For Customer Service, Many Prefer Phone and Email

Live chat is also a favorite

ARTICLE

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A survey of US internet users that examined how they interact with a brand's customer support team found that many favor doing so via more traditional channels—especially when compared with social media.

Indeed, 31.9% of respondents said they prefer to chat with a customer representative over the phone, while 29.1% selected email, according to "The eMarketer Ecommerce Insights Report," conducted by Bizrate Insights in March 2018.

Live chat was another channel that many favored. More than three in 10 respondents said they used that method.

Preferred Method for Interacting with a Brand/Website's Customer Support Team Among US Female Internet Users*, by Age, March 2018

% of respondents

	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	Total
Phone	23.1%	23.0%	25.3%	35.4%	40.0%	31.9%
Live chat	36.5%	37.5%	34.7%	31.0%	23.4%	30.7%
Email	31.7%	27.0%	33.2%	27.1%	28.6%	29.1%
Website inquiry	4.8%	7.5%	4.7%	5.2%	6.5%	6.0%
Social media	2.9%	3.5%	1.1%	0.4%	0.3%	1.3%
Other	1.0%	1.5%	1.1%	0.9%	1.3%	1.2%

Note: numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding; *at least 65% of respondents were female and at least 50% were ages 50+
Source: "The eMarketer Ecommerce Insights Report," conducted in March 2018 by Bizrate Insights, March 9, 2018

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Meanwhile, social media, which can be considered a less traditional customer service channel, was preferred by only 1.3% of respondents.

However, when broken down by demographic, older respondents were more likely to say they prefer to use the phone for customer service than their younger cohorts. And the roles are reversed when it comes to live chat and email, with younger users more likely to favor those channels.

By and large, consumers don't have time for a poor customer experience. A November 2017 survey by Aspect Software found that many US internet users stop doing business with a company because of a bad experience. That mirrors similar findings from the CMO Council, which found that nearly half of consumers will stop doing business with a brand that frustrates them.

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