

How Call Centers Handle Non-English Calls



Sponsored by:



2013 Report

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Background

Contact centers increasingly service non-English calls due to several driving forces, including:

- *Immigration:* 9% of US residents are Limited English Proficient and generally require language services.
- *Regulation:* some call centers must provide language services because of laws or regulations like Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, provisions of the Affordable Care Act, or new rulings from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.
- *Marketing:* Growing use of multicultural marketing campaigns that bring on non-English speakers as customers.

Analysts predict the US language services market will grow at an annual rate of 3.9% over the next 5 years.¹ Find out how your peers handle this growing issue in this report.

Executive Summary

Major items which emerged from our study include:

- 85% of respondents already service non-English speaking callers in some manner, and 100% of the remaining centers are either currently considering, or would consider, servicing such calls, indicating an untapped market space.²
- Quality and cost factors both are very important to managers in looking at Phone Interpretation Providers and the handling of their foreign language calls in general.²
- The quality and cost components are embedded with another element of “managerial convenience” (i.e. managers want to know that the issue is fully taken care of by one provider). This “convenience” aspect is shown in the fact that “number of languages accommodated” and “reliability of service” top their list of criteria for Phone Interpretation Providers, while “ease of connection” comes in fourth.²
- Security remains a major concern for managers when considering Phone Interpretation Providers, especially for managers in the banking industry.²
- Three out of four respondents indicated that it is “important” or “very important” that the Phone Interpretation Providers’ calls be handled from within the United States.²

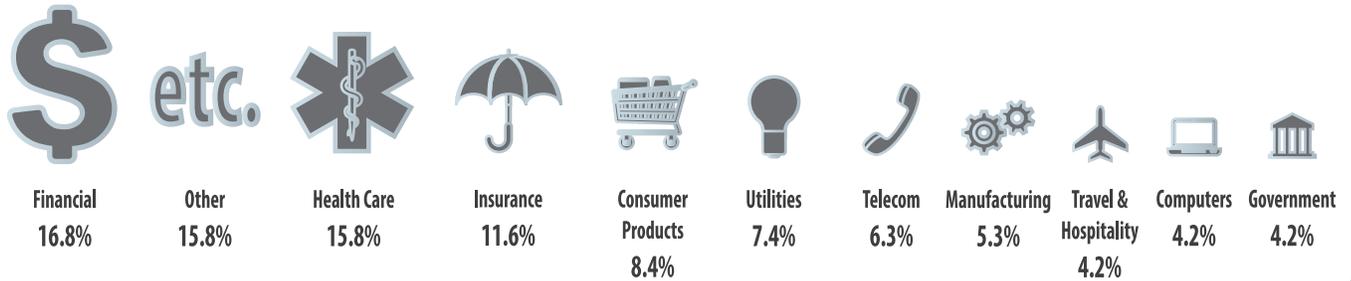
Methodology

In 2012 Voiance Language Services sponsored a study by call center consulting firm Benchmark Portal (BP), who conducted a survey² to their call center benchmarking community of over 35,000. The survey respondents were verified as contact center and operations professionals from multiple industries and sectors.

Objective

The objective of this study is to establish data points for operational issues related to the handling of non-English calls in contact centers, thereby providing a resource for better, fact-based decision-making for customer contact industries.

