

QueueBuster call-back for 101 calls

A technological call-back system that allows 101 callers to hang up the phone and keep their place in the queue for the police.

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Key details

Does it work?	Untested – new or innovative
Focus	Organisational
Topic	Community engagement Crime prevention Operational policing Organisation including workforce
Organisation	Humberside Police
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Region	North East
Partners	Police
Stage of practice	The practice is implemented.

Key details

Start date	September 2019
Scale of initiative	Local
Target group	General public Victims

Aim

To:

- improve the victim journey by creating a more efficient process for contacting the police
- reduce call wait times and abandonment rates
- improve public confidence

Intended outcome

- Manage victims' expectations and allow them to continue with other activities while they wait for their call to be answered.
- Reduce abandonment rates.
- Reduce failure demand (where a control room receives demand through a failure of their own process. For example, if force control rooms have high call waiting times, members of the public may hang up and then ring back at a later stage).

Description

The QueueBuster call-back system is a technological system used across call centres and private industries globally. Humberside began using the QueueBuster system in recognition of the importance of developing technology to improve the customer experience and victim journeys.

The system enables callers to hang up the phone in the safe knowledge that their call keeps its place in the queue and they will be called back.

How it works

The system works by connecting to the force contact management system. Humberside Police uses Avaya.

When 101 calls queue, after a set time the system offers the caller the ability to press '1' for QueueBuster. Callers are invited to enter their telephone number into their keypad and the system then hangs up the call for them. The system keeps their place in the queue. Once presented to a contact officer they receive the details of the original caller automatically via voice recording. The system then dials the caller back.

The system doesn't require any daily management. The IT team set it up. It did require funding (no costings available).

Overall impact

This has reduced the numbers of abandoned calls over a 12-month period.

During this period:

- 12.5% of non-emergency 101 callers requested a call-back
- 96.5% of those call-backs were successful

For 101 performance, Humberside's force control room continues to deliver best in class performance averaging at 5 seconds in the last 18 months.

An evaluation is being conducted by the force. This will involve data analysis.

The QueueBuster system is monitored as part of the force control room's performance framework. The force measures the volume of QueueBuster calls and the success rate of these calls.

There are no details of the original evaluation, as the system has been in place for over five years now.

Learning

After completing peer reviews with other forces who have adopted the technology, the learning is that the system must be used for its design – which is to 'keep the callers place in the queue' to prevent any degradation of service.

The system automatically configures the place each caller holds in the queue. Although the call hangs up the phone, the actual call stays in the call queue as if they were still on the phone. Practitioners have a dashboard that can be used to monitor performance.

Other adopters of the technology have instead used 'offline queues' or not provided the same priority to the call-backs. This has meant that victims and contacts may receive a worse service than callers who do not select for a call back. An offline queue is when the online queue is full. Instead of callers keeping their place in the queue, these calls are only answered when the online queue is completely empty. This could have a negative impact on abandonment rates, failure demand and the overall victim journey.

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Tags

Information communication technology (ICT) Force control rooms