

CALL FLOW AUDIT · 2026

Ring Your Own Business

Seven calls from an outside phone, fifteen minutes and a pen. Then eleven fixes, ordered by what each one is costing you rather than by how easy it is.

You cannot hear your own phone system. You know the options, you know which one you want, and you have never rung at 8:35 on a Monday from a mobile with one bar. That is why internal reviews always conclude the menu is fine: **everybody in the room already knows the answer, and the one group whose opinion matters is not in the room.**

■ The seven calls, and what each one exposes

Call	What it finds
Monday, 8:35am	The busiest moment. Systems are only ever tested at 2pm Wednesday, when they work.
Say and press nothing	What happens to a caller who is driving. Silence must reach a person, not loop.
Press zero straight away	The most common caller behaviour there is. It must reach a human.
Choose the wrong option on purpose	Whether they can transfer you, and whether anything travels with you.
Let it ring out entirely	The end of the line. This is where a path that rings forever is found.
6:15pm, and Saturday morning	After hours: configured once at setup, almost never verified since.
From a mobile on one bar	Whether prompts still work on imperfect audio. A real share of calls arrive this way.

Have an outsider make three of them

Give a friend or a customer a specific goal, like "find out if they can come Thursday", and ask them to describe what happened. **Where they hesitated is the finding.** It is the only reliable way to discover that a word like "operations" or "service delivery" means nothing outside your building, because nobody who works there can un-know what it means.

■ Write down four things per call

- **Seconds to reach a person.** Your customer's experience of your business, in one number.
- **How many decisions** the caller had to make. Each is a chance to get it wrong.
- **Anything you heard that a caller cannot act on.** Website addresses, awards, "options have recently changed".
- **Every dead end.** Ring outs, unowned mailboxes, loops back to the menu.

■ Fix in this order. The first two are losses, the rest are improvements

#	Fix	Why it is ranked here
1	Any ring group with one person in it	A flat battery, a meeting or a tunnel becomes a lost customer, with nothing recorded.
2	Any path that rings forever	They hang up at ~40 seconds and ring the next business. Your system records nothing.
3	Rename every menu option	Costs nothing, twenty minutes, biggest experience gain available.
4	Cut to four options, one level	Past four they pick what they heard last, not what they need.
5	Rewrite the greeting to under seven seconds	Delete the website, the awards, and "options have recently changed".
6	Make holding bearable	Position or wait only if accurate. Offer a callback that keeps their place.

■ Rename these six. Twenty minutes, no cost

Currently	Should be	Because
Customer service	An order you have already placed	Every caller thinks that is what their call is.
Accounts	A bill or a payment	Many callers read it as opening one.
Operations	A booking or a job time	Means nothing outside your building.
Technical support	Something is not working	Plain language beats a job title, and is faster to say.
General enquiries	Delete it	Collects everyone unsure. Biggest queue, least specialised staff.

■ Housekeeping, fixes 7 to 11

- **Public holidays twelve months ahead, by state**, plus the closures that are not public holidays: the Christmas shutdown, stocktake, a conference Friday.
- **Move voicemail to last.** Widen the ring group, then callback, then a mailbox. Many callers will not leave one at all.
- **Every mailbox gets a named owner and a checking frequency**, or gets deleted.
- **Walk every option and transfer target quarterly.** Ten minutes. People leave and nothing tells the phone system.
- **Zero must reach a person from anywhere.** If it loops to the menu, callers conclude you cannot be reached, and they are right.

Then ask whether the menu should exist at all

Menus sort callers into groups that need different people. If your callers do not need different people, the menu is a cost you impose for no return. Under about fifteen people answering calls, a short greeting and a ring group is usually better. And a menu was always a workaround for machines that only understood digits, which is no longer the constraint it was.