

# Introducing AnswerConnect, the 24/7 live answering service

How often have you struggled to get in touch with a business because of strict service hours? Such struggles could be a thing of the past with 24/7 answering service AnswerConnect. We spoke to the company's director of mattering and impact, Fraser Wilson.

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## What is AnswerConnect? How does it work?

AnswerConnect is a 24/7 live answering service. We provide businesses with virtual support from our live receptionists, based throughout the UK. Our virtual receptionists answer calls and live chat messages on behalf of businesses. Then, we transfer calls or take a message and pass these along to pre-designated members of the business' team.

The most important aspect of the work is providing a real human voice to businesses that otherwise wouldn't be able to answer all their calls. As we operate 24/7, we can handle out of hours calls with ease. We strive to act as an extension of their business, so callers feel they are speaking directly with the business, rather than with a third party.

# What do you believe are some of the key challenges when it comes to 24-hour customer service?

The 24-hour aspect isn't as challenging as you might think. We have a big team spread across the UK and offer a range of flexible shift patterns for our receptionists. I'd say the biggest challenge is finding ways to continually improve the customer experience in a way that's meaningful for the client.

Simultaneously, we recognise the huge responsibility we have; we're effectively representing the voice (and ears) of a business.

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## How does AnswerConnect address this challenge?

Exceptional client experience is the foundation of our business. We also constantly invest in improving our range of services and software/CRM integrations. We aim to help businesses grow; not just by answering live calls and chats, but also by providing a suite of powerful software.

Regarding the responsibility of faithfully representing our clients, we dedicate time during setup to understand a client's business model, their customers and their objectives.

## What are the key benefits of investing in a 24-hour live telephone answering

## service?

The ultimate benefit is flexibility. With 24/7 customer support coverage, businesses can focus on growth without the usual obstacles of increasing office space, increasing hiring (which takes time away from other business tasks) and increased overheads. SMEs, in particular, have the freedom to increase their lead intake and invest more time in developing their products/services.

For the customers of our clients, the benefit is consistent, professional service. Callers and website visitors can trust their queries will be handled by a real person, whenever they reach out. In an increasingly 24/7 world, that freedom to reach out is no longer just a nice-to-have; it's a business necessity.

## What industries do you work with?

We support all industries, but we have larger customer bases within real estate, IT services, construction and legal. A lot of high-value industries recognise that every call could be the most important call of the year. A missed call in their case could mean a significant loss in revenue.

Last year, we commissioned an independent study – 200 business professionals from across the UK – to discover the impact of missed calls on businesses. The study found that *missed calls cost businesses* an average of £600,000 in annual revenue, which is staggering.

We also support a lot of smaller businesses in the trades and service provider industries. These businesses are often made up of just a few employees. For these small businesses, making time to answer calls, live chats and social media messages is one of the biggest challenges. We provide the support they need to allow them to focus on delivering their service.

## What impact has COVID-19 had on your business?

We have always had a “work anywhere” business model, so we were well-placed to weather the shift to working from home. But COVID-19 had a significant impact all the same.

While we're pretty comfortable working anywhere, we recognise there are benefits to meeting up in person. To that end, we have tried to recreate the best aspects of the office in our virtual model. That includes adding social channels to our internal comms app so people can chat about subjects outside

of work and build stronger bonds.

We've also set up a weekly "learning call" where everyone in the company is added to a randomised group of employees for a video call. There, the group can chat about the topics they've been learning about. It's a great way for people who otherwise might not interact to connect and grow together.

## What does the future hold for AnswerConnect?

AnswerConnect has some big things on the horizon, but our mission remains the same. Our core values are people, planet and purpose.

People: We will continue to push the value of human connection over AI or chatbots. In an increasingly automated and impersonal world, we recognise the importance of real people connecting with each other.

Planet: We are working on a number of charitable projects and we are proud to plant a tree for every employee and every customer, every month. We are actually just on the cusp of a major milestone!

Purpose: We recently changed the name of our marketing department to the Mattering department. It's a small but significant gesture to represent our commitment to focus on what *really matters*, thinking long-term about the benefit we can add to the world.

Maddyness is a media partner of [AnswerConnect](#).