”

- Hubspot Research, 2022 ⁵

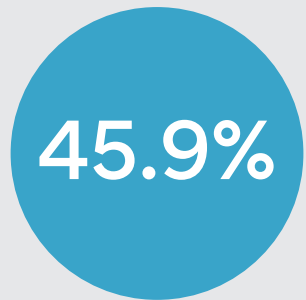
Table 1 / 2022 Customer Service Research

QUESTION	YES	NO
Have you stopped doing business with a brand due to poor customer service? ⁷	68%	32%
Do you prefer to find information about a company without contacting customer support? ⁷	9%	91%
Do you have higher expectations for customer service now than you had a year ago? ⁸	88%	12%
Are you more likely today to share a positive or negative experience compared to the past? ⁸	85%	15%
Are you likely to make a repeat purchase from a company that offered excellent service? ⁹	93%	7%
Would you switch to a new brand after just one bad experience? ⁹	61%	39%

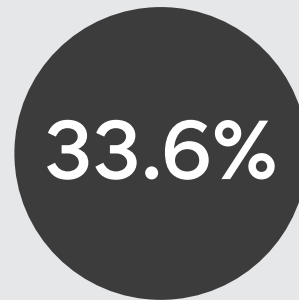
CX trends

“88% of customers say the experience a company provides is as important as its product or services – up from 80% in 2020.” Salesforce State of The Connected Customer, 5th Edition, 2022 ¹⁰

What is the top priority for your business in the next 5 years?



Customer
Experience



Product



Price

SuperOffice: 32 Customer Experience Statistics You Need To Know For 2023 ¹¹



“In 2023, consumers increasingly want their relationships and interactions with brands to be memorable and experiential. This means that brands that want to stay relevant must create customer journeys that are thoughtful, memorable experiences.”

Business advisor Bernard Marr,
Forbes Top 4 Customer Experience Trends in 2023¹²

Customers expect more than ever

The Amazon Web Services 2022 Achieving Customer Amazement Survey interviewed over 1,000 consumers to find out what their thoughts are about the customer experience.

The results underscore the rising importance of customer experience among consumers.

Source: [The 2022 ACA Study - Shep Hyken](#) ¹³

PARTICIPANTS

21% GenZ (ages 18-25)

38% Millennials (ages 26-44)

32% GenX (ages 45-56)

18% Boomers (ages 57-65)

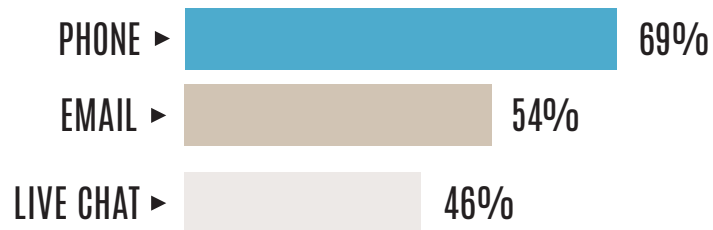
Table 2 / 2022 AWS Achieving Customer Amazement Survey

CX STATEMENT	%	TREND FROM 2021
I want to easily reach an agent	88%	▲ 3%
I never want to be placed on hold	31%	▲ 2%
If I experience good service, I will do more business with a company	80%	▲ 9%
If I have a bad experience with a company, I will tell my family and friends	76%	▲ 5%
When I have an issue with your company/brand, I will call on the phone for help	65%	▲ 6%
I trust a brand more if they provide an excellent experience	83%	▲ 4%
My preferred method of contacting a company for customer service is the telephone	71%	▲ 4%

The telephone channel dominates

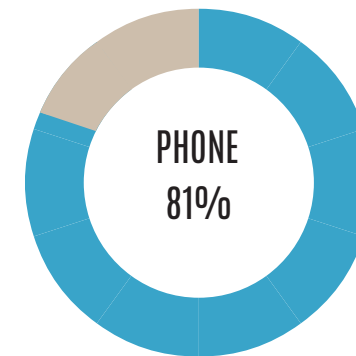
“Phone calls are still the dominant contact method.” CFI Group Contact Center Satisfaction Index, 2022 ¹⁴

