



# Number Translation Services:

Small and Medium Enterprise Research

**Report Document**

**Issued date: August 2004**

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## Section 1

# Introduction

## Background

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of the findings concerning usage of Number Translation Services (NTS), non-geographic numbers, used by SME businesses and other organisations.

## Reasons for carrying out research

- 1.2 Ofcom's previous research carried out in 2003 amongst residential consumers, indicated that most people do not know exactly how much they are paying for NTS calls (primarily 084X and 087X) or the fact that an 084X number could be more expensive than a local call to a geographic number.
- 1.3 The other emerging trend which is causing concern is that 084X and 087X numbers are being used to provide adult chat-lines rather than Premium Rate Service numbers (09X), and this makes it harder for parents to bar access to unsuitable content and means that service providers avoid ICSTIS regulation.
- 1.4 Against this backdrop, Ofcom wanted to re-examine the NTS framework and as part of the evaluation it wanted to understand the use of, and importance to, UK Small and Medium Enterprises (hereafter known as SMEs)<sup>1</sup> of these numbers, before it puts forward any proposals for change. This research focuses mainly on 084x and 087x numbers.

## Research objectives

- 1.5 The main objectives of the research were to uncover the following:
  - Why do SMEs use NTS numbers and how important are they to them?
  - What types of services are being offered on SMEs' 084x and 087x numbers?
  - Are SMEs aware of how much callers pay to phone an NTS number and do they know about the differences in prices consumers may pay?
  - How are NTS numbers being marketed to SME organisations?
  - What would be the reaction of SMEs to changing the pricing structure?

## Research methodology

- 1.6 Research was conducted by Wirthlin Europe amongst 500 SMEs in the UK that currently use 08xx numbers for voice services (i.e. incoming telephone calls).
- 1.7 Because the number of SME businesses using non-geographic numbers is currently unknown, interviewing a random sample of SMEs was agreed as the most accurate way to gauge usage across different sectors and sizes of business and to ensure that

<sup>1</sup> Defined by Ofcom as UK businesses with between 1 and 250 employees with a turnover of at least £50,000 per annum. Businesses with an annual turnover of less than £50,000 were excluded from the research with the exception of Not For Profit or Public Sector organisations without a turnover as such.

the results were as representative as possible. A pilot exercise was conducted using a representative sample of 3000 SME organisations sourced from Dun and Bradstreet.

- 1.8 Of the 629 organisations contacted (excluding refusals):
- 73 were eliminated because they did not fit Ofcom's definition of an SME, either in terms of employees or turnover;
  - 548 did not use an NTS number;
  - 8 did have an NTS number and were interviewed.
- 1.9 The pilot suggested that the incidence of SMEs using NTS numbers is about 1%<sup>2</sup>. It could be marginally higher than this in reality, as some of the people who refused to take part and some of the people who said they do not have NTS numbers may in fact have one. However, it was agreed that this method could not be used for the main body of fieldwork, as the cost and timescale would be unacceptable.
- 1.10 Wirthlin Europe located two sample sources that listed 084x and 087x numbers: Business Pages and Dun & Bradstreet. Both sources were used (although Dun & Bradstreet was found to be more useful as its records are company-based, whereas Business Pages' are site-based and, therefore, include many branches of large companies).
- 1.11 500 interviews were conducted during August 2004, broken down as shown in table 1 (numbers in brackets show quotas which were based on the Dun & Bradstreet records where employee size bands were allocated – about 60% were unclassified). The data was weighted to these sector quotas within employee size band. Note that due to the weighting, not all figures total 100%.

**Table 1 Breakdown of interviews**

Sectors	Employees			Total
	1-10	11-50	51-250	
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	22 (22)	14 (30)	14 (8)	50 (60)
Manufacturing	12 (12)	27 (16)	15 (7)	54 (35)
Mining/Construction	6 (6)	6 (6)	4 (3)	16 (15)
Retail	25 (24)	19 (40)	13 (29)	57 (93)
Services	95 (94)	75 (68)	35 (32)	205 (194)
Transport/Communications/Public Admin/Utilities	22 (22)	30 (20)	21 (14)	73 (49)
Wholesale	20 (20)	15 (20)	10 (7)	45 (47)
<b>Total</b>	<b>202 (200)</b>	<b>186 (200)</b>	<b>112 (100)</b>	<b>500 (500)</b>

- 1.12 Interviews were conducted with the person responsible for telecoms at the organisation.
- 1.13 Throughout the report, significant differences by SME size band or sector are highlighted where appropriate, although the main focus is on drawing out differences by the type of NTS number used.

