



CALL CENTER MANAGEMENT: THE PIECE YOU MAY BE OVERLOOKING

Customers still prefer the voice channel for connecting with your business. Unfortunately, many call centers overlook the hold time 86% of callers must endure on each business call. If you're in call center management, you may be missing the importance of high-value queue and on-hold content.



easyonhold.com

ANOTHER CALL CENTER MANAGEMENT CHALLENGE

You've spent months with your telecom team evaluating the best software from platforms like Genesys, Avaya, Cisco, Asterisk, and Broadsoft that will take your busy call center to the next level. You want to handle every call with excellence, from intuitive IVR, skills-based routing and chat to computer telephony integration, desktop notifications, and CRM integrations. Have you focused on the in-queue and on-hold caller experience?

Easy On Hold has published a guide to help your call center management team provide frictionless customer experiences by adopting best practices for 2022 and beyond queue and on-hold.

Consumers are more sophisticated than ever, and sitting through bad on hold music and messaging will cause two-thirds of them to hang up after two minutes. The super-irritated callers will go one step further, taking their aggression out in social media to complain about your brand. They do; we've seen it over and over.

According to a study from Walker, customer experience has overtaken price and product as the key brand differentiator in 2020. As hold times have more than doubled during the COVID-19 pandemic, the in-queue on hold experience has become a critical piece of business success. The country's savviest brands are shifting their attention to perfecting the on hold experience to improve customer satisfaction scores (CSATs), drive sales, reduce hang-ups, and increase customer engagement with their brand's other channels. A strategic combination of licensed music, content, custom scheduling, and [streaming technology](#) enables top brands to connect with callers and keep them coming back.

The country's savviest brands are Embrace "smooth" as a CX design principle. Design and create "smooth" experiences using technologies and processes to remove friction in B-to-B interactions .

[Walker Customers 2020 Progress Report](#)

ACCORDING TO THE STATS, HOLD TIME MATTERS

Executives on average spend 15 minutes every day—that's 60 hours a year—on hold. — USA TODAY

7 out of 10 business callers are placed on hold before the call is completed. — INBOUND/OUTBOUND

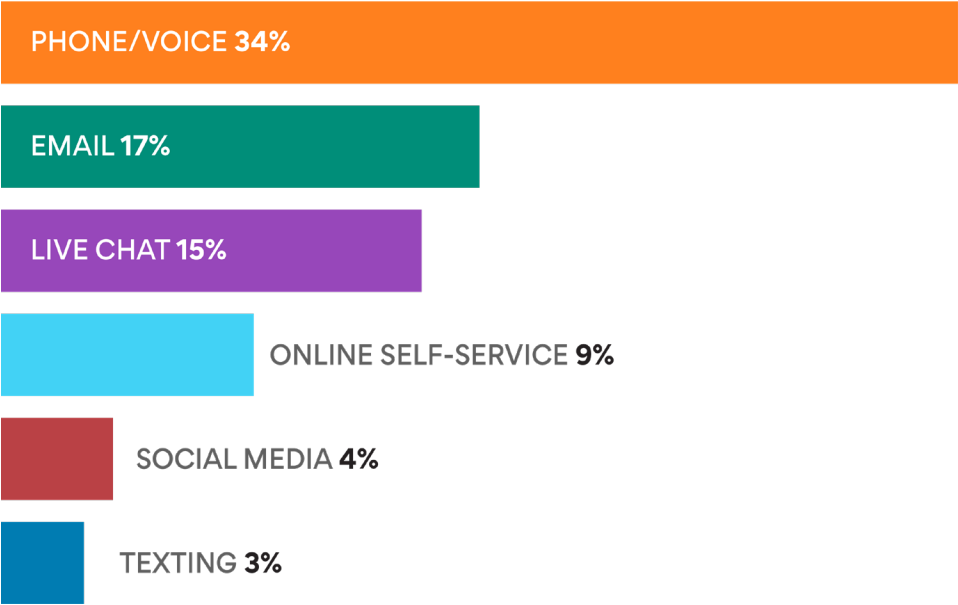
After an average of 1 minute 55 seconds of hold time, most callers hang up. Of those, 34% won't call back. — SMALL BUSINESS CHRONICLE

Most business callers get placed on hold at some point. Even if the average hold time is short, holding multiple times will add to the total time someone spends in the dreaded hold queue. If the hold time is long from the get-go, the risk of abandoned calls is clear.

