

How to Build Trusted and Secure Communications with Outbound Calls

Unsolicited and unwanted phone calls continue to be some of the most prevalent approaches to spamming and fraud in the UK, with ‘deep fake’ artificial intelligence (AI) scam calls now the fastest growing type of nuisance call nationally¹. As a result, earning consumer trust through outbound communications is harder than ever – however, it is still achievable. This Good Practice Guide provides contact centre leaders with an outline of how to get started, the pitfalls of bad practice and some step-by-step instructions to ensure positive, successful delivery.

With the global rise in phone scams and fraud, consumers have become increasingly wary of answering unidentified calls. Delivering on outbound call strategies while also maintaining integrity can be a huge uphill challenge for contact centre leaders.

Regulators, telecoms providers and device manufacturers have responded by stepping up their efforts against invasive phone calls. This includes the implementation of consumer protections such as call labelling. Also, stricter OFCOM guidelines on Calling Line Identification (CLI) try and combat the “rising tide of scam calls plaguing UK consumers”.²

Against this backdrop, it’s increasingly important for businesses to ensure their calls are considered - respecting both consumer preferences and applicable laws.

Despite the prevalence of voice fraud and scams, phone calls remain a preferred communication method for many businesses and customers. Your customers do want to hear from you, but it is essential to establish yourself as a trusted and secure caller, improving engagement while proactively preventing reputation pitfalls along the way.

What The Data Tells Us

- **Unwanted calls are surging:** Globally, unsolicited calls have risen to 11.3bn a year - an average of 123 million calls per day.
- **The UK has major challenges:** Around 9.3% of calls are fraudulent, and a third are classified as spam or nuisance.
- **The deepfake threat is growing:** Over a quarter of UK adults (26%) have received a deepfake scam call.
- **Call avoidance is high:** 48% of people never answer unidentified calls, and a further 33% rarely do.³

Understanding Call Warning Labels

Call warning labels are part of a phone’s built-in defence system. These labels help customers decide whether or not to answer.

There are two main types:

- **Fraud-related labels:** ‘Suspected scam,’ ‘Likely fraud,’ or ‘Potential fraud.’ These are based on known fraud patterns.
- **Spam-related labels:** ‘Likely spam,’ ‘Suspected spam,’ or ‘Likely nuisance.’ These are flagged based on user reports or calling behaviour patterns.

While the term ‘mislabelling’ is often used to describe legitimate calls flagged as spam, this usually reflects call patterns that are seen as unfriendly or intrusive. Even genuine callers can trigger these labels if calling practices don’t align with customer expectations.

What Shapes Call Labelling and Reputation?

Telecoms network providers use advanced spam detection tools powered by data modelling and AI to evaluate incoming calls. These systems assess more than just the number making the call - they consider the full context, such as:

- **Caller identity:** Transparent, verified businesses are far less likely to be flagged. Scammers rarely reveal who they are, so being open about your identity helps build trust.
- **Number history:** If a number has been reported in the past, it’s more likely to be flagged in future.
- **Call patterns:** High-volume calls to large, unconnected groups may seem suspicious. Targeted calls to known customers are seen as more legitimate.
- **Recipient behaviour:** How people respond matters. Frequent hang-ups, call blocks or spam reports all impact your reputation. On the flip side, answered calls help improve your standing.



¹ Hiya (2025). *Global Call Threat Report Q1 2025*. <https://en-gb.hiya.com/global-call-threat-report>

² OFCOM (2025). *Navigating The New OFCOM Rules For UK Businesses Calling From Offshore*. <https://www.cma.org.uk/navigating-the-new-ofcom-rules-for-uk-businesses-calling-from-offshore/>

³ Hiya (2025). *Global Call Threat Report Q1 2025*. <https://en-gb.hiya.com/global-call-threat-report>

While navigating this system is complex, success is achievable. Ensuring your calls are welcome and trustworthy – i.e. adhering to a ‘right customer, right time’ approach – can

give you a clear advantage. As a contact centre, your access to customer data is fundamental to establishing whether outbound calls are appropriate for customers.

Six Steps To a Trusted Call Reputation

If you’re seeing low pick-up rates or being flagged as spam, it’s time to rethink your calling approach. These six essential steps can help you protect your reputation and build trust.

1. Register your business numbers

This may seem obvious, but registering your numbers with phone networks is a vital first step. It shows you’re a legitimate business and not hiding your identity. Registration should always be free – services such as the Connect Number Registration, for example, lets you list your numbers across spam-detection networks globally.

It’s also important to work closely with your telecoms provider to ensure that your contact centre only uses UK CLI for legitimate calls that fall under one of OFCOM’s exceptions. Ensure the phone numbers you use are valid, dialable and uniquely identify you – and that you have the appropriate permissions to use them.

2. Avoid excessive repeat calls

Frequent or repeated calls to the same customer can be seen as harassing. This increases the chance of being blocked or reported as spam. Use call management tools or Contact Centre as a Service (CCaaS) platforms to monitor activity and avoid over-contacting the same people, unless there is an obvious urgency that needs their attention. Consider your multichannel communications too.

3. Make your calls personal and timely

Train colleagues to introduce themselves promptly and explain the purpose of the call clearly and quickly. Avoid silent or awkward delays at the start of calls – these can make calls feel robotic and suspicious.

It’s also important to always respect local time zones and regulations. Avoid early morning or late-night calls, and make sure you know the legal contact hours in the region you’re contacting.

4. Respect communication preferences

If a customer indicates they’re not interested – verbally or otherwise – it’s wise to stop calling. Silence, hang-ups or disinterest are often unspoken requests to end contact. Honour these signals, even if they don’t specifically ask to be removed from your list. Implement systems to track these preferences and adjust your outreach accordingly.

5. Be guided by your customer data

Make sure you’re contacting people who’ve expressed genuine interest in your service. Poor-quality or purchased lead lists often contain uninterested or incorrect contacts, leading to frustration, hang-ups and spam reports.

6. Consider branded caller ID

Branded caller ID in the UK allows businesses to display their name and logo when making outbound calls, helping customers identify legitimate calls instantly and potentially increasing answer rates. Research highlights that people are far more likely to engage with a call when they know who it’s from.⁴

⁴ Hiya (2025). *Global Call Threat Report Q1 2025*. <https://en-gb.hiya.com/global-call-threat-report>