<sup>2</sup> This is broadly consistent with Ofcom's business database analysis which put the incidence of NTS at about 1% of business sites.

## Section 2

# Executive summary

## Headlines

- 08xx numbers are used for a variety of customer services applications or for a main switchboard. Less than 1% of businesses sampled currently offer adult content on these numbers;
- 83% of SMEs who use them say NTS numbers are important to them;
- The main reason given for use of NTS numbers is the flexibility they offer in terms of moving location and retaining the numbers;
- 6 in 10 (59%) users do not currently offer geographic numbers as an alternative for callers and only a small proportion of these are likely to do so in the future;
- Between a half and two-thirds are currently aware of prices callers pay to call their numbers;
- Three-quarters are satisfied with the price callers pay from fixed lines, but only a third with the price of calls from mobile phones;
- Although BT is the main fixed line supplier to SMEs, many other suppliers are providing NTS numbers;
- About a quarter of SMEs with 084x or 087x NTS numbers were approached by a supplier in the first instance, rather than actively seeking out a supplier of NTS numbers;
- Changing the pricing structure so that callers on a given network would pay the same for 0845 and 0870 calls is greeted positively by three-quarters of SMEs using 0845/0870 numbers; less than half are receptive to abolishing the links between local and national calls and 084x and 087x numbers.

## 08xx numbers are most often used for the business' benefit – not the caller's

- Overall, the reasons given for using 08xx numbers relate to benefits for the user company. Flexibility is the main reason 08xx users give for using non-geographic numbers; they provide the ability to change location while retaining a consistent number for their customers (mentioned by 28%). This is followed by the ability to hide the organisation's geographic location (20%). Making it cheaper for callers is the third reason (15%) but it is the top reason given by 084x users. 1 in 10 of all 08xx users use them to make money, particularly 087x users.
- Two-thirds (68%) think it is important that the callers get good value for money when calling these numbers.

## 084x numbers often generate a loss while 087x numbers are usually profitable

- On average, 084x users are likely to incur losses on their numbers, while 087x users are more likely to generate a profit. This is not the case for all users, but half of 087x users say they generate money while only one-third of 084x users do. Despite this, over half of 084x and 087x users were unable to put a precise figure on their profit or loss.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Note that this is based in self-reported estimates of cost impact of NTS numbers.

### **NTS numbers are considered important to most SMEs that use them**

- 080x users are most likely to say their non-geographic numbers are 'very' important to their businesses, although over 80% of all users consider them important.

### **A range of services are offered on non-geographic numbers, although call centres/customer services applications dominate**

- 08xx lines are mainly used for a variety of customer service applications and/or call centres; 080x numbers in particular are used for sales-related call centres (presumably to encourage maximum customer response).
- Around 4 in 10 SMEs with 084x or 087x numbers use them as their main switchboard number but only around 1 in 10 080x users do.

### **Less than half of SMEs either offer geographic numbers as an alternative to callers or would consider doing so in the future**

- Currently, less than half of all organisations (41%) offer a geographic number as an alternative to their NTS line. Only a small proportion of those not offering a geographical alternative are likely to do so in the future (a further 8%).

### **Call cost awareness varies according to the number type used**

- Perceptions of call charges are mixed; 0845 and 0870 users are most likely to think of this in terms of local or national rate tariffs (respectively) while 0844 and 0871 users often think in terms of a specific cost per minute. Generally 0871 users' responses are the most consistent with likely call costs (although this does vary dependent on the caller's network) while others are more diverse, indicating a lack of factual knowledge of costs amongst many NTS users.
- 6 in 10 SMEs with 084x or 087x numbers are aware that callers may pay different prices for calls to 084x or 087x numbers dependent on which network they call from.

### **Most NTS numbers are sought by the user rather than sold by the supplier**

- The majority of SMEs proactively seek out NTS number suppliers themselves, particularly 080x users. Evidence of marketing is highest amongst 084x numbers (24% of users of these numbers were approached in the first instance by the supplier) and 087x numbers (23%), while this occurs in only 11% of 080x cases.

### **Supply of NTS numbers is very fragmented**

- Although BT is the main fixed line supplier (used by 79% of SMEs), according to survey respondents, it only supplies around a fifth of NTS numbers. After BT, Windsor Telecom is the main supplier of 084x numbers (15%) and Opal Telecom the main supplier of 087x numbers (to 6% of users). A number of other suppliers were mentioned.

