

Silent Calls Research 2005

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 Silent Calls Research 2005, Written By The Direct Marketing Association (UK)

Management Summary

Background

Nuisance calls are having a serious impact on both the telephone marketing industry and the Telephone Preference Service in the UK. Over the last 6 years the number of outbound agent positions in the UK have increased by around 50% and TPS registrations have increased dramatically and currently stand at 7.4 million. Once mobile phones have been excluded this represents around 32% of UK households that have a phone. The situation is developing rapidly - in the past 12 months the number of weekly TPS registrations has increased from 35,000 to 73,000.

In November 2004, to better understand the issue, the DMA commissioned Brookmead Consulting to produce the Brookmead Report - the first full scale review of the nuisance call issue in the UK. Brookmead interviewed representatives of four separate groups - the industry (dialler users, dialler manufacturers, telcos, trade associations), the regulators, the nuisance call bureaux and consumers.

Brookmead presented the results of its consumer research at the TPS Forum at Earls Court in March 2005 and, responding to demand, has produced this report to summarise consumer research commissioned by Brookmead, the DMA, the TPS and the Customer Care Alliance in the US.

The full Brookmead Report has been made available to DMA members.

Summary of key findings

Each of the studies reviewed here looked at a different aspect of the nuisance issues caused by telemarketing, and in particular predictive dialling.

The Brookmead consumer survey found that:

- 22% of the public feel anxious when they receive a silent call
- 37% feel that they are unacceptably inconvenienced by silent calls
- On average people receive around 6 silent calls per month
- 50% feel negatively towards a call if it starts with a "dead air"
- 35% of adults never receive silent calls

The Brookmead TPS registrants' survey 2005 found that:-

- 36% of registrants registered with TPS as soon as they heard about the service
- 64% are unacceptably inconvenienced by silent calls, 56% are made anxious
- The number of unwelcome calls are on the increase
- The range of nuisance issues caused by unwelcome calls is wide and varied

The consumer surveys carried out for TPS Ltd by MORI between 2001 and 2004 found that:-

- TPS registrations stood at 19% of UK households in June 2004 (currently stands at 32%)
- TPS awareness stood at 41% of UK households in June 2004 (currently estimated to be over 45%)
- In June 2004 46% of adults who were aware of the service had registered (currently stands at 65%)
- Many who haven't yet registered said that they will register in the future
- Demographics of TPS registrants identify certain key groups who are more or less likely to register

The survey of TPS registrants carried out by NOP in 2003 found that:-

- The TPS is effective in reducing the number of unwanted calls
- Registrants' level of satisfaction with the service is very high

The Customer Care Alliance survey carried out in the USA in 2004 found that:-

- The level of telemarketing is significantly higher in the US than in the UK
- Americans have strong views about telemarketing
- The National do-not-call register is effective
- There is higher awareness in the US than in the UK

The Future Foundation Participation Media survey in 2004 found that:-

â€¢ Telemarketing is the most intrusive of all marketing media

â€¢ Telemarketing is effective with 26% of calls receiving a positive response

Enquiries

If you should have any queries relating to this article please contact the DMA on 020 7291 3300.