



A GUIDE TO CHOOSING THE BEST TELEPHONE ANSWERING SERVICE FOR YOUR BUSINESS

“Outsourcing your calls to an external service provider can leave most businesses feeling apprehensive. So how do you go about choosing the right call handling provider for you?”

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We have a number of questions for you to ask...

Do they offer you a Lead PA?

Do you have a Lead PA or a pool of PAs who know your business inside and out, and have a briefing process in place, which ensures that whoever answers your calls, knows your business? What happens if your ‘lead PA’ goes on lunch or is on holiday? Is there a pool of PAs who are kept up to speed with your company details and movements?

How do you know that their PAs are experienced and have the necessary interpersonal skills?

Do you look for quality of staff when choosing a call handler? Are the PAs of your chosen call answering service put through a rigorous training process? Are they IQ and psychometrically tested, ensuring that their PAs are of a high standard, can thrive under pressure and are good at obtaining information and value customer service?

Can you access the service?

Most phone answering services offer email/sms for your messages but can you access your own client portal, for you to update your status yourself, to let your PA know your whereabouts, and to give call handling instructions? Can you view your pricing package information, see how many units you’ve used, and can you optimise your own bill?

Are their calls recorded?

Many say that all their calls are recorded, but are you offered the ability to listen to your calls? Can you log in to your own portal, in your own time, and listen to your PA in action, interacting with your caller/potential client?

Can you monitor the service levels your callers receive and give feedback?

Is the service honest and open? Can you give your virtual PAs feedback? Are you encouraged to leave positive and constructive feedback for each and every call? Why does this matter? Because it shows that the telephone answering service wants to improve its service for you.

How do you know you're dealing with a quality company?

Does the phone answering service that you're looking at have an external quality standard? Can they prove that they're dedicated to providing you with a first-class telephone answering service? How long have they been taking calls for? Look for testimonials, client feedback or check they have achieved a quality standard with a recognised external organisation. For example, do they have ISO 9001, proving that they have a recognised benchmark of best practice?

What will they offer you to evaluate their service?

Does the provider offer you a free trial to test and evaluate their phone answering service? Are they helpful? Will they provide you with free set up and assist you with any queries or technical issues?



IN SUMMARY...

There are many telephone answering services touting for your business, each one offering similar services, but when you look closer each one is different, and you have to filter out what's most important to you and your business.

Ask yourself all the above questions when looking for someone to represent you and your business and choose the best possible service you can get, with excellent value for money. You would want to know how an employed member of staff is doing, and it's no different when outsourcing to a telephone answering service. Honesty and openness are qualities to demand.

Face for Business - not just another telephone answering service.