Preferred channel for contacting for **any reason**
[CGS 2022 Customer Experience Report ¹⁵]



Preferred channel for **customer service**

[Microsoft Dynamics 365 State of Customer Service Report, 2022 ¹⁶]

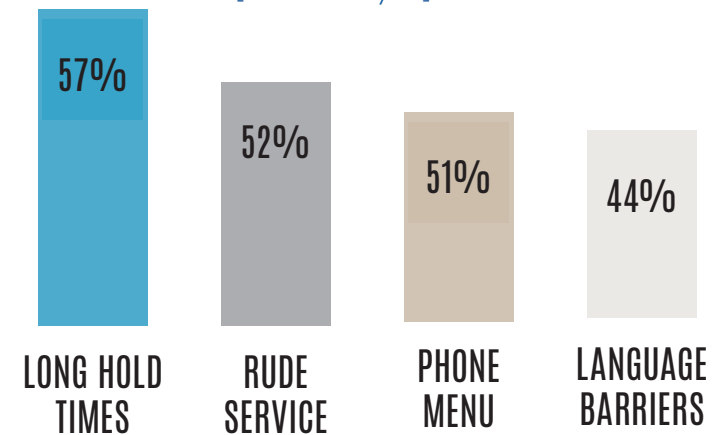


What customers hate most when trying to contact you [EIN Presswire 10/17/2022 ¹⁷]



FRICITION: What frustrates callers

[Clutch survey ¹⁸]



The caller experience opportunity

“The results of our survey demonstrate the enduring popularity of the phone, despite the plethora of communication channels now available to us. Customers use the phone when they have an urgent or sensitive issue to discuss, so **companies cannot afford to provide a poor call experience**, or business will be taken elsewhere.”

Eric Schurke, CEO, North American for communications group Money Penny ¹⁹



Managing caller frustration

The COVID-19 pandemic shut down face-to-face communications and fueled the investment in multichannel platforms. But because most consumers prefer the telephone channel, call centers became overwhelmed. In 2021, 90% of consumers said they had a bad caller experience in the past six months [[Replicant 2021 Contact Center Survey](#) ²⁰].

Even as technologies improve, call volume continues to rise. The [2022 CGS Customer Experience Report](#) ¹⁵ concludes, “**companies are still averaging a 14% volume increase in call centers.**” Today’s consumers expect more wait-on-hold time, and they’re getting it.

“We want real conversations with real people, and aside from face-to-face meetings or video calls—which people are quickly tiring of post-lockdown—only the phone will do.”

[Money Penny 2022 Customer Communications Global Trend Report](#) ¹⁹



How long will they wait?

Most consumers will hang up within the first five minutes of being “on hold.” At the ten-minute mark, almost half of those placed on hold will have abandoned the call.

1 TO 5 MINUTES

43%

5 TO 10 MINUTES

39%

SOURCE: [Microsoft Dynamics 365 Global State Of Multichannel Customer Service Report](#) ⁶

4 ways to make hold time seem shorter

Long hold times generate frustration, so how can we make hold times seem shorter?

1

Use the human voice. While callers wait, earn their attention with spoken content to satisfy the need for the human touch and conversational interactions. Only discuss topics that are relevant and helpful to the caller. When people are being helped, they don't hang up.

2

Never "loop" content. A repetitive loop of on-hold music or content quickly creates fatigue. Instead, focus on variety. Use individually packaged voiced messages of no more than 50 words, each with its own music of varying lengths. Consider using both male and female voices.

3

Don't remind callers that they're holding. Studies show the phrase, "your call is important" will cause hang-ups. Avoid apologies and any reference to waiting. Typical, expected phrases remind callers of other unhappy wait-on-hold experiences they've endured.

4

Do something unexpected. If you're able to integrate live streaming voiced messages, use topics targeted for a specific time or day, or day of the week. Imagine hearing, "Good morning" or "Tonight and every Wednesday our service department is open until six PM."

