



Live Help: Global Consumer Views & Trends Live Voice and Live Chat



A consumer research study commissioned by ATG

Survey Background

ATG commissioned research across four international markets to explore shoppers' perceptions and preferences for live online help services such as click to call and click to chat. The survey aimed to better understand why and when consumers opt for a live voice or live chat interaction online, how important they think it is, and when it is most helpful. The results provide online businesses with important data about the kind of assistance consumers want, and how offering live help can improve sales. ATG commissioned local, third-party research specialists to poll over 4,500 adult consumers in US, UK, France and Spain about using live help services when browsing, researching, buying and getting post-sale service online.

In particular the research looked at:

- **How consumers value live help, compared with other customer service methods**
- **Adoption levels for live help**
- **Key factors that drive shoppers to use live help, and**
- **How useful live help services are between countries**

Executive Summary

Consumers prefer live help (click to call and click to chat) over other online customer service options.

More and more businesses around the world are leveraging their online channels to increase sales and improve customer service. Accordingly, consumers today expect and demand engaging, personalized, and easy-to-use Web sites for both sales and service.

The results of this survey reveal that consumers want more than just a phone number or e-mail address when it comes to online customer service. They want the options to speak on the phone and chat online with a real person straight away to help answer their questions before, during, and after making an online purchase decision. Online shoppers want choices, preferring to use the phone for certain interactions while using live chat for others.

Four findings of the survey include:

- **Consumers want and value live online help.** Both click to call and click to chat were ranked highly by consumers and ranked ahead of many other common Web site features
- **Consumers prefer live help over other online customer service options.** Live help was ranked higher by consumers than other customer service options like e-mail response or online self-service
- **Consumers' use of live help indicates a lack of broad availability.** Only a small percentage of consumers have used live help, suggesting a lack of widespread availability
- **Consumers prefer live help, click to call and click to chat for specific, common reasons.** Survey results suggest click to call and click to chat are both required to meet all consumer needs

Research Highlights



Consumers want and value live online help.

Click to call and click to chat services were ranked highly by both US and European consumers, both on their own and when compared to other common Web site features.

‘Easy, fast access to live help’ was ranked third among seven common Web site features, second only to ‘price and ease of browsing’

- **94%** of US consumers and **77%** of European consumers ranked click to call as ‘useful to extremely useful’
- **90%** of US consumers and **83%** of European consumers ranked click to chat as ‘useful to extremely useful’
- **94%** of US consumers and **85%** of European consumers ranked live help as ‘useful to extremely useful.’ The complexity of questions, sensitivity of information required for online transactions, prices of goods and services, and problems transacting online all drive consumers to choose live help services

Most consumers prefer live help over other online customer service options.

Click to call and click to chat services, which allow consumers to immediately obtain live help without calling in and waiting on hold, ranked higher than other customer service options in most cases. When asked to rank the customer service methods they felt would be most useful, individuals demonstrated a strong preference for live help, although differences were identified between US and European consumers.

- **Click to call was ranked the most desirable customer service option by European consumers – an indication that free calls to a contact centre are not the norm in Europe and that click to call (which uses VOIP technology) is preferable**
- **European consumers preferred writing an e-mail to using click to chat, an indication that voice is the preferred live contact method while e-mail is the preferred written contact one. However, given the low percentage of European consumers who have used click to chat, businesses should be careful about assuming click to chat is not in demand in Europe. In the US, click to chat was strongly preferred over e-mail**
- **Click to call and click to chat were ranked second and third, respectively, out of five, behind only the option of a free phone call into the contact center**

Consumers' use of live help indicates a lack of broad availability.

Despite preferring click to call and click to chat over most other customer service options, few US and European consumers have used live help as compared to use of other options like calling a contact centre number, writing an e-mail query or using online self service. This data suggests that live help services are not as widely available as other customer service options, which is alarming given how strongly consumers prefer live voice help.

- **64%** of US consumers and **51%** of European consumers have called a customer service number
- **57%** of European consumers and **53%** of US consumers have written e-mail inquiries on Web sites
- **49%** of US consumers and **42%** of European consumers have used online self service/FAQ tools
- **37%** of US consumers and **27%** of European consumers have used click to chat
- **21%** of both US and European consumers have used click to call

Research Highlights continued

Consumers prefer live help, click to call and click to chat for specific reasons.

The need for live help options among global consumers is driven by common factors including needing additional information not available on the Web site, having trouble completing forms or checkout, not easily finding returns or cancellation policies, or needing to supply sensitive information (e.g. a social security number). In these cases, consumers prefer click to call for specific reasons and click to chat for a different set of reasons.

- **77%** of US consumers and **76%** of European consumers prefer click to call over click to chat when making a purchase or applying for a product or service that costs more than \$500
- **77%** of US consumers and **76%** of European consumers prefer click to call over click to chat when sensitive information (e.g. credit card number) is required
- **71%** of US consumers and **68%** of European consumers prefer click to call over click to chat when the online purchase process is complex
- **60%** of US consumers and **56%** of European consumers prefer click to chat over click to call when they need only basic information on a product or service to purchase or apply online
- **60%** of US consumers and **56%** of European consumers prefer click to chat over click to call when they need to ask about shipping or pick-up options
- **57%** of European and **56%** of US consumers prefer click to chat over click to call when they want to ask about discounts or promotions

Countries at a Glance

US respondents are most familiar with live help.

