

ruby

eBook

The ultimate guide to virtual receptionists.



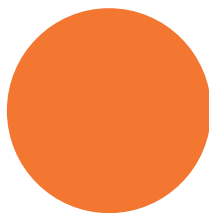
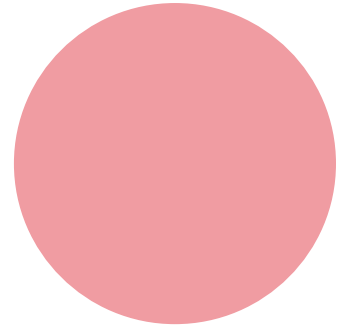


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PART ONE

A call for customer experience.



In a progressively digital age, small business owners are trying to figure out the best way to connect with prospective buyers and customers. From live chat to email to social media, the ways in which businesses can reach their customer base are continuously expanding.

While digital channels can offer new paths to reaching more prospects and supporting more customers, failing to meet consumer expectations on the phone can kill any momentum garnered by the web.

Why? Because customers want a high-quality, consistent experience across every medium, and move on quickly when businesses don't deliver.





*By the year 2020, customer **experience** will be the number one differentiator among brands.¹*

When experience reigns supreme, businesses that anticipate customer needs will stand apart from the competition. And whether you're in your first year of business or your tenth, adapting to evolving customer expectations is paramount to cash flow, the lifeblood of a flourishing small business.

Understanding Evolving Customer Expectations.

Customers aren't shy about their experience expectations. Sixty-seven percent openly admit their standards are higher than ever,² and why shouldn't they be? Access to products and services is no longer restrained by physical proximity. A simple Google search delivers tens, hundreds, or thousands of companies with similar offerings to fulfill the needs of a single consumer. With so many options right at their fingertips, customers have the luxury of being selective, and they're choosing companies with a track record for making people happy.



¹ SUPEROFFICE, 2019.
² SALESFORCE, 2019.

Traditional word-of-mouth coupled with Trustpilot, Angie's List, or Yelp reviews provides consumers with ample opportunity to form an opinion before ever interacting with a company. For businesses touting five star reviews and zero public customer complaints, this organic marketing is a dream.

Americans will pay 17% more to do business with companies boasting great reputations when it comes to customer service.³

However, those with even a single less-than-stellar review are passed up in favor of their well-liked competitors, regardless of price point or, often, superior perception of product. While a few publicly dissatisfied customers may sound like little more than a drop in the bucket, they can shrink the opportunity to win business dramatically.

Companies lose more than \$62 billion annually due to poor customer experiences.⁴



Companies with positive reviews get higher returns.

95%

of shoppers read online reviews before making a purchase

73%

of consumers trust a local business more after reading positive reviews

270%

conversion rate increases can be seen by displaying reviews

³ HELP SCOUT, 2019
⁴ SUPEROFFICE, 2019

What customers want.

Customers are looking for companies they can trust. What does it take for small businesses to win over the hearts and lasting loyalty of today's consumers?



Loyal customers
DRIVER: personalized business experience.

72%

of customers expect personalized engagement from companies they do business with.

which means

4.4x

the chance of a sale when transitions between communication channels are smooth.

however

51%

of customers say companies fall short of their expectations.

Small business owners
DRIVER: foster personal engagement.

87%

of business owners recognize a personalized experience is important to their customers.

and

90%

of business owners agree that quality, consistent experiences are critical to customer satisfaction.

but

58%

say meeting customer expectations is a challenge to business growth.⁵

On paper, business owners and consumers are a near-perfect match. Customers desire personalized interaction and businesses recognize this need and aim to fulfill it. Quality of communication is paramount to happy customers, and companies hope to create reliably exceptional experiences. Despite a shared vision of what it takes to win lasting loyalty, there is still a discrepancy between expectation and reality.

So why the disconnect? If businesses know what their customers want, why aren't they delivering?



⁵ SALESFORCE, 2019

PART TWO

The business call is back.

Anyone who has interacted with a phonetree—continuously pressing “0” in hopes of reaching a customer service representative—knows there is a gap between customer expectations and outcomes.

In other words, how companies handle their phone calls can make or break a customer’s willingness to continue doing business with them.

74%

of consumers say they are very likely to choose another business after a poor phone experience.

— *but* —

80%

of customers indicate that they’re likely to become a repeat customer after a good experience.⁶

Business owners are seeing these interactions influence both brand perception and their profit margins. Why? Because more people are calling businesses than ever before. This year, there will be an estimated 140 billion calls from mobile click-to-call alone.⁷ That’s about 20 billion more than 2018 and 30 billion less than what is projected for 2020. These calls will influence more than \$1 trillion dollars in consumer spending in 2019.

