



Interactive Northwest, Inc.  
Customer Experience Solutions

## THE BENEFITS OF CALLBACK POWERFUL ROI FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION

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WHITE PAPER

# THE BENEFITS OF CALLBACK

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## INTRODUCTION

It will come as no surprise that customers dislike waiting in contact center queues to speak with an agent. Automatic Call Distributor (ACD) statistics from thousands of contact centers over many years indicate that an average wait time is around 20-30 seconds. However, when the public was asked to estimate the time they usually (not exceptionally) spent waiting to speak to someone in a contact center, the average answer was 11½ minutes: *27 times longer* than the reality.

Aside from time wasted, there are many other reasons that customers dislike queues, according to data by ContactBabel, a contact center market research firm:

Reason for disliking queue	Average score from 10 where 10 is "extremely frustrating"	% of public scoring this at a maximum 10
Not knowing how much longer you'll have to wait	8.7	61%
Repetitive announcements	8.0	45%
Having to restate account information already given earlier in the call	8.0	45%
Can't do anything else in the meantime	7.9	46%
The music you have to listen to	7.3	39%

*Credit: ContentBabel 2017*

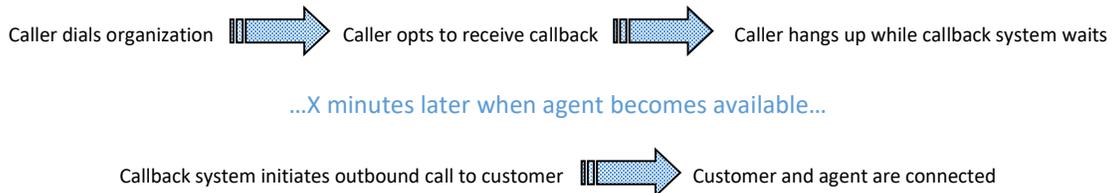
For these reasons and more, callback has become a critical customer service strategy. In this paper, we'll discuss the benefits of callback and how an organization can estimate its return on investment.



## UNDERSTANDING CALLBACK

A typical contact center queue operates in a linear fashion: callers dial, navigate to the preferred option, and wait to be connected. If queue times are long, their choice is two-fold: continue to wait, or abandon the call.

A callback system interrupts this linear flow by taking the place of the caller in queue. The customer's place is maintained by the callback system until an agent is available and the call can be delivered:



Depending on queue configurations and other variables, either the agent or the customer can be contacted first. An agent-first scenario provides a better customer experience, while a customer-first scenario provides better agent utilization. Which strategy to use depends upon the organization's needs and priorities.

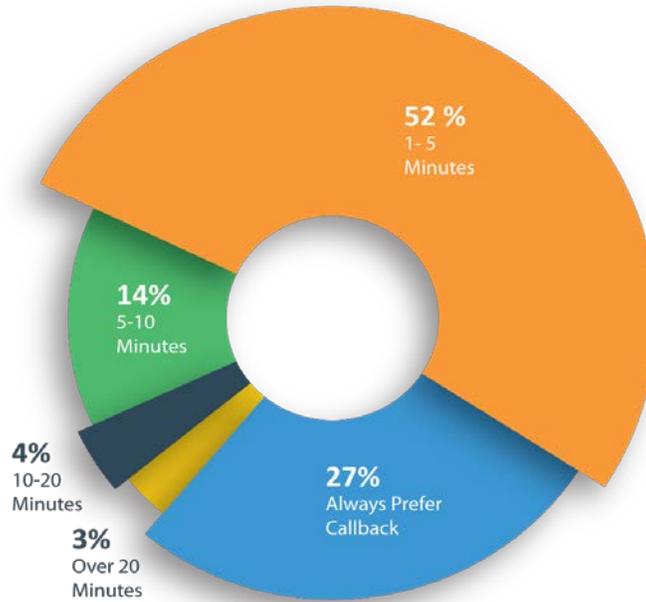
## CALLBACK USAGE AND STATISTICS

According to ContactBabel, more than 39 percent of all contact centers offer a callback option, with the greatest adoption (73 percent) being amongst medium-sized contact centers. Of those, 48 percent offered callback based on actual time spent in the queue, 21 percent based on estimated wait time, and 31 percent both. The majority of contact centers utilized a First In-First Out (FIFO) strategy, as opposed to scheduled or timed callbacks:

Type of Callback	Proportion of repondents offering callback that use this
FIFO (first-in, first-out) - holds the caller's place in the queue, then calls once they are at the front.	67%
Scheduled (caller can specify a day to be called back on)	18%

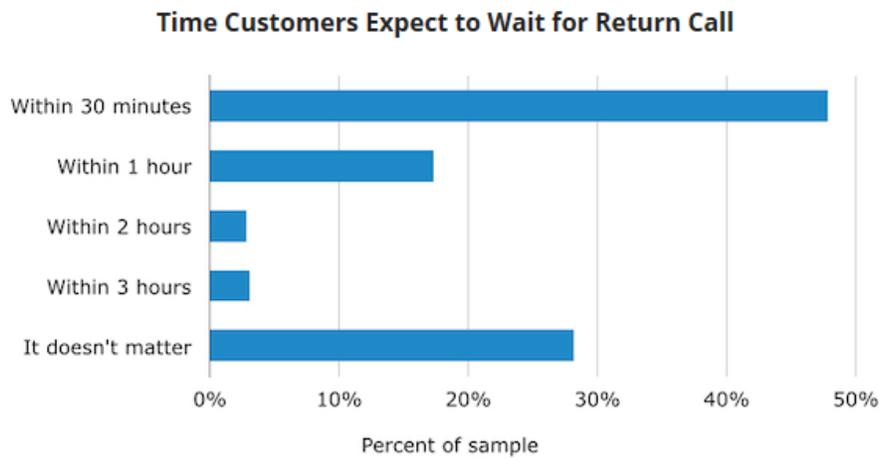
*Credit: ContentBabel 2017*

Customers surveyed overwhelmingly preferred (63 percent) a callback option. In fact, nearly a third of callers would rather receive a callback than spend *any* amount of time in queue. The following diagram shows the maximum amount of time customers are willing to spend in queue without abandoning:



*Credit: SoftwareAdvice*

Additionally, almost half of customers expect a callback to come within thirty minutes (unless they had scheduled it for a specific day/time).