- **94%** say live help would be useful when making online purchases
- **58%** have tried live help services
- **70%** rate click to call as extremely or very useful
- **40%** say live help is a major determining factor in converting them from browsers to buyers

UK participants make high value purchases.

- **54%** say live help is an important Web site feature
- **55%** make online purchases worth over £100
- **75%** say click to call would be useful when making online purchases
- **61%** say click to chat would be useful when making online purchases
- **52%** would seek out live help if they needed more information about a product or service

Countries at a Glance continued



French consumers are active online, looking for the best deal.

- **42%** research products and services to buy online weekly
- **76%** think a reasonable price is the most important feature on a Web site
- **66%** would find live help useful for making online purchases over €100
- **58%** would use live help for questions about shipping
- **84%** like sharing their purchases with friends on Facebook

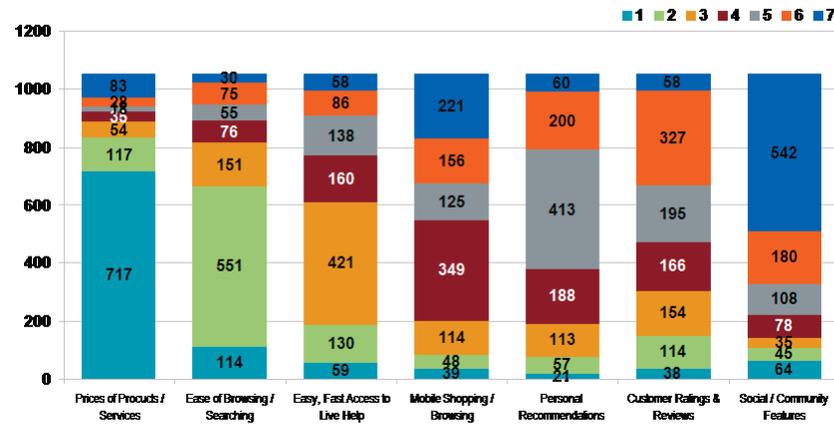
Spanish respondents want more click to call services.

- **71%** would use click to call to make sure the organisation understood their question
- **64%** would use click to chat because they can do other things while chatting
- **76%** would find live help useful if they had to give out sensitive information
- **42%** would find live help useful if the return policy was unclear
- **55%** say e-mail queries are not useful

Survey Results: Importance/Usefulness of Online Customer Service Features

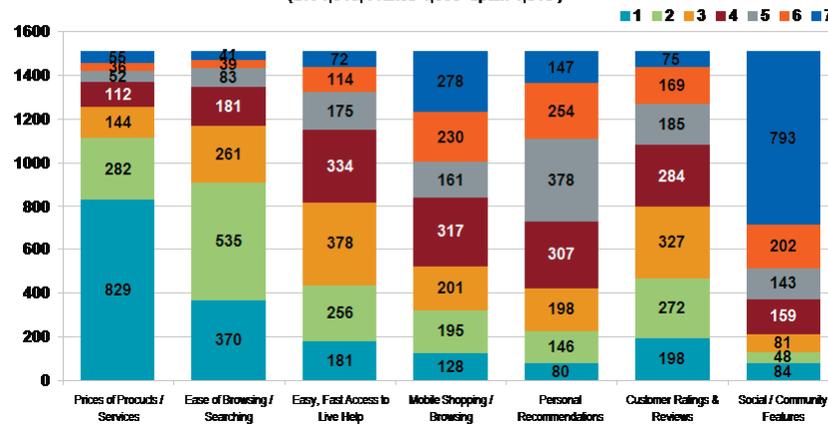
- Rank the features you find to be most important on a Web site, with “1” being most important and “7” least important.