### **9 in 10 are satisfied with suppliers and a similar number have never switched supplier**

- Almost 9 out of 10 SMEs are happy with their current NTS supplier and a similar number (84%) have never changed suppliers.

### **Mixed reactions to pricing structure charges**

- Changing the pricing structure so that all callers on a given network would pay the same price for 0845 and 0870 calls is the most popular of the two propositions tested; three-quarters (74%) of 0845 and 0870 users reacted positively to this. Less than half (43%) are in favour of abolishing the links between local and national rate calls and introducing differing call charges.
- 0870 users in particular would not be receptive to paying to receive calls (71% would either stop using them or think about stopping, whereas this figure drops to 63% of 0845 users).

### **Half of all NTS service providers have five or fewer lines**

- Around 90% of all users know the number of lines they use to receive calls, whereas knowledge of the number of calls and number of call minutes received is much lower. Half of all users have five or fewer lines and between 15% and 20%, depending on number type, have only one.

### Section 3

## Why organisations use NTS numbers

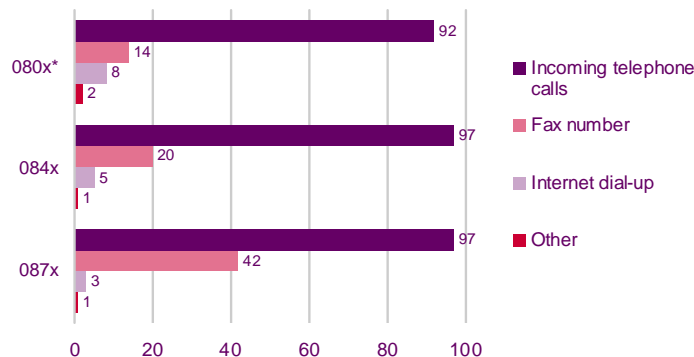
- **08xx numbers are used mainly for call centres, followed by main switchboard (084x and 087x users)**
- **They are used most often for the organisation’s benefit, not the callers**
- **Less than half currently offer an alternative geographic number and very few are likely to do so in the future**

### How numbers are used

3.1 9 in 10 SMEs in our sample use their NTS numbers for voice services (incoming telephone calls), rather than as fax or Internet lines. 087x numbers are far more likely than other number types to be used as a fax number. Larger businesses (with 11-250 employees) are significantly more likely than smaller ones (1-9 employees) to use 0800 numbers for all services (i.e. voice, fax etc.). Financial companies are significantly more likely than other sectors to have an 0871 number.

**Fig 3a. How numbers are used**

Base: All respondents (500): All with 080x numbers (71); All with 084 numbers (169); All with 087x numbers (379)



\* Base size less than 100, treat with caution and as indicative only

3.2 The vast majority (81%) only use one number type<sup>4</sup> for incoming calls, while 13% use two and just 5% use all three 08xx numbers.

### Services provided on NTS numbers

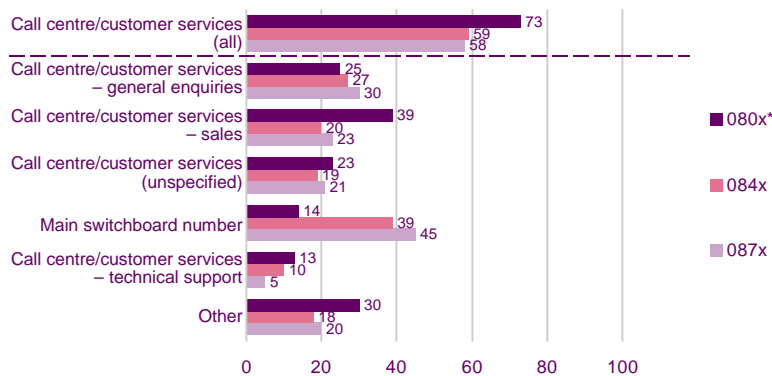
3.3 NTS numbers are used mainly for a variety of call centre services or as the organisation’s main switchboard number. 080x numbers are the most likely of the three types to be used for customer services/call centres, with 73% of all 080x numbers used in this way versus 59% of 084x and 58% of 087x numbers. As could be expected, 080x numbers are used more for sales than 084x or 087x numbers, presumably to encourage customers to call at no cost to themselves. In contrast, 080x numbers are used far less for main switchboards than 084x or 087x ones.