MOST CONSUMERS STILL PREFER ASSISTANCE BY PHONE

Consumers prefer the telephone over other channels of communication when connecting with a business.

[State of Global Customer Service Report](#) by Microsoft



IN THE CALL CENTER MANAGEMENT WORLD, **THE HOLD EXPERIENCE IS** OFTEN AN AFTERTHOUGHT.

Almost 94% of all marketing budgets are spent on funneling a customer toward a call. Only 6% is spent on handling the call once it is received. — INBOUND TELEPHONE CALL CENTER

Up to 15% of a company's customer base is lost each year, and what's the culprit two-thirds of the time? Indifferent or negative phone treatment — OREN HARARI OF THE TOM PETERS GROUP

So your company gets their flashy new Unified Communications set up, CRM integrations for customer data, and marketing content that brought them to your business. More than 1/3 callers were reaching out to buy something! And then they heard silence or a low-quality music loop and hung up (possibly forever).

Most calls include time-on-hold. We know **poor experiences lead to hang-ups and lost revenue**. Yet, companies still refuse to allocate resources to the hold experience, creating the 'indifferent or negative' experience referenced by Harari. In essence, failure to make a positive caller experience costs companies more money than they're saving.

Simply put, businesses will spend more to pique the interest of their potential customers, and then fail to use an efficient follow-through system. A system that will help them secure and convert these potential customers when they make calls to your business.

[Reachify](#)

ON HOLD MESSAGING ROI

So what can you do to deliver an exceptional experience and reap the benefits in brand loyalty and bottom-line growth?

First, your company must believe there's ROI in [music and messaging on hold](#). Thousands of **call centers that institute a robust on hold marketing program see a significant increase in inquiries about products and services** from callers who were hearing about them for the first time or were in a mood to act.

Others see reduced hang-ups because the hold experience was pleasing; they didn't want to hang up. Still, others received valuable information that allowed them to make a repair or solve a problem themselves. Be sure to add bottom-line results to the 'soft' victories that help improve CSATs.

The tactics that work involve music licensing, voice talents, scriptwriting, and the right technology to serve content to your callers. Our company and many others offer a suite of services to assist in the entire process. By the end of this article, you will have a list of good ideas for reducing caller friction.



Get The Music Right

Begin by ditching the default music, which is nothing more than the same-old-elevator-music used by plenty of other companies with that same phone system. Callers will know you spent zero dollars on their hold queue experience. Instead, obtain licensed music from a reputable vendor. The licensing is critical here and, if not handled correctly, can result in tens of thousands of dollars in fines. These [music licensing agencies](#) don't mess around.

So what can you do to deliver an exceptional experience and reap the benefits in brand loyalty and bottom-line growth? [Browse hold music tracks](#) that are more modern and high-quality. You might be able to stream hit music by famous artists. Match the hold music to your caller profile and your brand, and it will be a significant and welcome improvement over the low-grade music you used to have.

Add Helpful Content For A Valuable Caller Experience

that average around 50 words each, assembling them in a library of 8 or more in a cloud-based dashboard for the clients to approve. They can pause them in real-time, schedule them to play again in the future, or leave them archived forever. Think of each message like a Tweet; clear, engaging, and to the point.

Focus on your callers' wait time experience with music and messaging that strategically keeps callers from hanging up, maximizing revenue from your client base.

