

# To Get the Value - Answer the Phone



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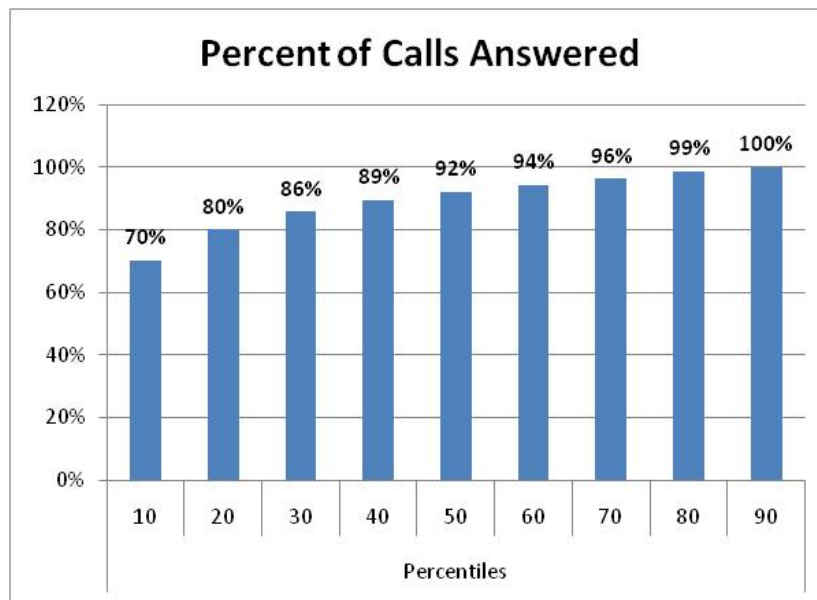
It's a simple message - for business to get the full value of their investment in Yellow Pages, they must answer the phone.

Yet, call-tracking data<sup>1</sup> indicate that **13% of calls received by advertisers from Yellow Pages ads go unanswered!!**

Ideally, a business would answer all calls. Every unanswered call will most likely be a lost customer<sup>2</sup>. Consumers will simply move on to a competitor after trying a business and not having the phone answered.

Realistically, a reasonable target would be to answer 95% of all calls. Only 35% of current Yellow Pages advertisers reach or exceed this target, however.

The figure below shows the distribution of advertisers by percent of calls answered. It shows that 10% of advertisers answered less than 70% of their calls - one out of three calls were missed by these businesses. 25% of businesses answered less than 83% of calls - one out of six calls were missed. And, 50% of businesses answered less than 92% of their calls - which means they missed one out of every twelve calls.



<sup>1</sup> 2011 Yellow Pages Metered Ad Study, CRM Associates, based on over 6,500 tracked ads.

<sup>2</sup> Only unanswered calls are measured. Calls received by voice mail could have the same discouraging impact on consumers, making loss of the potential customer to a competitor very likely. There are no data to indicate the percentage of calls that go directly to voice mail, but it suggests that the picture painted in this paper is even worse in terms of lost business opportunities for advertisers.

Every percentage point increase in calls answered translates directly to the bottom line for businesses. An increase from 70% of calls answered to 80% would yield a 15% increase in total return on investment for the business. An increase from 70% to 95% would increase returns by 36%!

Answering the phone is probably the easiest money a business can make. For a relatively small expenditure and a discipline to ensure calls are answered, businesses can increase their total revenues and profits by 5 to 40%.

The appendix shows phone-answer rates by heading for the top 200 headings.

### The Best and the Worst

The table lists the 25 headings with the highest average call-answer percentage<sup>3</sup>. Several financial, legal, and health related headings are on this list.

<b>Higher Call-Answered Headings Total</b>	<b><u>Answered</u> 87%</b>
CREDIT DEBT COUNSELING	100%
SURGICAL APPLIANCES & SUPPLIES	100%
MEDICAL ALARMS	98%
ATTORNEYS MARITAL FAMILY LAW	98%
MONUMENTS	97%
BOILERS REPAIRING CLEANING	97%
BANKRUPTCY SERVICES	97%
CHURCHES	96%
OPTICIANS	96%
RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES & HOMES	95%
MORTGAGES	94%
SECURITY CONTROL EQUIP SYSTEMS MONITORING	94%
ATTORNEYS WILLS TRUSTS ESTATES PLANNING	94%
GENERATORS ELECTRIC	94%
REFRIGERATION EQUIP COMMERCIAL SALES SERVICE	94%
TENTS RENTAL	94%
TOILETS PORTABLE	94%
GAS PROPANE	94%
SIGNS	94%
PRESSURE WASHING SERVICE	94%
AUTOMOBILE DEALERS NEW CARS	94%
KITCHEN CABINETS & EQUIP	93%
VETERINARIANS	93%
ABORTION PROVIDERS	93%
FUNERAL DIRECTORS	93%

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<sup>3</sup> Headings included all have a minimum of 5 ad studies and range up to 490 ads.