<sup>4</sup> Number Type: 080x, 084x, 087x



**Fig 3b. Services provided (Main services shown)**

Base: All using numbers for voice services (500): 080x (66); 084x (164); 087x (366)



\* Base size less than 100, treat with caution and as indicative only

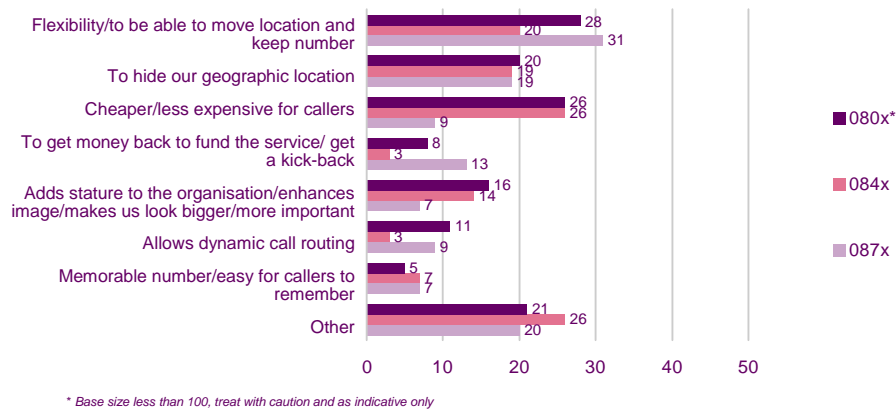
3.4 There is little evidence of these numbers being used for adult content. One business offers gambling on its 084x number, while another said it offers chat-lines. None of the organisations interviewed offer tele-voting or other adult content via 08xx numbers.

### Reasons for using NTS numbers

- 3.5 Amongst SMEs overall, NTS numbers appear to be used more for the company's benefit than for the customer's. Flexibility/the ability to change location whilst retaining the same number is the main reason SMEs use non-geographic numbers. This is a more prevalent reason amongst those using 080x and 087x numbers than 084x numbers. One-fifth (20%) use 08xx numbers to hide the geographic location of their organisation.
- 3.6 Overall, only 15% use NTS numbers to make calls cheaper for callers but there is a difference by number type. This reason is cited far more frequently by 080x and 084x users (both 26%) than by 087x users (9%) (in fact it is the top reason given by 084x users).
- 3.7 Manufacturing businesses are significantly more likely than financial, retail or services to mention cheaper calls as a reason for using their numbers. Organisations with higher turnovers (£5 million or more) are significantly more likely to use their numbers to get some money back and one-quarter (25%) state this compared to just 8% of smaller companies (less than £5 million turnover).
- 3.8 087x users are significantly less likely (7%) than 080x (16%) and 084x (14%) users to mention that the number adds stature to their organisation. Of the three number types, 087x users are most likely to mention generating revenue (13%). 084x users are the least likely to be concerned with dynamic call routing.

**Fig 3c. Reasons for using 08xx numbers**

Base: All using 08xx numbers for voice services (500): 080x (66); 084x (164); 087x (366)

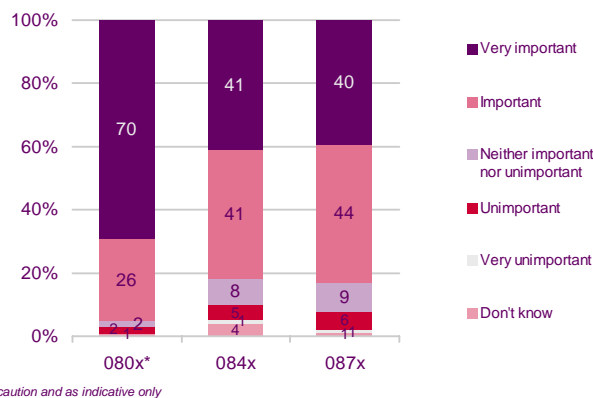


**Importance of NTS numbers to SMEs**

3.9 83% of all respondents/companies say their NTS numbers are important to their organisation. However, this varies from almost all 080x users (96%) to 82% of 084x and 84% of 087x users. 080x users are almost twice as likely as others to regard their non-geographic numbers as ‘very important’.