NA - 1,052 respondents

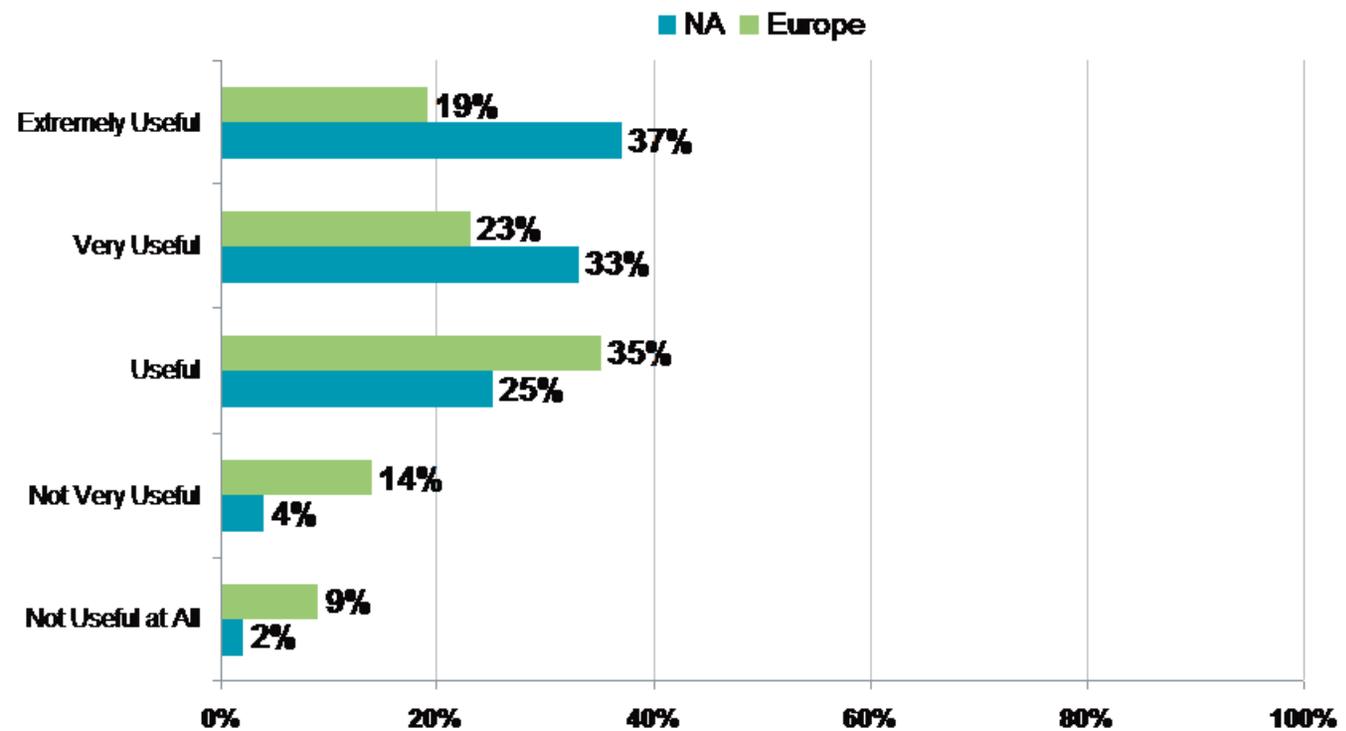


Europe - 3,528 respondents

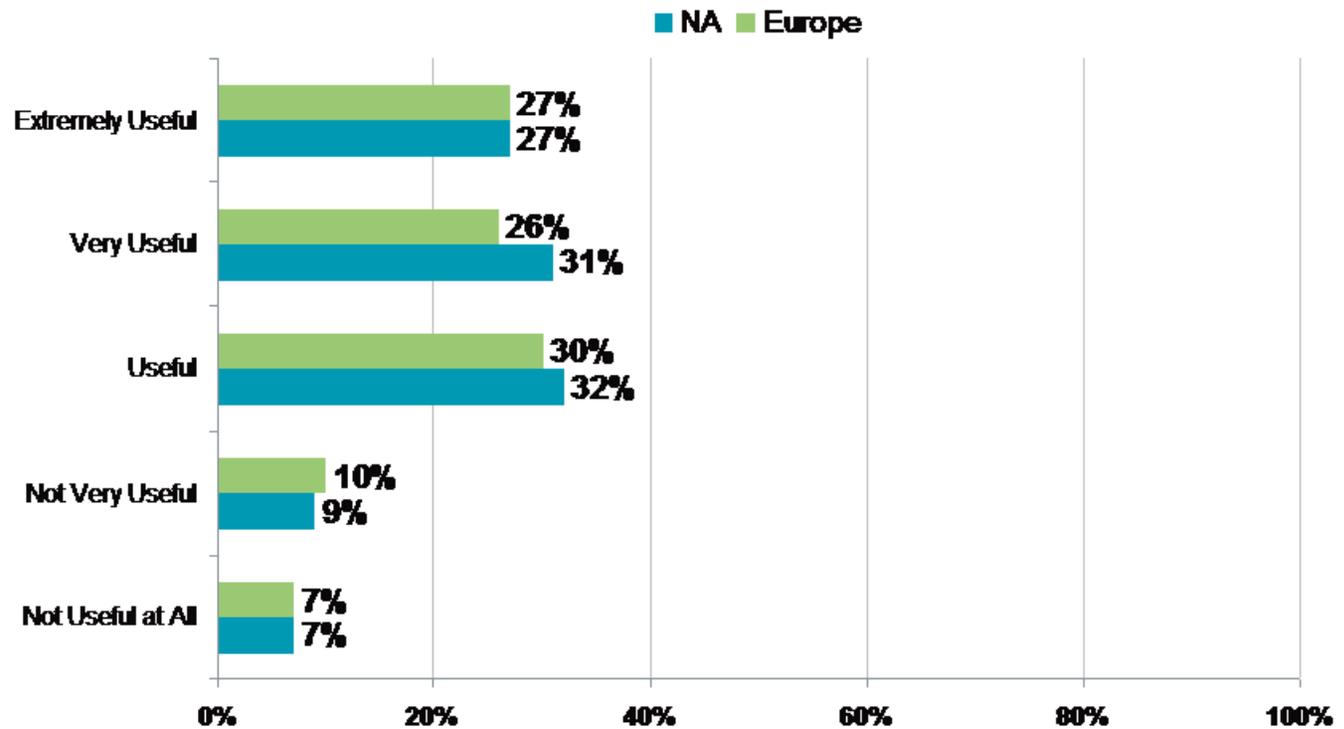
(UK-1,510, France-1,008 Spain-1,010)