“When callers were presented with messages (promotional or otherwise) on hold versus silence or a radio commercial, they stayed on hold longer, were more likely to be interested in the product advertised, were more likely to retain information, and were less annoyed at the wait time.” - Jefferson Dennealen Marketing

Use Multiple Customized Caller Experiences

Companies can hit a home run with their hold experience by targeting specific caller groups. Plenty of contact center VoIP systems allows precise content playback for various hold queues. An experienced [messages on hold company](#) can help you with the complex scripting, recording, producing, music licensing, and streaming platform technology to make it happen.

The reality with marketing today is that “one size fits all” is no longer acceptable, which goes for your modern contact center. Callers who want to sign up for your product have different questions than those with technical difficulties. Callers curious about a new feature are in a different frame of mind than unhappy callers or those who have not yet decided to do business with you. You get the point.

BUILDING MULTIPLE QUEUE STREAMS

Set up several unique message-on-hold streams to speak directly to each caller profile. Consider your customer demographics, the length of your hold times, and why people call. Here are some examples:

Demographics. Are your callers under 25? Over 60? Somewhere in between? Choose music that will be liked by as many of your callers as possible. Curate a blend of modern instrumental music or licensed popular hit music that will appeal to each age group.

Length of Hold Times. The data shows that as calls exceed 2 minutes of hold time, caller fatigue becomes a critical factor, with calls being abandoned by two-thirds of callers at that mark. By knowing your average hold times per caller demographic and by type of call, we can design hold experiences that make perceived hold time seem shorter and reduce hangups. That means happier customers and a positive impact on your bottom line.

Reason For The Call. Provide custom content to your caller groups based on why they are calling. Content is heard between songs and can be programmed on a custom schedule, even by the time of day. For example, callers who are interested in your product for the first time can hear about new customer promotions, while those who are waiting for technical help can hear a tip that allows them to hang up and try it themselves. These information streams can be segmented per caller type and blended with their demographical music tastes for an amazing customer experience that feels like you made it just for them.

Virtual Smiles. Not quite ready to target messaging to your callers? They still crave a human connection, which can be handled by inserting friendly messages that say things like “Hope you’re having a great Monday.” When you can’t greet customers in person with a genuine smile, a greeting that sounds like you’re right there will be an unexpected and refreshing “virtual smile”. It’s a touch only Easy On Hold® offers.

CALL CENTER USE CASES



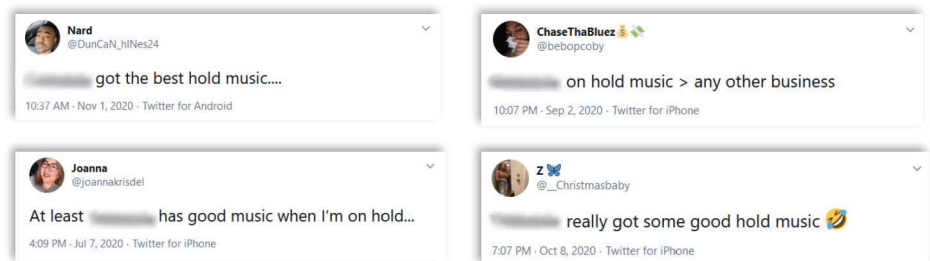
The U.S. government has awarded Easy On Hold® the trademark “The Music On Hold Experts™”. We specialize in creating superior experiences for some of the world’s top brands.

Let’s take a look at how three of these companies are using the techniques described in this guide to craft world-class on hold experiences.

3rd Largest U.S. Wireless Provider

A few years back, the 3rd largest U.S. cellular phone service provider was looking to shake things up with their customer experience. The sleepy queue music experience had to go!

The call center team wanted to give their callers high-energy music to listen to while holding in the queue, hit music that would not only make hold time seem shorter but would reflect well on their brand (and tie in with the very pink branding if you catch our drift). They chose the Easy On Hold® streaming solution for its ability to stream a customized experience for the corporation's callers and the ability to insert promotional messages in between songs based on caller type.



Their callers were delighted with the change. Since choosing Easy On Hold® in 2016, the company has been able to use the hold experience as a serious brand differentiator and ultimately keep their callers happily holding.