**Fig 3d. Importance of NTS numbers**

Base: All using numbers for voice services (500): 080x (66); 084x (164); 087x (366)



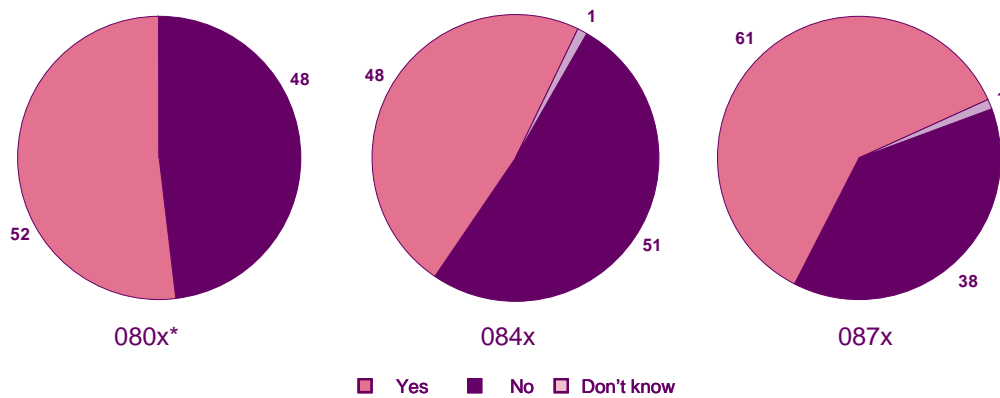
3.10 Organisations in Transport/Communications/Public Administration sectors are significantly more likely than average to rate the numbers as important to them.

**Current provision of geographic numbers as an alternative**

3.11 At present, 4 in 10 (41%) organisations offer callers a geographic number with an area code to call as an alternative to the 08xx number, and those with 084x numbers are the most likely to do so (51%) while 087x users are the least likely (38%).

**Fig 3e. Provision of geographic numbers alongside NTS numbers**

Base: All using numbers for voice services (500): 080x (66); 084x (164); 087x (366)

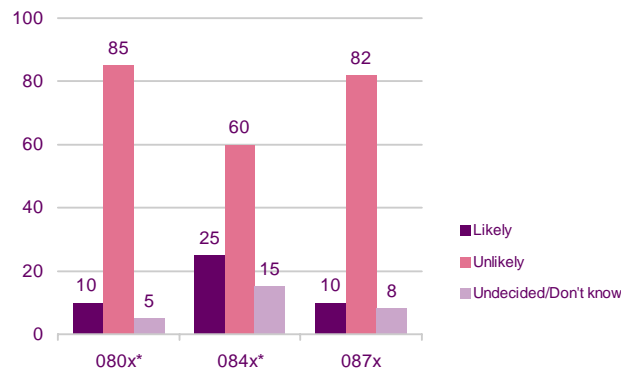


\* Base size less than 100, treat with caution and as indicative only

3.12 Most of the 6 in 10 (59%) who do not already offer an alternative geographic number are unlikely to do so in the future, as only 14% say they will consider doing so in the next 12 months. Smaller organisations (with 10 or fewer employees) are significantly more likely to say they are very likely to consider offering a geographic alternative.

**Fig 3f. Likelihood of providing a non-geographic number in the next 12 months**

Base: All who do not currently publicise a number with a local dialling code: 080x (34); 084x (81); 087x (228)



\* Base size less than 100, treat with caution and as indicative only

## Section 4

# Sizing the NTS business

- The majority of SMEs are aware of the number of NTS phone lines in their organisation (40-50% have 5 lines or fewer)
- They tend not to have information on the number of calls or call minutes

## Measuring NTS usage

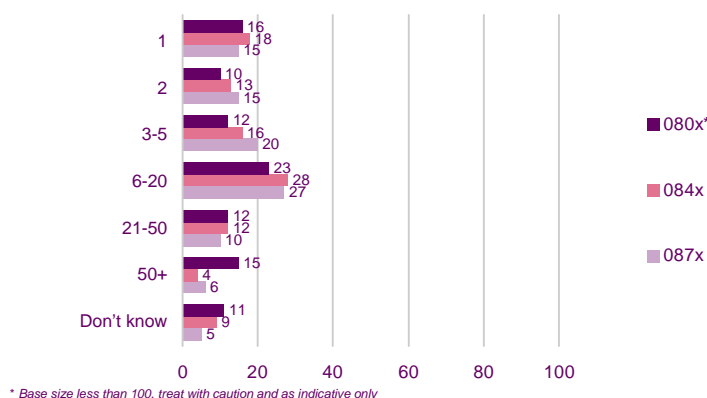
4.1 Our aim was to measure the size of NTS business amongst SMEs. We tried to do this in 3 ways, each with varying levels of success: by lines, calls received and call minutes. The data provided by respondents' answers to these questions should be treated as indicative only, as they are based on estimates. The data should not be used to attempt to gross up to a total market size, as our sample source is not necessarily representative of all NTS users.