The next list contains the 25 headings with the lowest average percentage of calls answered. This list contains several contractor/home improvement headings as well as several professional or personal services headings.

<b>Lowest Call-Answered Headings</b>	<b><u>Not</u> <u>Answered</u></b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>13%</b>
SKIN CARE-SALON SPA TREATMENTS	46%
COFFEE BREAK SERVICE SUPPLIES	45%
PHYSICIANS & SURGEONS SURGERY VASCULAR	42%
FOUNDATION CONTRACTORS	40%
REAL ESTATE	38%
CABINETS	37%
PHYSICIANS & SURGEONS OBSTETRICS	29%
GYNECOLOGY	
BATHTUBS SINKS REPAIR REFINISH	28%
WATER HEATERS DEALERS	28%
DEMOLITION CONTRACTORS	27%
SCRAP METALS	27%
BOAT DEALERS	26%
GOLD, SILVER & PLATINUM BUYERS & DLRS.	26%
WATER FILTRATION PURIFICATION EQUIP	25%
CATERERS	24%
CHILD CARE DAY CARE CENTERS	23%
TIRE DEALERS	23%
CONTRACTORS GENERAL	23%
PAINTING CONTRACTORS	22%
ATTORNEYS SOCIAL SECURITY LAW	22%
AIRPORT TRANSPORTATION	21%
WINDOW CLEANING	21%
SHOWER DOORS & ENCLOSURES	20%
HOME IMPROVEMENTS	20%
WATERPROOFING CONTRACTORS	20%

### Summary

The most vulnerable part of any business is the phone call coming into the business. Whether and how the business answers the phone can make a dramatic impact on the amount of business that company receives and on the profitability of its advertising investments. A company might have the best possible ad, but the benefits of the ad can be lost if the company does not answer its phone or handle incoming calls effectively.

Current Yellow Pages advertisers fail to answer 13% of calls from Yellow Pages users. The percentage would be higher if calls that go directly to voice mail were included.

This suggests that the average business can increase the revenues and profits from their Yellow Pages investment by about 10-15% simply by paying more attention to answering their phones.

**Appendix - Alphabetical Listing of Percent Answered for Top 200 Headings**

<b>Heading</b>	<b><u>Answered</u></b>	<b><u>Not</u></b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>13%</b>
ABORTION PROVIDERS	93%	7%
ACCOUNTANTS	83%	17%
AIR CONDITIONING CONTRACTORS & SYSTEMS	87%	13%
AIRPORT TRANSPORTATION	79%	21%
ALCOHOL ABUSE & ADDICTION-INFORMATION & REFERRAL	92%	8%
APARTMENTS	80%	20%
APPLIANCES MAJOR DEALERS	88%	12%
APPLIANCES MAJOR DEALERS SERVICE REPAIR	91%	9%
APPLIANCES MAJOR REPAIR	87%	13%
ATTORNEYS	91%	9%
ATTORNEYS ACCIDENTS PERSONAL INJURY	91%	9%
ATTORNEYS BANKRUPTCY LAW	91%	9%
ATTORNEYS CRIMINAL LAW	92%	8%
ATTORNEYS DIVORCE FAMILY LAW	91%	9%
ATTORNEYS DUI & TRAFFIC OFFENSES	89%	11%
ATTORNEYS MALPRACTICE LAW	82%	18%
ATTORNEYS MARITAL FAMILY LAW	98%	2%
ATTORNEYS PERSONAL INJURY PROPERTY DAMAGE	89%	11%
ATTORNEYS PROBATE LAW	84%	16%
ATTORNEYS SOCIAL SECURITY LAW	78%	22%
ATTORNEYS WILLS TRUSTS ESTATES PLANNING	94%	6%
ATTORNEYS WORKERS COMPENSATION LAW	85%	15%
AUTOMOBILE BODY REPAIRING & PAINTING	84%	16%
AUTOMOBILE DEALERS NEW CARS	94%	6%
AUTOMOBILE DEALERS USED CARS	91%	9%
AUTOMOBILE PARTS & SUPLS.-NEW	83%	17%
AUTOMOBILE PARTS & SUPLS.-USED & REBUILT	84%	16%
AUTOMOBILE REPAIR SERVICE	86%	14%
AWNINGS CANOPIES	88%	12%
BAIL BONDS	82%	18%
BANKRUPTCY SERVICES	97%	3%
BANKS	90%	10%
BANQUET FACILITIES	84%	16%
BASEMENT REPAIR RESTORATION	85%	15%
BATHROOM ACCESSORIES	82%	18%
BATHROOM REMODELING	87%	13%
BATHTUBS SINKS REPAIR REFINISH	72%	28%
BEAUTY SALONS	86%	14%
BEEKEEPERS	82%	18%
BICYCLES DEALERS	90%	10%
BLINDS RETAIL	87%	13%
BOAT DEALERS	74%	26%
BOILERS REPAIRING CLEANING	97%	3%