*Credit: ContentBabel 2017*

## COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS

In order to determine the savings associated with callback implementation, it is first necessary to calculate the cost of an inbound call with standard linear queue handling. In this example, a caller spends five minutes in queue and five minutes speaking with an agent (after a minimal amount of menu navigation) on an inbound line with toll-per-minute costs:

Dial	3 seconds
Navigate	30 seconds
Wait in Queue	300 seconds
Speak with Agent	300 seconds
Total Inbound Talk Time	10 minutes 33 seconds
Toll-Per-Minute Rate	\$.02
<b>Cost Per Call</b>	<b>\$.21</b>

By implementing callback and shifting talk time to less costly (or free) outbound lines, the same customer interaction saves the organization *\$.19 per call*.

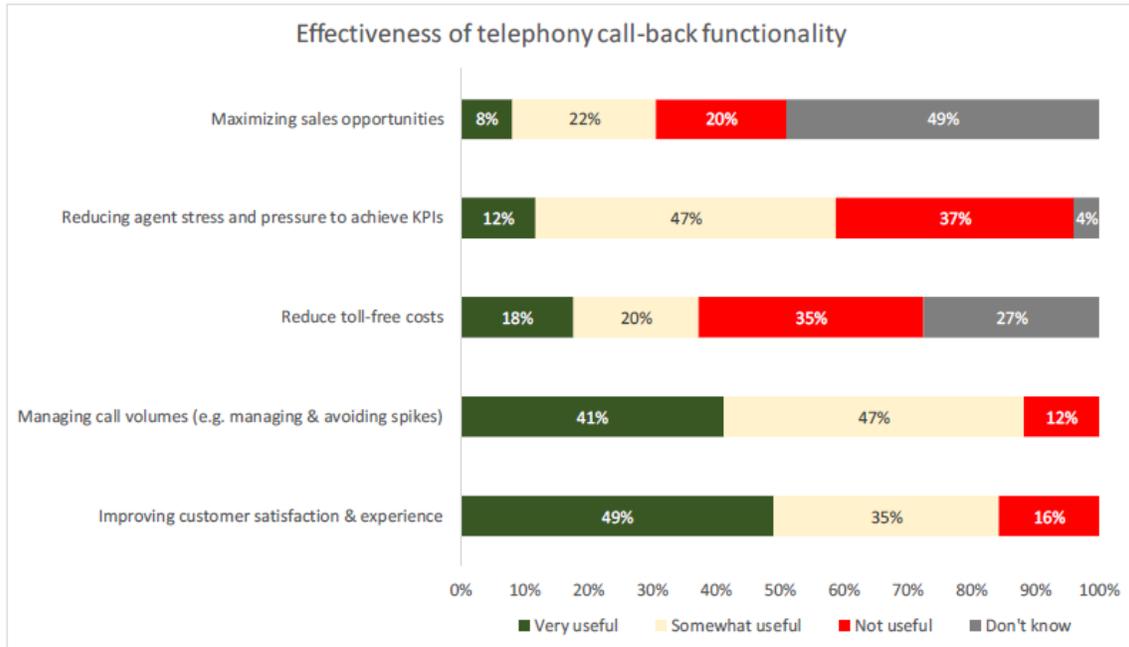
Dial	3 seconds
Navigate	30 seconds
Make Callback Request	30 seconds
Total Inbound Talk Time	1 minute 3 seconds
Toll-Per-Minute Rate	\$.02
Outbound Talk Time	300 seconds
Outbound Cost-Per-Minute	\$.00
<b>Cost Per Call</b>	<b>\$.02</b>

**At the above rates, if a single queue performs 200 callbacks per day, five days a week, an organization would recognize \$10,000+ a year in savings—per queue.**



In addition to the financial benefits of callback, there are numerous “soft” benefits including increased agent happiness and customer satisfaction.

Of the contact centers surveyed, 49 percent of those offering callback say it is “Very Useful” in improving CSAT levels. Respondents stated clearly that it was most useful for managing call volumes and spikes in busy periods, thus improving customer experience.



Credit: ContentBabel 2017

## SUMMARY AND FINAL OBSERVATIONS

Giving callers an alternative to waiting on hold by allowing them to request a callback empowers them to choose how they will spend their time and instills the sense that the organization values them and their patronage. In addition to the compelling financial benefits, a callback solution can preserve customer satisfaction and turn a potentially negative situation into an opportunity to enhance brand loyalty and extend customer lifetime value.



**The Benefits of Callback: Powerful ROI for Your Organization**  
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## About Interactive Northwest, Inc.

INI has a 25-year partnership with Avaya and its predecessor companies as an integration partner and software developer. INI also has partnerships and development agreements with Nuance, LumenVox, Red Hat, and Microsoft. Our solutions have delighted over 1,000 customers nationwide, in a variety of industries, including insurance, healthcare, finance, education, and government.

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