## Number of NTS lines

- 4.2 The vast majority of users (89% of 080x, 91% of 084x and 95% of 087x) are aware of how many phone lines their organisation uses to receive calls.
- 4.3 Around 40-50% of all organisations said they have five lines or fewer per number type. 080x users on average have the highest number of lines (15% have over 50, compared to only 6% of 087x and 4% of 084x users). However, a couple of 084x and 087x users claim to have tens of thousands of lines.

**Fig 4a. Measuring usage: Number of lines used**

Base: All using numbers for voice services (500): 080x (66); 084x (164); 087x (366)

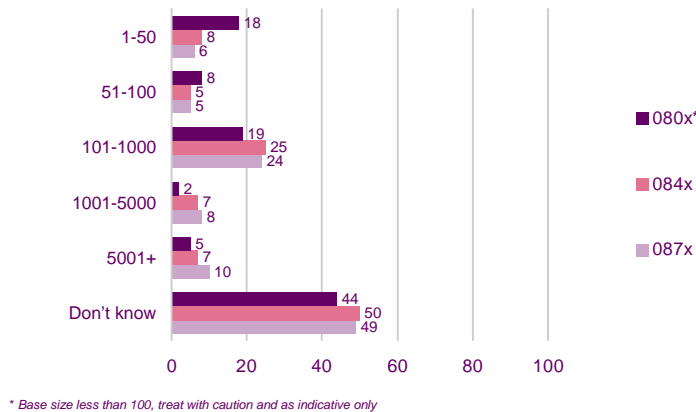


## Number of NTS calls received

- 4.4 Around half do not know how many calls per month they receive on their 08xx numbers. Awareness is slightly higher for 080x users, as 56% are able to give a response, while just 50% of 084x and 51% of 087x users are able to provide a figure. In some cases this is because they do not have information to hand but a quarter (26%) of 080x users say they do not record call minutes and neither do a third (34%) of 084x and 3 in 10 (30%) 087x users. In total, therefore, we estimate that about two-thirds of organisations keep a track of the number of calls they receive on their NTS numbers.
- 4.5 As with lines, there is a huge variation in number of calls received, with some only receiving a couple of calls a day and others receiving hundreds or thousands. Over a quarter (26%) of 080X users receive 100 calls or less per month.

**Fig 4b. Measuring usage: Number of calls received per month**

Base: All using numbers for voice services (500): 080x (66); 084x (164); 087x (366)

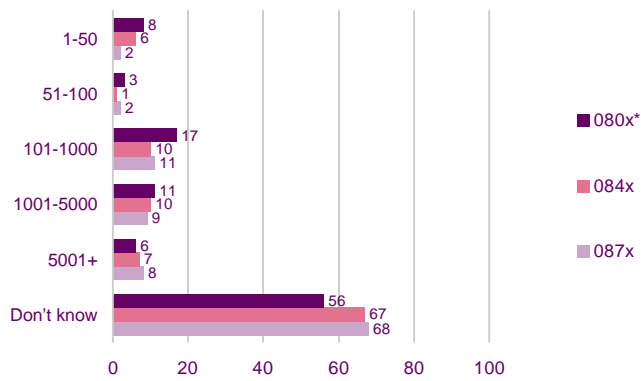


## Number of NTS call minutes

- 4.6 Even fewer users are able to provide information on the number of call minutes they receive per month on their 08xx number(s). Around 4 in 10 say they do not keep records of call minutes.

**Fig 4c. Measuring usage: Number of call minutes per month**

Base: All using numbers for voice services (500): 080x (66); 084x (164); 087x (366)



\* Base size less than 100, treat with caution and as indicative only

**Section 5**

# Who supplies SMEs with NTS numbers and how?

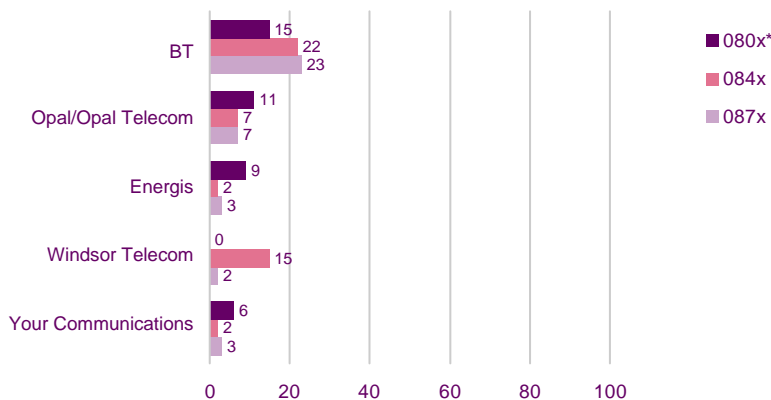
- **BT is the main supplier of all three number types but after this, supply is fragmented**
- **Most have never changed their supplier, usually because they are happy with the service**
- **Two-thirds of SMEs sought out their NTS number, with supplier direct marketing most prevalent amongst 084x and 087x users**

