A consumer research study commissioned by ATG
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**
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.
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
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 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

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**Research Highlights continued**
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
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

1. 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Rank 1</th>
<th>Rank 2</th>
<th>Rank 3</th>
<th>Rank 4</th>
<th>Rank 5</th>
<th>Rank 6</th>
<th>Rank 7</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prices of Products/Services</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>542</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ease of Browsing/Searching</td>
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<td>75</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>76</td>
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<td>221</td>
<td>58</td>
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<tr>
<td>Easy, Fast Access to Live Help</td>
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<td>421</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mobile Shopping/Browsing</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>48</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Recommendations</td>
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<td>Customer Ratings &amp; Reviews</td>
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<td>166</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social/Community Features</td>
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</table>

### Europe - 3,528 respondents

(UK: 1,510; France: 1,008; Spain: 1,010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
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<th>Rank 5</th>
<th>Rank 6</th>
<th>Rank 7</th>
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<td>261</td>
<td>176</td>
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<tr>
<td>Easy, Fast Access to Live Help</td>
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<td>261</td>
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</table>
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.

Survey Results: Importance/Usefulness of Live Call Options when Purchasing Online

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>NA</th>
<th>Europe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Useful</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Useful</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useful</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Very Useful</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Useful at All</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.

Survey Results: Importance/Usefulness of Live Chat Options when Purchasing Online

- Extremely Useful: 27% (NA), 27% (Europe)
- Very Useful: 26% (NA), 31% (Europe)
- Useful: 30% (NA), 32% (Europe)
- Not Very Useful: 10% (NA), 9% (Europe)
- Not Useful at All: 7% (NA), 7% (Europe)
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 Live Call AND Live Chat Options when Purchasing Online

- Extremely Useful: 30% (NA), 38% (Europe)
- Very Useful: 23% (NA), 29% (Europe)
- Useful: 32% (NA), 27% (Europe)
- Not Very Useful: 8% (NA), 3% (Europe)
- Not Useful at All: 2% (NA), 7% (Europe)
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.

**Survey Results:** Importance/Usefulness of Online Customer Service Features

NA - 1,054 surveyed

- Calling a customer service 800 number (from a toll line or mobile phone): 539 votes
- Clicking a button to have a customer service representative call you (we’re waiting on hold): 141 votes
- Clicking a button to initiate a live chat interaction with customer representatives: 161 votes
- Writing an email query to customer service and waiting for a reply back: 189 votes
- Online self-service (FAQ page): 437 votes

Europe - 3,528 respondents

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

- Calling a customer service 800 number (from a toll line or mobile phone): 285 votes
- Clicking a button to have a customer service representative call you (we’re waiting on hold): 324 votes
- Clicking a button to initiate a live chat interaction with customer representatives: 269 votes
- Writing an email query to customer service and waiting for a reply back: 201 votes
- Online self-service (FAQ page): 373 votes
6. Which of the following methods of customer service have you used when seeking assistance from a Web site? Choose all that apply.

- Calling a customer service 800 number (from a land line or mobile phone)
- Writing an email query to customer service and waiting for a reply back
- Online self service (FAQ page)
- Clicking a button to initiate a text chat interaction with customer representatives
- Clicking a button to have a customer service representative call you directly (no waiting on hold)

Survey Results: Customer Service Methods
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.

Survey Results: Contributing Factors in Seeking Live Assistance from a Web Site

- Need more product info/service than is on the site
- Trouble completing the order/checking out
- Return policy is not clearly stated on the site
- Product/service requires sensitive information (e.g. SS #)
- Want to hear about discounts or promotions before buying
- Complicated product/service - many steps (cell phone plan)
- Shipping and pick-up options and timing
- Product/service is expensive (e.g. appliance or TV)
8. In the following scenarios, would you rather use live call or live chat if you needed assistance?

Survey Results: Live Call or Live Chat?

- Making a purchase or applying for a product/service that costs more than $50: Live Call 78%, Live Chat 22%
- Making a purchase requiring sensitive information (e.g., SSN): Live Call 77%, Live Chat 23%
- Needing complicated information on products/services to purchase or apply online: Live Call 71%, Live Chat 29%
- Having trouble completing my order: Live Call 69%, Live Chat 31%
- Making a purchase or applying for a service that costs between $100 and $500: Live Call 67%, Live Chat 33%
- I can't log in to my account: Live Call 62%, Live Chat 38%
- I have a question about the status of my order: Live Call 64%, Live Chat 36%
- Making a purchase or applying for a service that costs less than $100: Live Call 49%, Live Chat 51%
- I want to hear about discounts or promotions: Live Call 48%, Live Chat 52%
- I want to ask about the return policy: Live Call 53%, Live Chat 47%
- I want to ask about shipping and pickup options: Live Call 54%, Live Chat 46%
- Need basic information on product/services to purchase or apply online: Live Call 56%, Live Chat 44%
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:

Survey Results: Contributing Factors in Initiating a Voice Interaction

- I want to be sure the rep understands me and my questions
- I want a real human being, not pre-written responses
- It's faster to answer my questions with a voice conversation
- I'd rather speak with a representative than type
- I'm not comfortable typing, writing or spelling
- Other, please specify

[Bar chart showing survey results for NA and Europe]
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:

**Survey Results: Contributing Factors in Initiating a Text Chat Interaction**

- I can do other things online while waiting for a text response: NA 47%, Europe 44%
- It’s faster to answer my questions with a text interaction: NA 26%, Europe 21%
- I want to be sure the rep understands me and my questions: NA 23%, Europe 29%
- I’d prefer to type rather than speak to a representative: NA 21%, Europe 23%
- Other, please specify: NA 15%, Europe 14%
- I’m not comfortable speaking on the phone: NA 12%, Europe 13%
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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