Heading	<u>Answered</u>	<u>Not Answered</u>
BURGLAR ALARM SYSTEMS & MONITORING	81%	19%
BUS CHARTER RENTAL	89%	11%
CABINETS	63%	37%
CARPET & RUG CLEANERS	88%	12%
CARPET RUG NEW	86%	14%
CATERERS	76%	24%
CHILD CARE DAY CARE CENTERS	77%	23%
CHIMNEY BUILDERS REPAIR	92%	8%
CHIMNEY CLEANING	88%	12%
CHIROPRACTORS DC	90%	10%
CHURCHES	96%	4%
COFFEE BREAK SERVICE SUPPLIES	55%	45%
COIN DLRS., SUPLS., ETC.	83%	17%
COMPUTER DEALERS	89%	11%
COMPUTER SERVICE REPAIR	87%	13%
CONCRETE CONTRACTORS	84%	16%
CONTRACTORS GENERAL	77%	23%
COPYING MACHINES-SALES, SVCE. & SUPLS.	86%	14%
COUNTER TOPS	86%	14%
CRANES CRANE SERVICES	90%	10%
CREDIT DEBT COUNSELING	100%	0%
DEMOLITION CONTRACTORS	73%	27%
DENTISTS	89%	11%
DENTISTS ORTHODONTISTS STRAIGHTENING	89%	11%
DETECTIVE AGENCIES	91%	9%
DOORS	89%	11%
DRIVING INSTRUCTION	92%	8%
DUCT CLEANING HEATING AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEMS	92%	8%
ELECTRIC CONTRACTORS	89%	11%
ESCORT SERVICE PERSONAL	90%	10%
EXCAVATING CONTRACTORS	90%	10%
FENCE	89%	11%
FIRE PROTECTION EQUIP SUPPLIES SALES SERVICE	86%	14%
FIRE WATER DAMAGE RESTORATION	89%	11%
FLOOR LAYING REFINISHING RESURFACING	82%	18%
FLORISTS	92%	8%
FOUNDATION CONTRACTORS	60%	40%
FUNERAL DIRECTORS	93%	7%
FURNITURE	80%	20%
GARAGE DOORS	89%	11%
GARBAGE REMOVAL	88%	12%
GAS PROPANE	94%	6%
GENERATORS ELECTRIC	94%	6%
GLASS AUTOMOBILE PLATE WINDOW	90%	10%
GOLD, SILVER & PLATINUM BUYERS & DLRS.	74%	26%
GUTTERS DOWNSPOUTS	88%	12%
HEALTH CLUBS	92%	8%
HEARING AIDS ASSISTIVE DEVICES	85%	15%
HEAT PUMPS	92%	8%

Heading	<u>Answered</u>	<u>Not Answered</u>
HEATING CONTRACTORS	89%	11%
HOME HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS SERVICES	86%	14%
HOME IMPROVEMENTS	80%	20%
HOTELS	89%	11%
HOUSE CLEANING	89%	11%
INSULATION CONTRACTORS	87%	13%
INSURANCE	89%	11%
INSURANCE AUTOMOBILE	80%	20%
INVESTIGATORS	91%	9%
JANITOR SERVICE	83%	17%
JEWELERS	85%	15%
JEWELRY BUYERS	85%	15%
KENNELS BOARDING SERVICES	86%	14%
KITCHEN CABINETS & EQUIP	93%	7%
LANDSCAPE CONTRACTORS	83%	17%
LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE SERVICE	80%	20%
LIGHTING FIXTURES RETAIL	86%	14%
LIMOUSINE SERVICE	90%	10%
LOANS	83%	17%
LOCKS & LOCKSMITHS	89%	11%
MESSAGE THERAPISTS LICENSED REGISTERED CERTIFIED	80%	20%
MATTRESSES DEALERS	88%	12%
MEDICAL ALARMS	98%	2%
MEDICAL EQUIP & SUPPLIES	90%	10%
MOLD INSPECTION & REMEDIATION	87%	13%
MONUMENTS	97%	3%
MORTGAGES	94%	6%
MOTORCYCLES DEALERS NEW	90%	10%
MOVERS	91%	9%
NIGHT CLUBS	92%	8%
NURSERIES PLANTS TREES	88%	12%
NURSES	89%	11%
NURSING HOMES & NURSING CARE COMMUNITIES	86%	14%
OFFICE FURNITURE	93%	7%
OILS FUEL	90%	10%
OPTICAL GOODS RETAIL	85%	15%
OPTICIANS	96%	4%
OPTOMETRISTS-O.D.	90%	10%
PAINTING CONTRACTORS	78%	22%
PARTY SUPPLIES RETAIL RENTAL	89%	11%
PAVING CONTRACTORS	83%	17%
PAWNBROKERS	84%	16%
PEST CONTROL SERVICES	87%	13%
PET GROOMING	92%	8%
PHYSICAL THERAPISTS	89%	11%
PHYSICIANS & SURGEONS	88%	12%
PHYSICIANS & SURGEONS CARDIOVASCU	87%	13%
PHYSICIANS & SURGEONS DERMATOLOGY	85%	15%