**NTS Suppliers**

- 5.1 BT is the main supplier of all three NTS number types and is used by 15% of 080x users, followed by Opal Telecom and Energis (11% and 9% respectively). There are a host of other suppliers used and about a fifth of users do not know who their supplier is.
- 5.2 BT is again the main supplier (used by 22%) of 084x numbers, closely followed by Windsor Telecom (18%). BT is used significantly more by larger businesses with 084x numbers (42% of 51-250 employees) than smaller ones (14%).
- 5.3 BT supplies 23% of 087x users with their numbers. The second most commonly used supplier, Opal Telecom, is used by 7%. Telewest and Cable & Wireless are suppliers to 4% and 3% respectively of 087x users, whereas these companies are only used by one or two 080x or 084x users

**Fig 5a. Main NTS Suppliers**

Base: All using numbers for voice services (500): 080x (66); 084x (164); 087x (366)



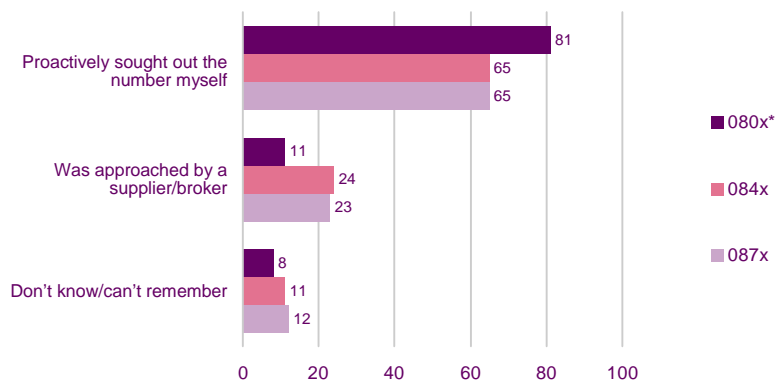
NB: Don't knows excluded: 19% 081x; 21% 084x, 12% 087x  
 \* Base size less than 100, treat with caution and as indicative only

## How the numbers were obtained

5.4 Most organisations are taking the initiative themselves when it comes to obtaining NTS numbers, rather than having the service ‘marketed’ to them by suppliers. This is particularly the case for 080x users and smaller companies using 087x numbers (with 73% of 1-10 employee SMEs seeking out the number themselves compared to 61% of 11+ employee organisations). Almost a quarter of all 084x and 087x users are approached in the first instance by a supplier, with 30% of 1-50 employee SMEs who use 084x numbers obtaining the number in this way.

**Fig 5b. Number acquisition**

Base: All using numbers for voice services who knew which supplier they obtained their number(s) from: 080x (54); 084x (130); 087x (323)



\* Base size less than 100, treat with caution and as indicative only

5.5 084x and 087x users who obtain their number/s from BT are significantly more likely to have approached BT rather than the other way around. However, 084x users who obtain their number/s from Windsor Telecom are significantly more likely to have been sold to.

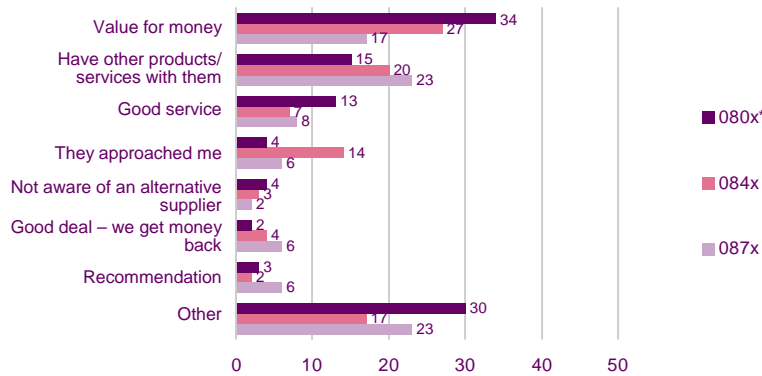
## Reasons for choosing the supplier they did

5.6 The main reasons for obtaining numbers from the various providers used are value for money and because the organisation buys other products and/or services from them. 084x users are more likely to say the company they obtained the numbers from approached them, reinforcing the finding reported overleaf.



