



On hold marketing Guru Newsletter

Issue no 8 – February 2005

The On-Hold Marketing Guru is now a monthly newsletter full of sound advice and tips on how to get the most out of your business telephone lines ... a wine pick that you can use to impress your clients or yourself.

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What's new:

We're going monthly – hopefully you will see that as good news – it's a little more work for us but we think we are up for the task; and we also thought you might like to hear from us more often ... we hope we're right.

The name of this newsletter should be "Taking Criticism" ... something we all must do once in awhile. Criticism is good as long as it is constructive and its purpose is to take stock, help us improve and make us look at ourselves introspectively. To that end, in this issue, we take a little and we give a little ... a criticism quid pro quo if you will – and that IS something new.

Is quitting the real answer ...

If quitters never win, and winners never quit, then who is the fool who said, "Quit while you're ahead"?

Feature: Criticism goes both ways

In all our newsletters I ask for feedback – some months I get more than others – last month I received the following: "I really enjoy reading your newsletter, sometimes I even learn something – but I was wondering why the highlight article always seems so dry in comparison with your other features. P.S. Thanks for the wine tips." Now nobody likes to be criticized, but sometimes criticism makes us stronger in what we are trying to accomplish; especially when it comes from those whom we respect ... and if you're a subscriber to this newsletter the respect is already there – and it is also quite obvious, to me anyway, that you're smart too. So let's take a look at your on-hold time with a lighter flare.

With most, if not all of my clients, the first question I ask is "how long do you keep people on hold?" (the answers vary dependant on the sense of humour of the respondent – my favourite is "depends on whether it's my wife ... or my girlfriend." – but I digress...). Some people know right away and some have no clue, and one company in particular put the project on-hold for two weeks to study their on-hold time. Their conclusion was between 15-30 seconds. Then I asked the follow up question, "how many of your callers do you put on-hold"; again answers vary due to senses of humour, but in this case another two weeks passed before I got my answer ... almost all of them. Their receptionist reported that close to 95% of her calls were put on-hold in some form or another: whether it was transferring to the appropriate party; getting some

information; or putting somebody into voicemail. So by combining those two pieces of information we were able to determine the proper format for their on-hold message system: short 15-20 second messages.

Keeping these findings in mind makes me think of those companies that tell me “we never put callers on hold” (do they not have spouses, significant others or both?) ... but in actual fact they do it more times than they realize each and every day ... some companies make it sound like it's a crime to put callers on hold ... it's not a crime to put your callers on hold, the crime is not having anything informative or interesting for them to listen to when they are.

Shameless Plug

Custom Sound Impressions works with you to help you get the most of your on-hold messages. We use our experience to help you determine the best message length and content.

Signs that you have grown up ...

Your house plants are alive, and you can't smoke any of them.

Mike's Wine pick: Konzelmann 2002 Pinot Noir Spaetburgender

I have to admit that I am not a Pinot Noir drinker ... I have tried a good number of them and decided awhile back that it was not my grape of choice, which is why this wine came as such a treat (and surprise). Smooth as silk on the palate with a hint of spice – oh so nice (had to rhyme it, sorry) ... “almost has a sweet taste” said someone in attendance at this tasting – but is still ranked a zero on the sugar code. This one is quite tasty ... enjoy.

A word from our sponsor – Enjoy - Warning: may offend some listeners

[Click here to begin downloading the "word from our sponsor" clip immediately](http://www.customvoicing.com/audio_files/sponsor_8.mp3)
http://www.customvoicing.com/audio_files/sponsor_8.mp3

Final Thought

Next month we'll focus on voice mail etiquette, from leaving a good outgoing message to making yourself understood leaving a message ... we'll even touch upon calling people back. Until then – keep warm.

Feedback ...

We invite your comments and feedback on the highlight article or any other part of this newsletter. Send to guru@customvoicing.com

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