How many business opportunities are you losing to voicemail?

⁶ SUPEROFFICE, 2019
⁷ INVOCA, 2019

WORKSHEET

Phone calls & potential revenue.

I receive 10 calls per day and answer 70% of them.

Statistically, 29% of those calls will result in a sale.⁸ Multiply .29 by total answered calls to get daily possible conversion rate.

..... $.29 \times 7 = 2.03$

There are 261 weekdays in one year. Multiply conversion rate by 261 to see how many sales you currently earn per year.

..... $2 \times 261 = 522$

Now, multiply this number by your average profit per sale to find current revenue in answered calls.

..... $522 \times \$1000 = \$522,000$

Now, what if you were able to answer the phone 100% of the time?

YOU'D BE BRINGING IN AN ADDITIONAL

\$235k

IN REVENUE EVERY YEAR

The concept of answering the phone to connect with more potential customers seems simple. But, to small business owners managing employees, selling products, balancing the budget, stocking supplies, updating the website, and hosting clients, this "quick" task becomes a distraction from the day-to-day to-do's necessary in keeping a business moving forward. The good news is, business owners have options!

⁸ INVOCA, 2019

PART THREE

Automation versus tech enablement.

Previous to the era of automation, there was only one way to ensure phone calls would be answered: someone had to physically pick up the receiver. Now, 85% of companies will have transitioned to automated customer service interactions by the year 2020.⁹ This means that customers are progressively less likely to reach a human, and will instead be greeted by a bot or filtered into voicemail.

30% of consumers say that not being able to reach a human is the single most frustrating part of a bad customer experience.¹⁰

Voicemail proves ineffective in capturing the hearts and minds of prospects, and rarely manages to serve its intended purpose of collecting important contact information. 72-80% of callers will hang up without leaving a voicemail if their call isn't answered, 44% of whom will immediately dial one of your competitors.¹¹

⁹ GARTNER, 2019

¹⁰ NEXTIVA, 2019

¹¹ BIGGERPOCKETS, 2019

Consider what customers say is the optimal experience:

Highly-personalized, responsive, and consistently exceptional service across all communication channels. While on the surface, automation seems to aid business owners stretched thin, the brief respite it affords can result in disgruntled customers, missed opportunities to connect with prospects, and diminished profit margins.

People buy from people—and their relationship with you, your business, and your brand influence their purchasing decisions. Giving customers the human interaction they crave can be the difference between barely surviving and thriving. Rather than opting for an impersonal automated system, leverage technology to empower real, human connections.



INCREASE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION



ELEVATE CUSTOMER SERVICE REPUTATION

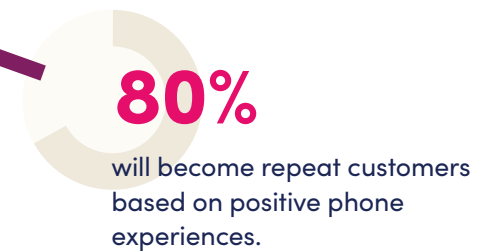


Five benefits of live call answering.

COLLECT CALL INFORMATION



WIN MORE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES



STAND APART FROM THE ROBO-CROWD



Traditional answering services.

As an alternative to automation, some companies outsource their phone calls to traditional answering services. Call centers typically operate after business hours and on weekends, though many also offer business-hour service. The benefits of an answering service include a shorter ring time, a real human voice on the other end of the line, and most notably, inexpensive labor.

Lower overhead is always enticing, but can come at a cost. Often located overseas, language barriers and delays over the phone frustrate callers. A lack of fluency can prove problematic, as interpreting colloquial phrasing, sarcasm, and other small details are essential to building relationships. It's more difficult for a non-fluent speaker to effectively communicate the nuances of what makes your company unique in a real-time conversation with a potential customer.

Traditional domestic answering services are available, but fall short in delivering the highly-personalized experience necessary to truly serve as an extension of a business. Without the ability to customize call handling, businesses lose their voice to the impersonal service call centers are notorious for. Domestic or offshore, consumers instantly recognize an answering service when they reach one, and are generally put-off.



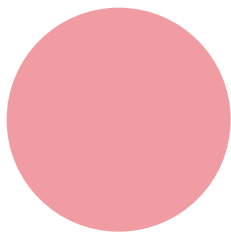
Onsite receptionists.

Bringing on an in-house hire to handle phone calls, perform administrative tasks, and develop a rapport with customers is an excellent solution sure to elevate caller experience. For many small business owners, however, this is not a viable option. The average annual salary for an in-house receptionist is \$36,000.¹³ This payroll figure doesn't include benefit packages, training costs, or potential severance.