5 ideas for making callers happy

You can say a lot in 30 or 60 seconds. Here are some tips to get started.

1

Hold time is a golden opportunity to help callers. When people are being helped, they don't hang up. Start with frequently-needed answers. Instead of generic on-hold messages, excite callers by talking about current events, limited-time offers, and other time-sensitive information.

2

These days, security counts. What steps are you taking to protect customer information? Build trust by reassuring callers that you have their best interest in mind. Talk about your standards, certifications, and be transparent about how you protect customer information.

3

Connect to and support other marketing initiatives. When your audience responds to your outbound marketing messages, mirror the content in your inbound channel, your phone system. Align your marketing calendar with your messages on hold.

4

As your contact center provides more self-help options, be sure callers hear about them. Friendly suggestions on where to get help belong in the queue and on-hold. While a majority of customers prefer human contact, many will accept digital self-service to solve simple problems.

5

Many Easy On Hold® clients have discovered that the hold queue is an effective recruiting tool. Like word-of-mouth marketing, on-hold marketing can build your company's reputation for being a great place to work. You just might find your next great hire among customers waiting on hold.

Elevate the in-person customer experience

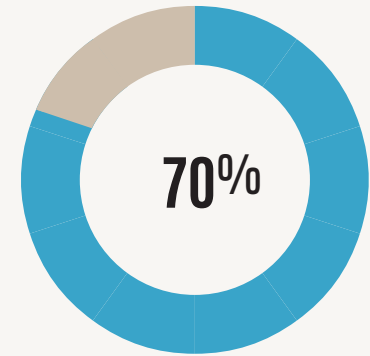
Music and announcements in your space bring energy and excitement to your brand.

Consider a professional music service for staff and visitors to enjoy.
Note: Playing music in a commercial setting requires licensing.

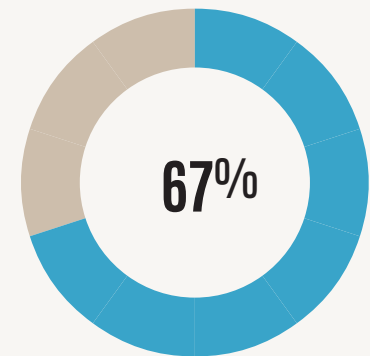


The 2-Channel Business Audio System ²¹ plays a continuous stream of music you select in your secure portal.

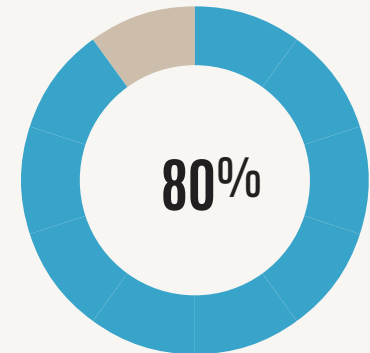
- Mix up to 4 channels of curated music in any genre
- Family-friendly lyrics only
- ASCAP, BMI, SESEC, GMR, SOCAN - all licenses paid on your behalf
- Add announcements between songs
- Choose the number of songs to play between announcements



Shoppers who say they're more likely to shop at places that play music they enjoy ²²



Agree that background music incentivizes them to make purchases ²²



Shoppers say music "lifts their mood" ²³

Conclusion

Customer experience is all about how you make people feel when they interact with your brand or company. With focus, good CX will build a long-term, loyal customer base, leading to increased revenues.

Several revealing surveys and studies demonstrate the importance and value of focusing on CX in 2023 and beyond.

Consumers are trending toward improved experiences and seek less friction at every brand touchpoint. They value experiential, yet speedy interactions that are **natural and conversational**.

Talking to a human on the phone is still the most preferred method of contact, but hold time generates discord. Reactions to typical on-hold experiences range from disappointment to anger.

Techniques for making hold time seem shorter should be adopted, including the use of relevant and helpful **voiced messages**. Those on hold are already reaching out to you and are in a position to make a buying decision, creating the perfect **caller experience opportunity**.



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