



Americans are really angry about customer service

By Kim Peterson

A new survey shows that more Americans than ever are increasingly upset with shoddy products and customer service -- and they have no problem voicing their displeasure.

People are angry for a number of reasons, said Scott Broetzmann of Customer Care Measurement and Consulting, the company that designed the survey. They're mad at the robots that answer the phones and the lack of human customer-care agents. They have to contact companies an average of four times to get resolution, and they're upset at all the time wasted.

The survey is the sixth version of research originally conducted by the White House in 1976 when Gerald Ford was president. And though companies have had decades to improve their customer service levels, Broetzmann said that "satisfaction is no higher than reported in 1976."

Here's more uncovered by the survey:

- About half of those surveyed reported customer problems in the last year, up from 45 percent in 2011 and 32 percent in 1976.
- Some 36 percent of Americans have yelled at customer-service agents in the last year, up from 25 percent in the past.
- Cursing was used by 13 percent of those surveyed, up from 7 percent in the past.
- The No. 1 product making us mad is cable and satellite TV.

People want to see some form of compensation, even if it's just an apology. When a remedy is in place, consumer satisfaction soars to 74 percent from 37 percent.

The survey was conducted through phone interviews of about 1,000 households, and partially designed by the W.P. Carey School of Business at Arizona State University. More information about the research can be found [here](#).

"The moral of the story: Don't invest in improving your customer service unless you're going to do it right," Professor Mary Jo Bitner from the university said in a statement. I've got the power.



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