For small business owners on a budget and juggling a long list of to-do's, adding the responsibility of a trainee is overwhelming. In-house receptionists have the potential to be a great representative of your brand and your business, but proper onboarding takes time and resources—luxuries many small business owners simply do not have.

Relying on a single employee to manage customer communications also leaves business owners vulnerable and scrambling when receptionists take their lunch breaks, vacation, sick days, or resign. Suddenly, missed calls and lost opportunities again become an issue despite a \$36K investment.





Virtual receptionists.

Virtual receptionists answer calls on behalf of the businesses they serve from US-based offices. Quality services can perform many of the same tasks as an in-house receptionist—answering and transferring calls live, taking messages, scheduling appointments, handling FAQs, placing outbound calls on your behalf, and more! The right service will provide a human touch without breaking the bank.

Highly-trained employees coupled with customized call-handling separates virtual receptionists from traditional call centers. Empowered by technology with a suite of unique features, virtual receptionists create connections and build trust as an ambassador for your business. Your callers get the experience of an in-house receptionist and you pay a fraction of the cost.

From hosting your business number to acting as support to virtual or onsite staff, the best virtual receptionist companies are there when (and how) you need them.

Let's take a look at just how virtual receptionist services work, and how they can best support your business.



PART FOUR

Virtual receptionists & your business.

While the word 'virtual' may bring futuristic images of holographic receptionists or otherwise artificial forms of intelligence to mind, when referring to remote receptionists, 'virtual' alludes to the sophisticated technology working behind the scenes to ensure customer communication is easy, efficient, and effective.

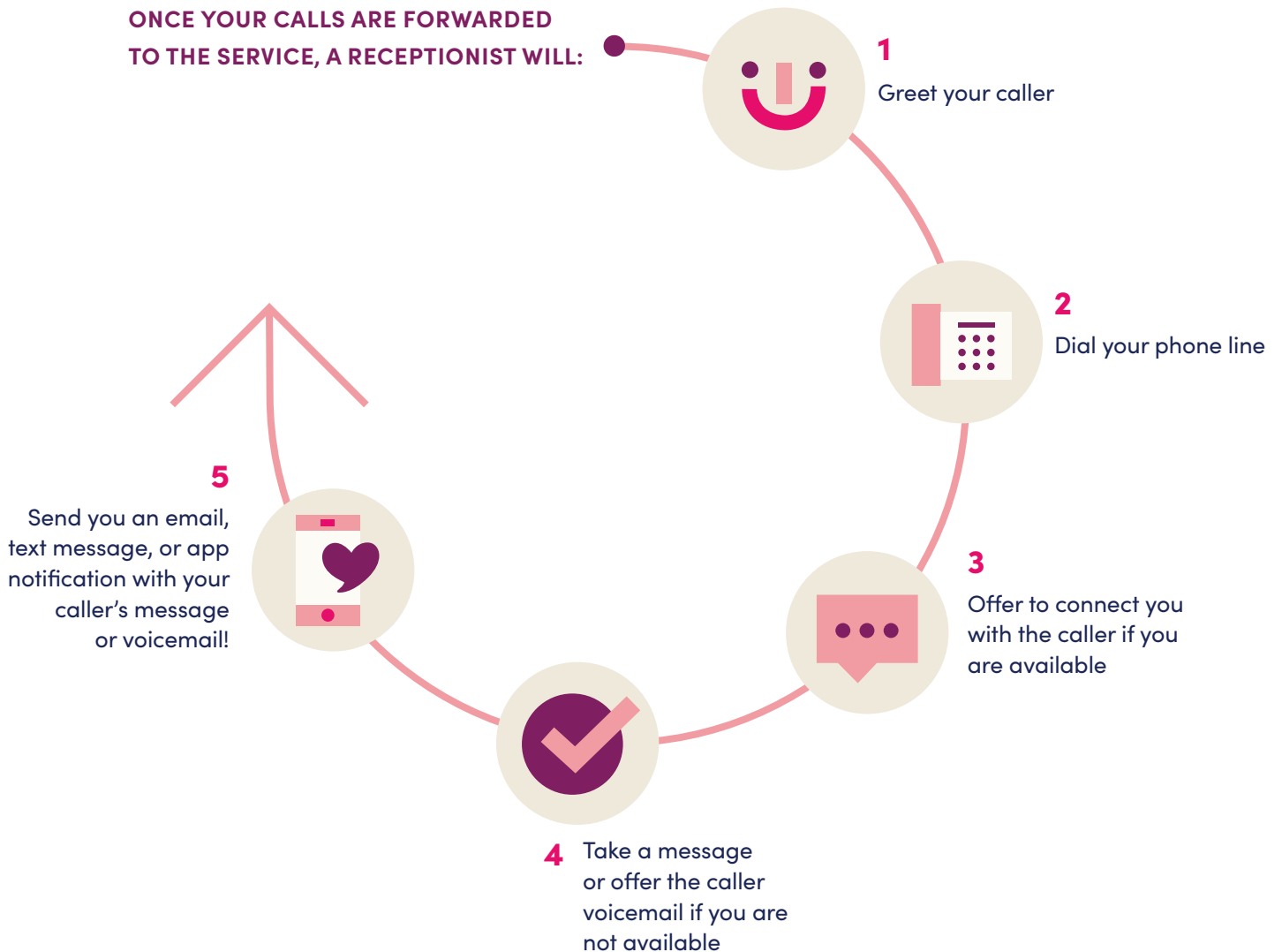
Call handling evolves to reflect the day or week a business owner is having. During busy days, when taking calls interrupts and impedes important work, receptionists are there to engage with prospects. From collecting intake information to scheduling appointments, they create connections with callers who would have otherwise been sent to voicemail.