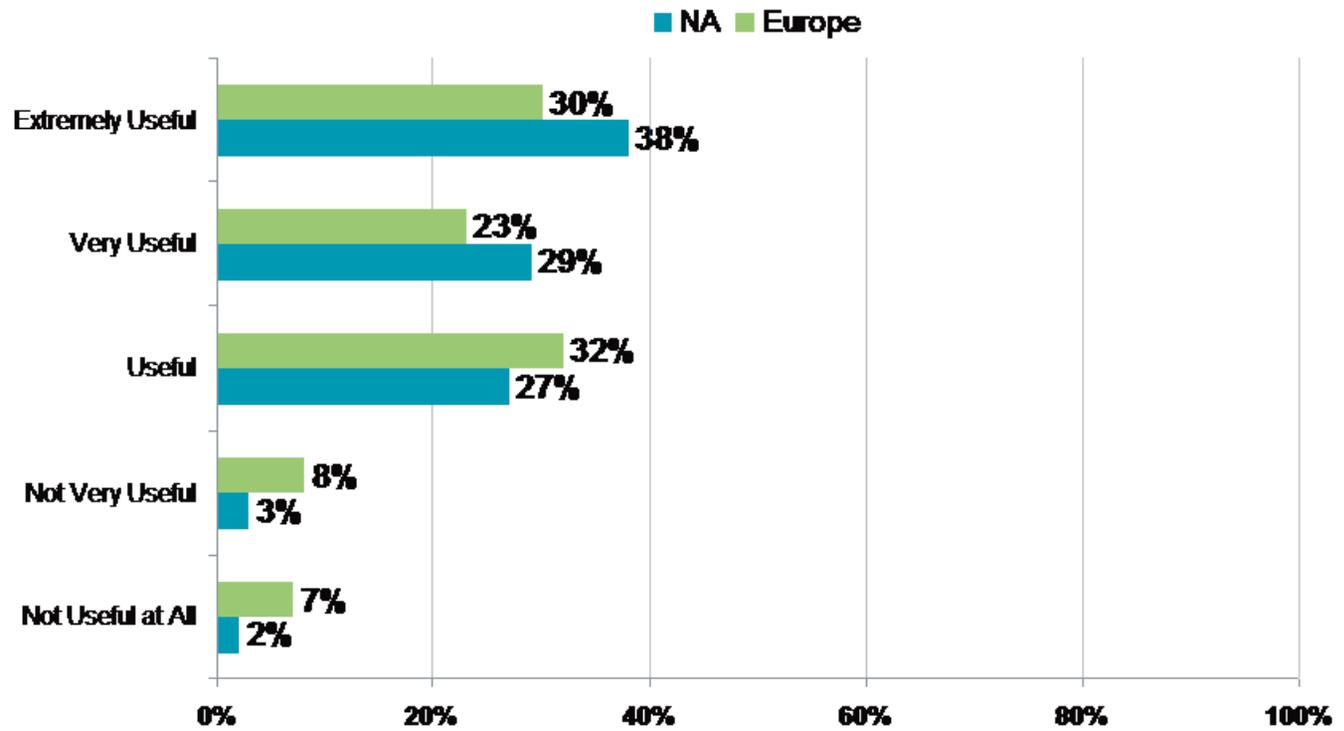
2. On a scale of 1-5 (with 1 being extremely useful and 5 being not useful at all) please rate how useful you think live call options would be when making purchases online.



3. On a scale of 1-5 (with 1 being extremely useful and 5 being not useful at all) please rate how useful you think live chat options would be when making purchases online.

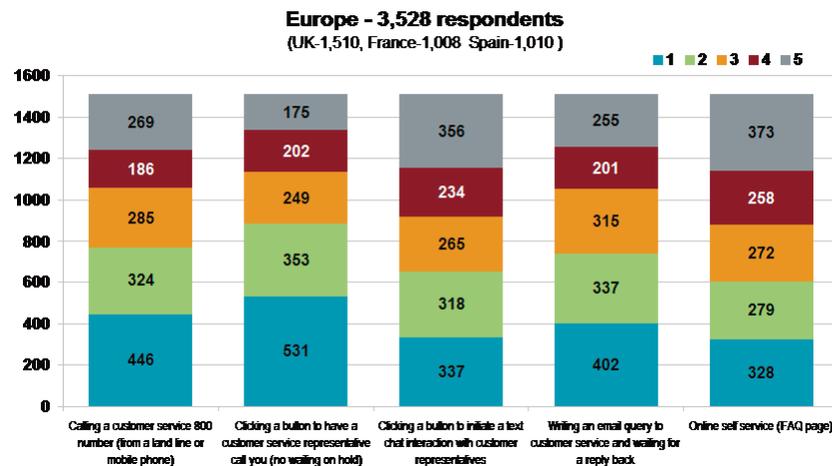
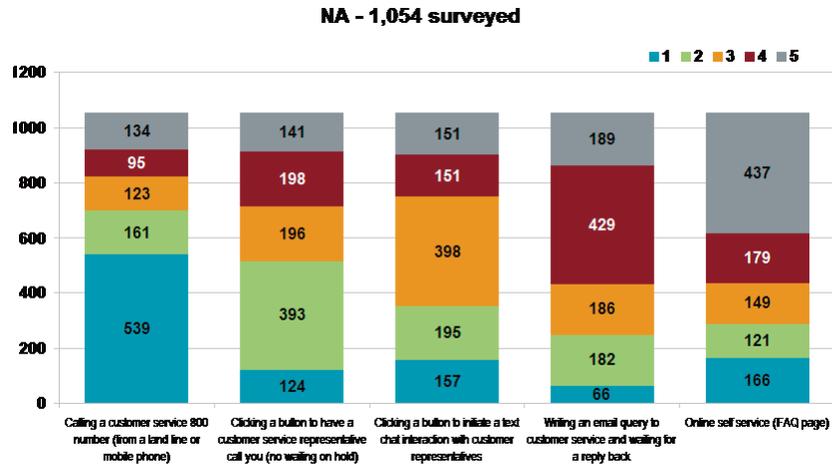


