

## **The Importance of Call Sequencing in a Busy Office Environment**

Is yours an office that processes a large volume of incoming orders? Is it a busy "Help Desk" operation that takes a steady stream of trouble calls, or do you simply have an overworked Receptionist with too many duties and too little time? If any of these scenarios sound familiar, you could be a candidate for a Call Sequencer.

A Call Sequencer is a device which will answer calls after a prescribed interval (usually 3 to 5 rings), play a recorded message to the caller, then place the caller on hold. At the console where calls are answered, an electronic display alerts those answering phones to the number of calls waiting and the next call to be answered. This ensures that calls are answered in the order in which they are received, so that callers do not have to remain on hold unnecessarily.

While callers are on hold, they can hear informative messages that enable a business to sell and provide promotional information of which the customer may be unaware. These messages can save time for the caller and the business since the caller is better prepared to complete his business before reaching a live agent.

Call Sequencers have several key advantages over conventional telephone systems, particularly in busy office environments. These advantages lead to a "win-win" for the business with reduced costs, improved customer service and enhanced employee satisfaction:

- All calls are answered promptly, professionally, and uniformly
- Calls are routed in the order that they are received so that a caller placed on hold is not forgotten.
- Customers can be pre-sold or prepared so that they conduct their business quickly and efficiently when they reach a live agent.
- Employees are able to process more calls more efficiently.
- Often fewer phone lines are needed because of more efficient call processing.

The most sophisticated Call Sequencers also provide traffic reports. These reports tell the business owner whether the system has the optimum number of phone lines to handle the business presented. Some systems also monitor employee productivity, showing the number and average length of inbound and outbound calls for each employee. This information in turn can be used to reward superior performers and to counsel and improve those whose performance may not be up to expectations.

Historically, Call Sequencers were prohibitively expensive for small to medium size businesses. However, the advent of computer technology has made these devices surprisingly affordable. A small system, which will support up to 10 lines is available for around \$3500 in addition to the cost of an associated telephone system. More sophisticated systems with full reporting and productivity packages are available for as little as \$15,000. Often, the increases in sales and productivity can repay this investment in just a few months.

As with any sophisticated system, it is important to purchase from a vendor who has experience with the systems and has a group which specializes in Call Handling technology. Also be certain that the package you purchase includes comprehensive training so that you get the most from the system.

Call Sequencing can prove to be a valuable tool in the arsenal to make your business stand out from your competition.