How it works.

Virtual receptionists answer calls from US-based offices, greeting callers with a personalized message such as “Thank you for calling ABC Company, how may I help you today?” From there, receptionists route callers according to call handling instructions tailored to fit the unique needs of your business. Specific types of calls can receive their own treatment: a prospect, for example, being immediately connected to your office while solicitors are offered voicemail.

ONCE YOUR CALLS ARE FORWARDED TO THE SERVICE, A RECEPTIONIST WILL:



Attorneys are a prime example of professionals who benefit from such flexible call handling. Virtual receptionists can help callers with commonly asked questions, such as what type of cases a firm takes on, before transferring the caller to an attorney or front desk reception. On days when attorneys are moving from in-person client meetings to casework to court dates, virtual receptionists are able to engage potential new clients. Collecting intake not only arms attorneys with information they need to prioritize return calls, it jump-starts the relationships between potential clients and a firm. In taking the time to gather high-level details from a person about their unique situation, virtual receptionists aid busy attorneys in capturing their next-big case while voicemail or a poor answering service would have likely delivered that prospect into the arms of another practice.

This makes a big impact on a practice's bottom line. Consider the value of an average case at \$4,000.

If a firm is able to capture even two more cases per week with the help of virtual receptionists, they stand to gain over \$400,000 annually.



PART FIVE

Virtual receptionists help you increase revenue.

MONEY SAVED WITHOUT SACRIFICING QUALITY

Gain a team of model professionals who are never sick, late, or on vacation, at a fraction of the cost of a single on-site employee.

FREEDOM TO FOCUS ON YOUR BUSINESS

Funnel your energy toward the big picture while resting assured your receptionists are representing your brand with enthusiasm.

HUMAN CONNECTIONS CREATE CUSTOMER LOYALTY

Build trust and meaningful relationships for a quantifiable ROI that takes shape in increased referrals and returning opportunities.

BUSINESS EARNED WITH EVERY ANSWERED CALL

Turn more callers into clients when you have virtual receptionists serving as an extension of your office.



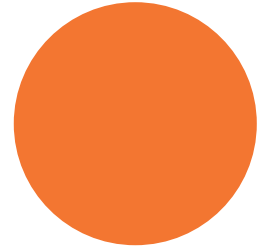
Virtual receptionists as flexible support.

For many business owners, being able to answer the phone and chat with customers is a welcomed task when time and schedules permit. A virtual receptionist service can play support as your backup solution while still allowing you or your staff the opportunity to pick up from your office.

Real estate agents, for example, work to develop trusting relationships with their clients. While taking client calls is important for an agent, it isn't always possible. Agents can opt to have their personal cell phone ring twice before the call is routed and answered by a virtual receptionist. Clients will be greeted by a warm, friendly receptionist who sounds as if they are right in an agent's office, rather than moving to voicemail.

For contractors or financial firms who might have a receptionist, a virtual counterpart can take over calls when administrative tasks take precedence or multiple calls come in at once—or when your in-house receptionist is sick or on vacation. Virtual receptionist services adapt to fit the unique needs of your business, to help you capture more business, one call at a time.

As discussed earlier in this guide, missed calls are missed opportunities to grow your business. From attorneys to plumbers to financial service providers, small business owners stand to gain thousands to millions of dollars per year when answered calls and customer experience come together to build your reputation and convert callers into clients.