4. On a scale of 1-5 (with 1 being extremely useful and 5 being not useful at all) please rate how useful you think having live call AND live chat options together would be when making purchases online.

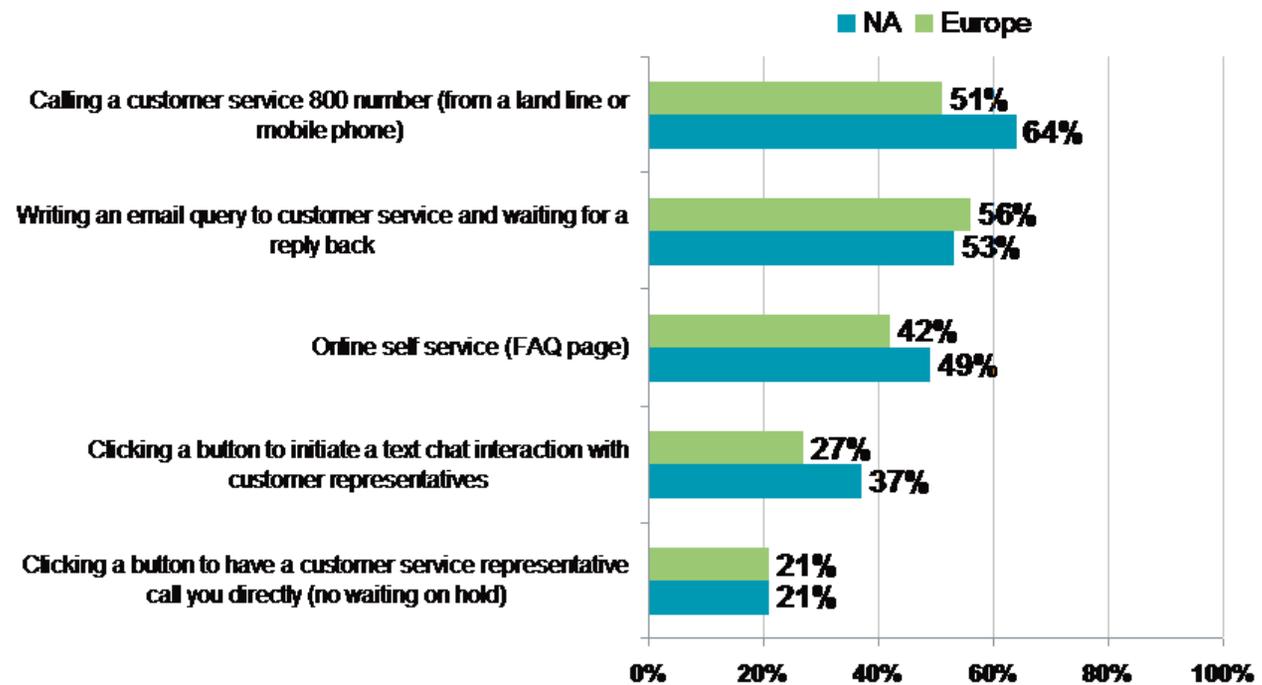


Survey Results: Importance/Usefulness of Online Customer Service Features

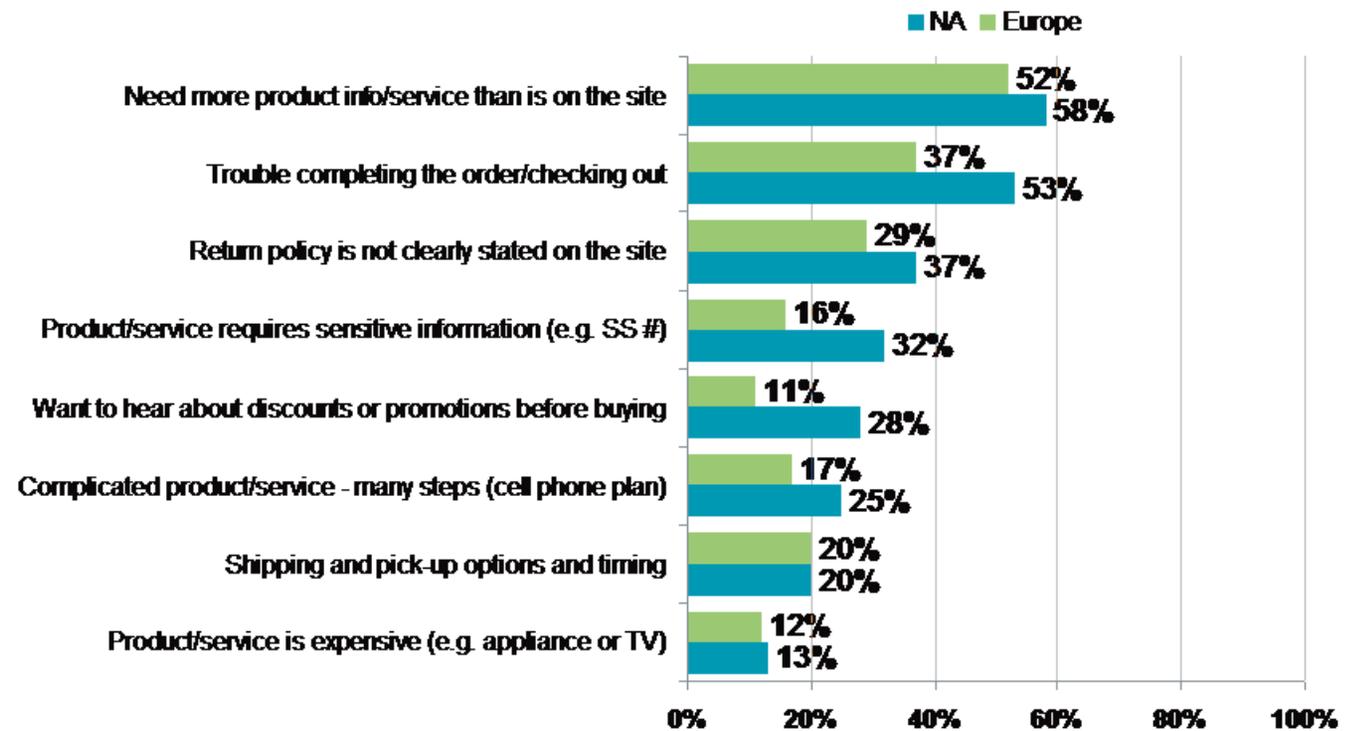