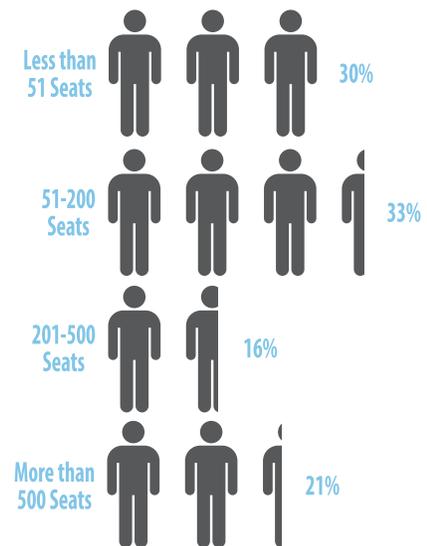
Industry of Survey Respondents



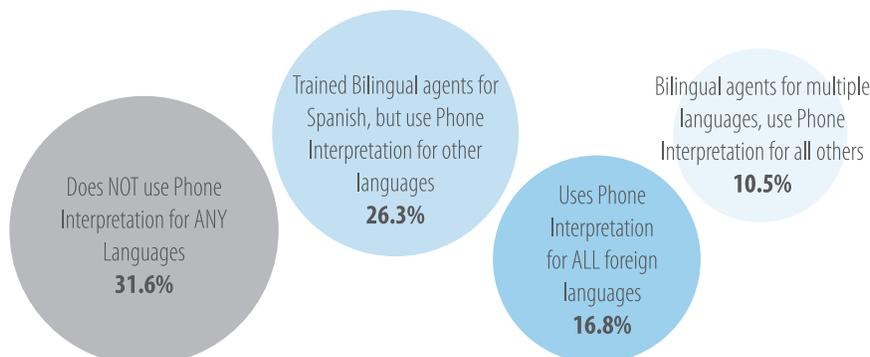
Respondent's Position



Size of Call Center (in seats)

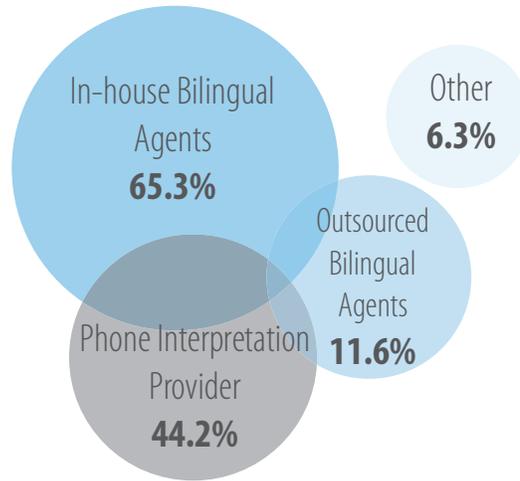


When are Phone Interpretation Providers Used?



How are Non-English Calls Handled?

85% of our respondents currently support non-English speaking calls, some in multiple ways.



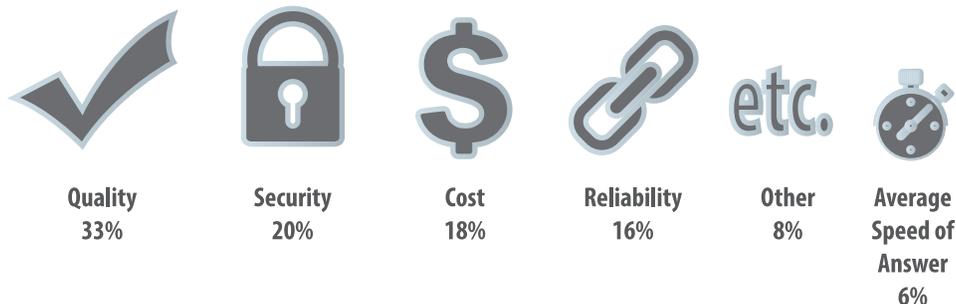
Motivation to Support Non-English Calls

All of the survey respondents are either currently using a language service or acknowledge that they need to use a language service. The two main motivating factors listed for using a Phone Interpretation Provider were "Customer Service/Satisfaction" and "Regulatory Requirements".



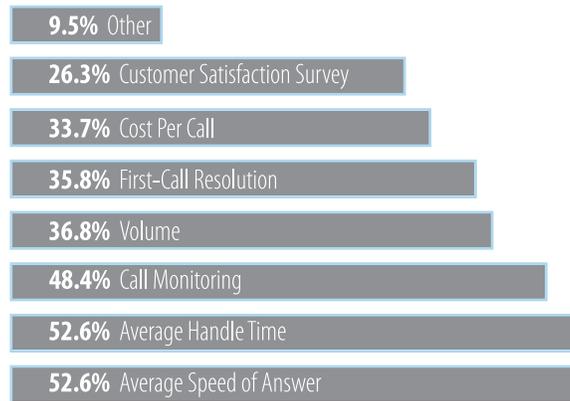
Primary Concerns Regarding the Outsourcing of Phone Interpretation

For the majority of survey respondents the primary concerns regarding the use of Phone Interpretation services were quality and information security.