Choosing the virtual receptionist service that's right for you.

Not all virtual receptionist services are created equal. Services should be evaluated and taken for a test drive before business owners hand over their most important asset: their customers.

There are dozens of virtual receptionist solutions out there. And with so many options to choose from, it's easy to feel overwhelmed. To help you evaluate which solution is right for your business, we've developed a quick, ten-question assessment.



SCORECARD

Critical questions for virtual receptionist service providers.

When looking at solutions, ask yourself each of the following questions, then rate your level of confidence from one to ten, ten being the highest. After you've scored providers against the criteria below, take a look at your results. If your cumulative score falls below 80, consider another option.

	PROVIDER A	PROVIDER B	 call ruby
1 Will 100% of the calls the service handles be answered live?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Are all of your receptionists US-based and/or fluent speakers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Does your service include live transfers, personalized greetings, and customized call handling?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Are your receptionists able to gather intake information and schedule appointments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Does your service come with a desktop and mobile application?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 Does your company provide training and supervision for receptionists to ensure quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 Do you provide customers with personalized onboarding assistance from a real person?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 Does your company have a proven ROI with customers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 Do you offer a money-back guarantee, and will I have the ability to edit my plan if needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 Do you have live customer support if I have questions or need help?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	TOTAL		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Why customers choose Ruby's virtual receptionist services.

Trusted by over 10,000 small businesses to deliver WOW-worthy customer experiences, Ruby is the live virtual receptionist company turning callers into clients from the very first "hello!" From our US-based offices, award-winning receptionists answer and transfer calls, take messages, collect new client intake, make outbound calls, and more—just like an in-house hire, at a fraction of the cost.

We use technology to fuel real, human connections rather than replace them. Our proprietary software enables us to sound just like we're in your office. With the Ruby App, Ruby customers can make on-the-fly changes to call-handling, text from their Ruby-hosted business number, receive real-time updates from receptionists, and more. With the power of the front desk in the palm of your hand, all you need to run your business is Ruby and a cell phone!

With Ruby's virtual receptionists on your team, you get the freedom to focus while we help you grow your business, one call at a time!



Fast facts on Ruby's live receptionist services:

20%

increase in sales inquiries from 100% live answering.*

10hrs.

monthly time savings for productive work.

20%

increase in satisfaction.

2-3x

quantifiable return on the investment in Ruby.

*DURING RUBY BUSINESS HOURS



Our story.

Founded in 2003 by former receptionist, Jill Nelson, Ruby was born from the desire to help small businesses build trust, foster customer loyalty, and win business through the power of personal connections. What was once a humble business providing remote receptionist and administrative support out of a tiny Portland studio has flourished into what Ruby is today—a company and team that views every call as an opportunity to create an exceptional customer experience.

We know from personal experience what it takes for small businesses to succeed and take pride in treating our customers' businesses as our own. We offer experience and expertise in industries including legal, finance, real estate, home services, and more.



What customers have to say about Ruby's virtual receptionists.

"Ever since we signed up with Ruby we've been able to recover 10-15% of our inbound leads and over \$1,600 in marketing costs per month. That's a huge return for our investment with Ruby and we're just getting started!"

Ariel Istueta

ISTUETA ROOFING



"Ruby delivers exactly what they promise, every time. It is crystal clear that they (and the extraordinary people they employ) take their job seriously and make it their mission to do it very, very well."

Eric Johnson

UTAH FAMILY LAW, LC

What customers have to say about Ruby's virtual receptionists.



"I'm extraordinarily happy with Ruby, you all exceeded expectations. I can't say anything but good things about your service. I would refer a friend or be a reference in a heartbeat!"

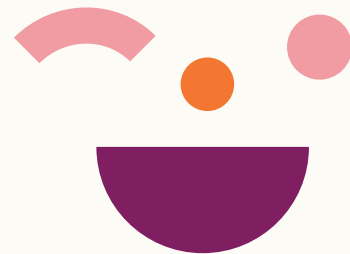
Jim Dobbins

CLEANING SOLUTIONS & SUPPLIES

"You just can't beat the personal touch Ruby offers and the world demands! Their service pays for itself many, many times over."

Bobby Hutchinson

APPRAISAL ASSOCIATES





**Start turning
callers into
customers with
Ruby's 21 day
money back
guarantee.**



Interested in learning more about how you can elevate your customer experience and close more business with Ruby's live receptionist services?

We offer a 21 day money back guarantee so that you can try Ruby risk-free! Contact Ruby today!

866-611-ruby(7829)

www ● ruby ● com



21 Day Money Back Guarantee