5. Please rank the methods which you believe would be most useful when seeking assistance from a Web site, with “1” being most useful and “5” being least useful.



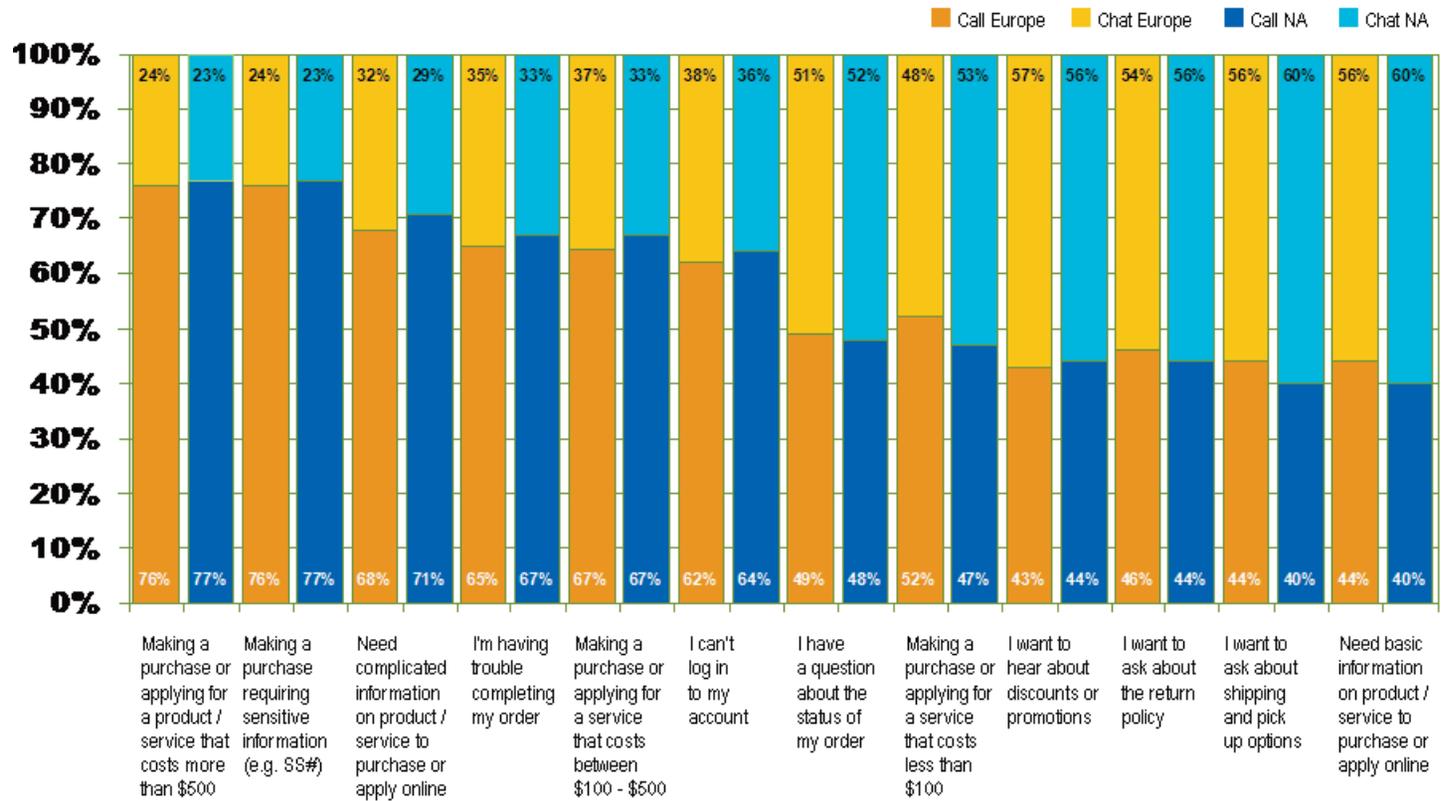
6. Which of the following methods of customer service have you used when seeking assistance from a Web site?
Choose all that apply.



