

## Digital Message-On-Hold *In English*

It is inevitable that, at times, you will have to place your callers on hold, there are a variety of ways that this will be done;

1. Press the hold key and the caller will be held until you either take the call back or the recall timer in your system determines that a call has been held too long. Recall timers are a parameter that can be altered to suit your organisation's views on how long callers should be held for.

2. Press the transfer key and the caller will be held until you hang up, irrespective of whether you choose to introduce the call or just perform a blind (unannounced) transfer. In the case of a blind transfer the caller will hear ring tone at the extension transferred to until answered. A recall timer will apply to transferred calls so that unanswered transfers will be returned to the original transferor once the timer is exceeded.

3. Once a call is parked, for the purpose of making a tannoy announcement or similar, it is effectively on hold. Recall timers also apply to parked calls so it is not possible to park a call all day unless the timer is set to be several hours.

4. Pressing a one-touch extension key on systems that support one touch transfer is effectively the same as pressing the transfer key.

### **There are options as to what a customer will hear whilst on hold;**

1. Traditionally callers used to hear silence on hold. Given the technology now available to us, it is not prudent to leave callers holding in silence. They may think they have been disconnected and hang up and you also miss one of the best selling opportunities, as it is virtually the only time you have a true captive audience. This opportunity should not be abused, make the experience a pleasant one for your customer, whilst also getting your message across.

2. Originally music on hold tended to be "Muzak" that is to say digital noises on a chip within the system. The common tunes were such as Green Sleeves and were the butt of many peoples criticism.

3. External music on hold ports are available on all modern day systems. Some manufacturers make an M.O.H. port standard on the CCU and others provide it as a port available by adding an extra card. A limited number of manufacturers offer systems that offer two M.O.H. ports so that you can play different messages or music to callers into different lines.

**Once you have a music on hold port you could have any of the following;**

1. A purpose designed CD player to play your music of choice 24 hours a day, 365 days per year.
2. A digital message on hold unit that will record your advertising message from an audio tape onto it's chip for permanent playback.
3. A purpose designed MP3 player that comes with a CD allowing you to construct your own licence paid music and digital on-hold message.
4. A purpose designed MP3 player that comes with access to a supporting web site where you can download pre-recorded prompts specific to various industries. An example would be "Thank you for holding, why not ask one of our agents about travel insurance to protect you during your trip?"
5. An MP3 player where you have invested in an MP3 recording that is specific to your organisation. Such as, "Thank you for holding at Phones4Less, one of our agents will be with you shortly. Don't forget to ask about our installation service."

**There are pitfalls associated with music on hold;**

1. If you use music you will need to pay licence fees to both PRS (Performing Rights Society) and PPL (Phonographic Performances Ltd) as they collect for the writers and artists.
2. You cannot please all of the people, all of the time. If you choose jazz there will be those who would say that you should have picked rock, soul or classical.
3. Most telephone system maintainers will not cover external music sources so you need to bear in mind that any breakdown will be either chargeable or on a back to base warranty basis.
4. Even the CD players that are specifically designed for constant use on a telephone system run the risk of breakdown so MP3 or other digital message on hold systems are the most resilient.
5. You run the risk of callers hearing inappropriate chat shows or commercials if you choose radio as a music source.



Remember that callers on hold are generally already friendly with you. There are only three ways to increase sales turnover;

- a) Speak to more prospects
- b) Convert more prospects
- c) By selling more products and services to the same people.

Message-On Hold Gives you a huge opportunity to sell value-added products or services to existing customers so it makes sense to have a message on hold.

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