

CALLING INTO THE VOID

Out of 705 phone calls placed to carriers, 132 were either non-existent numbers or went unanswered

Even though eCommerce solutions have gained significant ground in the past decade, being able to call sales or customer service at a container carrier is still a crucial requirement for most customers.

We have in the past analyzed the results stemming from calling carriers with specific questions. These investigations provided us with the inspiration for this week's analysis.

The analysis this week takes an even more fundamental view. If you call a phone number supplied by a carrier, will you be met by a person or by an automated system providing you with various choices, designed to send you in the right direction?

It quickly became clear, that we needed to expand the

phone calls resulted in either the phone not being answered, or the phone number itself being invalid.

Out of 705 phone calls to 30 carriers, 132 calls – 19% - either went unanswered by the carriers, or the provided phone number simply did not exist.

Methodology

We decided to investigate 30 of the largest container carriers globally.

We wanted to test 25 different phone numbers for each carrier, spread across multiple countries and offices. Every phone number we tested was listed on the carrier's own website, as a contact number for either sales or customer service.

The calls were timed to take place within normal business hours.

NEXT STEP IN THE GAME

This week saw the opening in the next step of the "game" between the carriers. The "game" is to force some consolidation in the industry, and until a week ago, no tangible movement had been seen. However, we have now seen both MISC and CSAV basically throw in the towel. MISC announced a complete withdrawal from container shipping, and CSAV is now openly looking for someone to take over their hugely loss giving carrier. Additionally, TUI announced their intentions to sell their stake in Hapag Lloyd, clearly aimed at getting out at a point where the carrier is still marginally profitable. We see these developments as clear signs that 2nd part of