7. What are some of the factors that would drive you to seek live assistance from a Web site when making a purchase online?
Choose up to three.

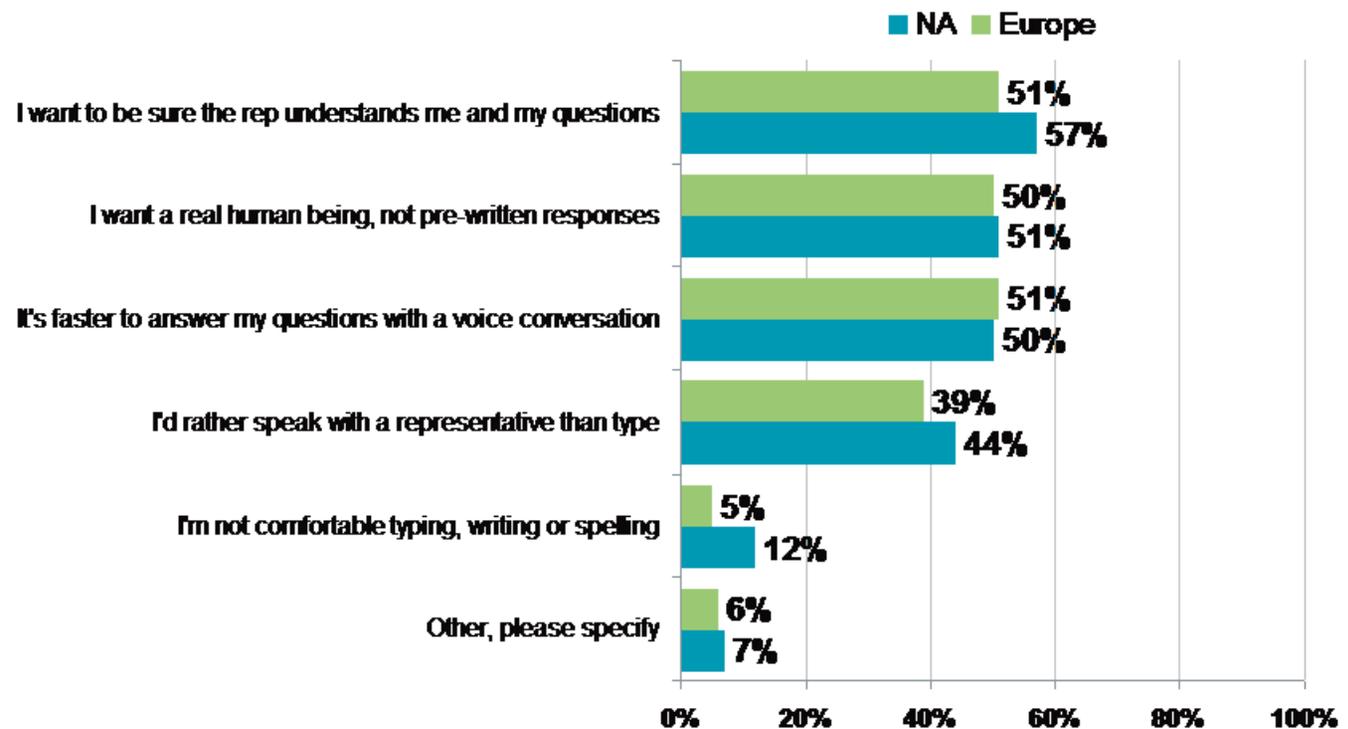


8. In the following scenarios, would you rather use live call or live chat if you needed assistance?

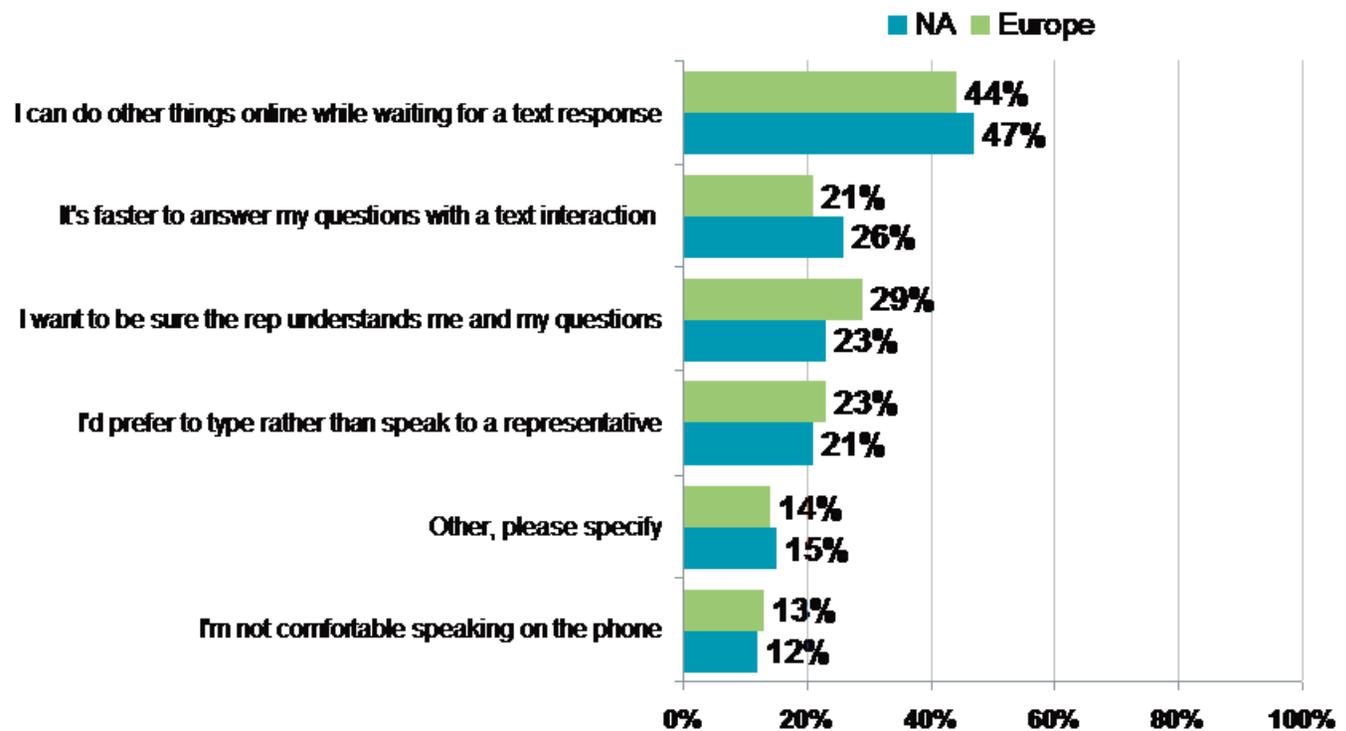


Survey Results: Contributing Factors in Initiating a Voice Interaction

9. For the scenarios in which you chose interacting via live call vs. live chat, please check all the reasons that would drive you to initiate a voice interaction:



10. For the scenarios in which you chose interacting via live chat vs. live call, please check all the reasons that would drive you to initiate a text chat interaction:



Conclusion and Methodology

The study reveals most shoppers in all countries surveyed think live help is important – 87% say access to click to call or click to chat technologies would be useful when making online purchases. 7 out of 10 feel live voice is useful, and another 1 in 2 value click to chat. Chat is valued especially when shoppers have basic questions about products, delivery methods and returns – which can often be key causes of abandonment. More than half said they would seek out live help if there was not enough information about the product or service online, 35% would use it for a problem at checkout and 30 if a return policy was unclear. In fact, more than half say live help is an important Web site feature after just reasonable prices (73%) and user-friendly navigation (60%).

However just a quarter have had the chance to use click to call and click to chat services. Low adoption rates indicate a lack of availability of live help services on online shopping sites. The research points to a clear opportunity for all online businesses to offer an integrated live voice and live chat