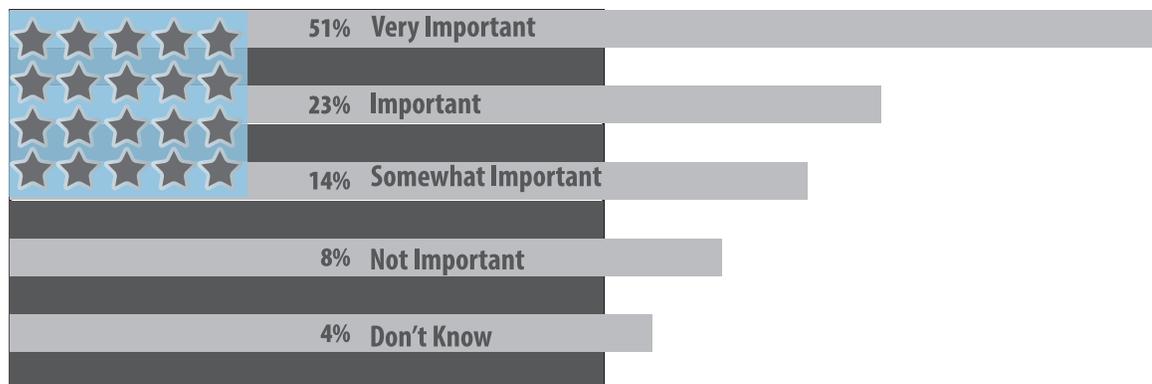
Key Performance Metrics Used to Measure Non-English Calls

These key indicators are used by the call center managers to evaluate the operational efficiency to indicate base levels of performance when measuring non-English calls. Average speed of answer and average handle time are the primary Key Performance Indicators used.



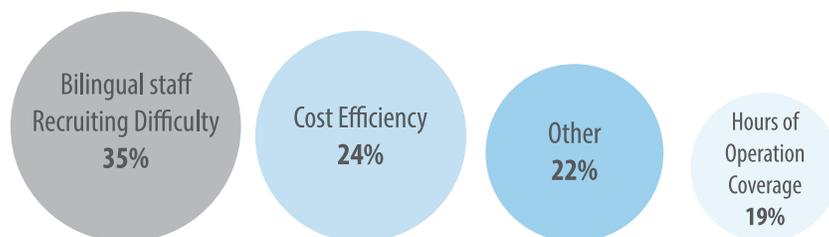
Importance of US Based Resources

51% of respondents indicated that it is "very important" for the Phone Interpretation Provider service to be handled within the United States.



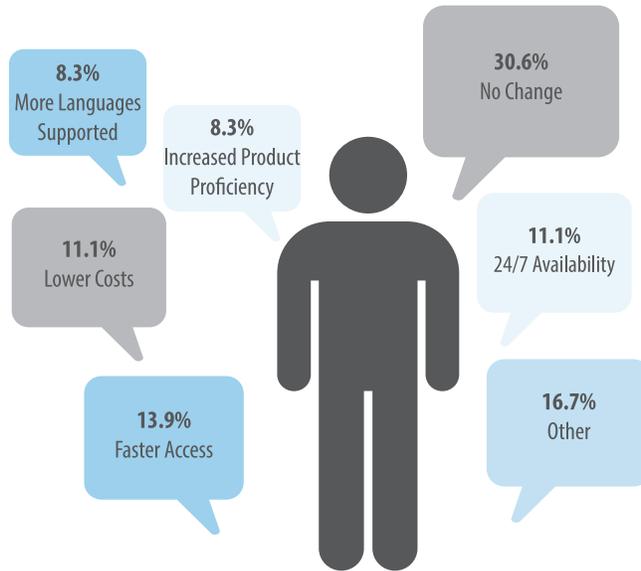
Primary Reason for using a Phone Interpretation Service

While there were a number of reasons indicated by respondents for using a Phone Interpretation Provider, over one-third of the survey respondents outsource Phone Interpretation due to difficulty recruiting bilingual staff to work inside their contact centers.



Most Desired Improvements from Current Phone Interpretation Provider

Faster access, lower costs and extended availability topped the list of most desired improvements. Many survey participants seemed to be satisfied with their Phone Interpretation service provider. 30.6% indicated that they would make “no change” to their provider’s service.



About Voiance Language Services

Voiance Language Services provides multilingual support in over 200 languages to companies operating customer contact centers. Voiance operates the only large-scale network of interpreter contact centers in the US, providing clients with quality, security, reliability and the ability to connect to an interpreter in an average of 15 seconds or less.



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