Heading	<u>Answered</u>	<u>Not Answered</u>
PHYSICIANS & SURGEONS OBSTETRICS GYNECOLOGY	71%	29%
PHYSICIANS & SURGEONS ORTHOPEDICS	89%	11%
PHYSICIANS & SURGEONS PLASTIC SURG	90%	10%
PHYSICIANS & SURGEONS PODIATRIC-D.P.M.	92%	8%
PHYSICIANS & SURGEONS SURGERY VASCULAR	58%	42%
PIZZA	86%	14%
PLUMBING CONTRACTORS	88%	12%
PLUMBING DRAIN SEWER CLEANING	80%	20%
PRESSURE WASHING SERVICE	94%	6%
PRINTERS	92%	8%
RADIATORS-AUTOMOTIVE	93%	7%
REAL ESTATE	62%	38%
REFRIGERATION EQUIP COMMERCIAL SALES SERVICE	94%	6%
RENTAL SERVICE STORES YARDS	88%	12%
RESTAURANTS	84%	16%
RESTAURANTS DINING GUIDE MENU PAGES	83%	17%
RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES & HOMES	95%	5%
ROOF CONTRACTORS	85%	15%
ROOF MAINTENANCE CLEANING	85%	15%
RUBBISH REMOVAL	90%	10%
SCRAP METALS	73%	27%
SECURITY CONTROL EQUIP SYSTEMS MONITORING	94%	6%
SECURITY GUARD PATROL SERVICE	88%	12%
SEPTIC TANKS & SYSTEMS CLEANING & REPAIRING	84%	16%
SEWER & DRAIN CLEANING	89%	11%
SHEDS STORAGE BUILDINGS	90%	10%
SHOWER DOORS & ENCLOSURES	80%	20%
SHUTTERS	91%	9%
SIDING CONTRACTORS	84%	16%
SIGNS	94%	6%
SKIN CARE-SALON SPA TREATMENTS	54%	46%
SNOW REMOVAL SERVICE	86%	14%
SOD & SODDING SVCE.	89%	11%
SPAS HOT TUBS DEALERS	92%	8%
SPRINKLERS LAWN GARDEN INSTALLATION REPAIR	88%	12%
SERVI		
STORAGE HOUSEHOLD COMMERCIAL	85%	15%
SURGICAL APPLIANCES & SUPPLIES	100%	0%
SWIMMING POOL CONTRACTORS DEALERS DESIGNERS	86%	14%
SWIMMING POOL SERVICE REPAIR	81%	19%
TAXICABS	88%	12%
TENTS RENTAL	94%	6%
TILE CERAMIC CONTRACTORS DEALERS	89%	11%
TIRE DEALERS	77%	23%
TOILETS PORTABLE	94%	6%
TOWING AUTOMOTIVE	90%	10%
TRANSMISSIONS AUTOMOBILE	87%	13%
TREE SERVICE	86%	14%
VETERINARIANS	93%	7%

<b>Heading</b>	<b><u>Answered</u></b>	<b><u>Not Answered</u></b>
WATER DAMAGE RESTORATION	84%	16%
WATER FILTRATION PURIFICATION EQUIP	75%	25%
WATER HEATERS DEALERS	72%	28%
WATER SOFTNG & COND EQUIP., SVCE.	84%	16%
WATER-BOTTLED & BULK	84%	16%
WATERPROOFING CONTRACTORS	80%	20%
WEB PAGE DESIGNERS	89%	11%
WHEELCHAIRS SCOOTERS	91%	9%
WINDOW CLEANING	79%	21%
WINDOW TINTING	88%	12%
WINDOW TREATMENTS	85%	15%
WINDOWS	91%	9%