service, enabling customers to get the help they need in the moment to make purchasing decisions faster and more frequently and obtain superior customer service to other methods. The survey data indicates online businesses have the opportunity to reduce their shopping cart abandonment rates significantly if they deploy live help options for customers. With more people heading online, companies need to give customers choices and consider how live help services can best support their overall e-commerce strategy.

Responses to ATG's Live Help survey were gathered from 1,510 adult consumers in the UK, 1,052 in the US, 1,008 in France, 1,010 in Spain totalling 4,580 overall. All respondents are active users of the internet. The study was commissioned by ATG and deployed by local third-party research specialists: Opinion Matters in the UK, Maximiles in France, MarketTools in the US, and MarketingMH in Spain.

About ATG

A trusted, global specialist in e-commerce, ATG (Art Technology Group, Inc., NASDAQ: ARTG) has spent the last decade focused on helping the world's premier brands maximize the success of their online businesses. ATG Commerce is the commerce platform and business user application solution top-rated by industry analysts for powering highly personalized, efficient and effective e-commerce sites. ATG's platform-neutral optimization services can be easily added to any Web site to increase conversions and reduce abandonment. These services include ATG Recommendations and ATG's Click to Call and Click to Chat live help services. The company is headquartered in Cambridge, Massachusetts, with additional locations throughout North America and Europe. For more information, please visit <http://www.atg.com>.

For more information, please visit <http://www.atg.com>, or call 1-800-RING-ATG.

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