Top U.S. Credit Union Creates a Branded Music Station

old times, with station 'IDs' that sounded like a radio station. The marketing team could schedule ongoing promotions that start and stop at any time. Their newly designed on hold experience is classy, modern, and appealing.

Simply put, businesses will spend more to “We were just going to buy the rights to a few songs, but thankfully Easy On Hold® mentioned a streaming option with hit music, and that got my attention. My sales consultant made it seem very easy and it still fit within our budget. We even have people ask what song was playing on hold because they like it that much.”

Amanda Gish, VP of Marketing, Credit Union of America

Enterprise Internet Provider Deploys Targeted Content & Outage Messages

A top-tier internet services provider in the U.S. heard about Easy On Hold’s streaming service while researching ways to improve customer time in the queue. The first solution was to create a music channel that would project a bright, happy vibe. EOH curators produced a brand-new music channel with familiar hit songs that were positive, happy, or just made you feel good.

Next, the client wanted to deliver custom messaging to seven different caller profiles based on product type or reason for the call. We helped design their caller profiles and what content they should receive. Call center management personnel can schedule, start, stop, and pause content in real-time from a cloud-based dashboard. Always-ready voiced messages are quickly deployed, as in the case of a system outage announcement.

When a customer has an outage in a geographical area and they’re calling in to tell us, we can quickly deploy a prerecorded message in real-time that lets them know we’re on it. Then, they can hang up knowing we’re aware, reducing their time on hold and unnecessary strain on our agents.

Courtney Long, Project Manager

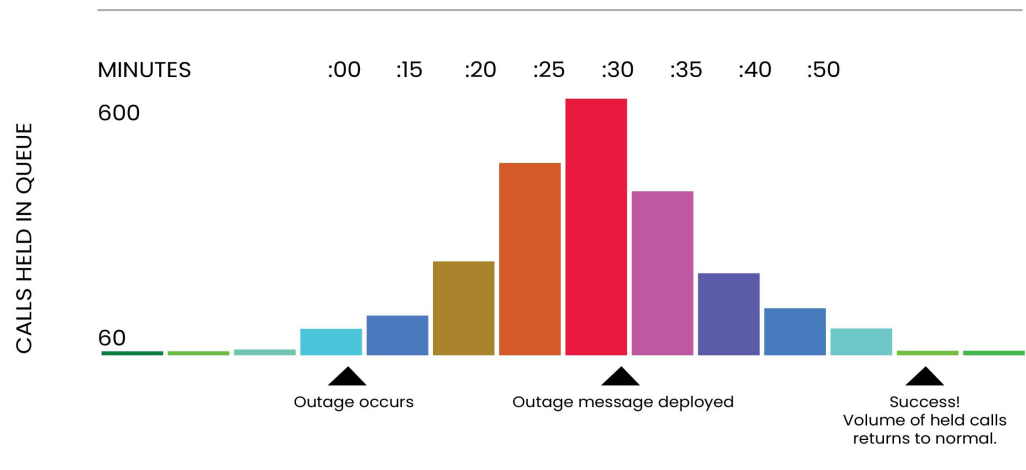


Illustration: the positive effect of agile, real-time hold messages on call-on-hold queues. Based on actual deployment.

TECHNOLOGY + CONTENT

The takeaway here is simple: The hold experience is tolerated by most callers, and keeping them engaged and happy is critical. Some companies are lukewarm about investing in the on hold experience, even though customers have little tolerance for a bad experience. We say, creating an amazing experience is achievable.

By choosing the right music, serving up relevant information, and using the right technology, your company can turn frustrated callers into lifelong customers. Easy On Hold® is the leading call center management solutions provider for in-queue and hold messaging solutions.

Easy On Hold® is a [Cisco Solutions Partner](#) and Genesys Solutions partner and has experience in many larger call center management platforms. We hope this information will help you persuade the right stakeholders to take advantage of the opportunity that your contact center needs—an excellent hold experience.



Easy On Hold® (EOH) is a leading provider of digital streaming delivery systems for communications platforms and producer of custom music and marketing messages for telephone on hold systems and related business voice and music services.

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