**Fig 5c. Main reasons for supplier choice**

Base: All responses given for using suppliers; All using numbers for voice services (500): 080x (54); 084x (132); 087x (325). N.B. Each 'other' response was mentioned by less than 4% per number type



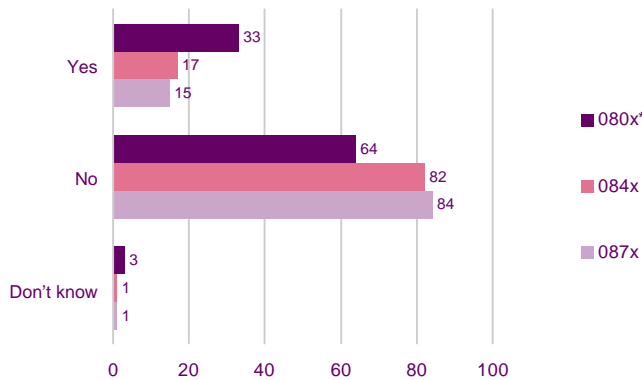
\* Base size less than 100, treat with caution and as indicative only

### Changing suppliers

5.7 The vast majority of SMEs (84%) have never changed NTS suppliers (see chart below) but 080x users are twice as likely to have done so as 084/087 users. Those with more employees (11+) are significantly more likely to have changed suppliers than smaller organisations with 10 or fewer staff (18% versus 9% respectively).

**Fig 5d. Switching suppliers**

Base: All respondents (500)

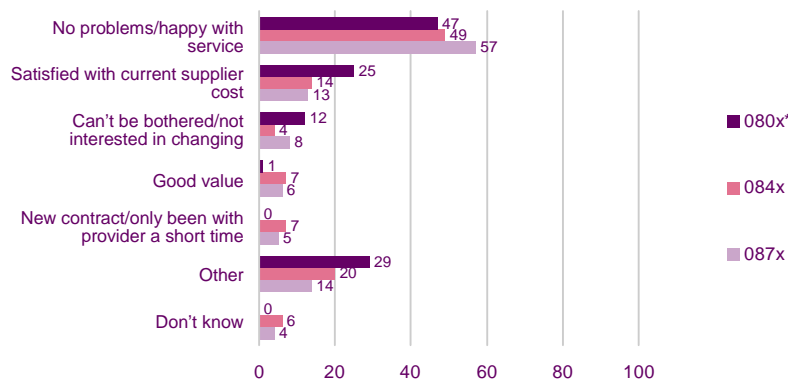


\* Base size less than 100, treat with caution and as indicative only

5.8 In most cases, users have not changed suppliers because the service they receive is fine or because they have not experienced any problems (56%). Unprompted, 13% across all three NTS number types say they are satisfied with the current cost of the number/s and this figure increases to 25% among 080x users.

**Fig 5e. Reasons for not changing NTS suppliers**

Base: All using numbers for voice services who have never changed supplier: 080x (42); 084x (134); 087x (306)



\* Base size less than 100, treat with caution and as indicative only

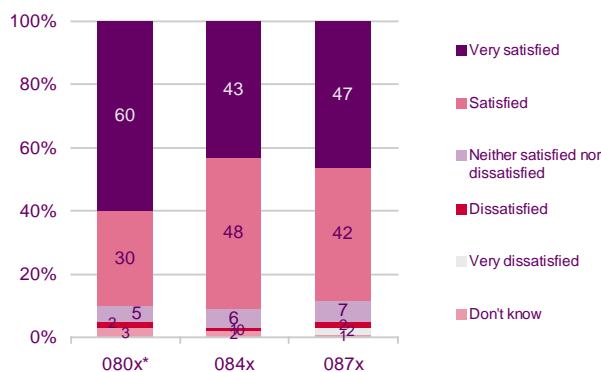
5.9 For the small number who have changed suppliers, being offered a better or cheaper deal is by far the main reason given (59%) and two-thirds (66%) are satisfied overall with the process of switching NTS suppliers. Interruption of service, having to change numbers and paperwork or 'red tape' are the main barriers experienced when going through the process.

**Service**

5.10 Almost 9 out of 10 (89%) SMEs are satisfied with the quality of service they receive from their NTS number supplier and 080x users are significantly more likely to be 'very' satisfied.

**Fig 5f. Service**

Base: All using numbers for voice services who knew which supplier they obtained their number(s) from: 080x (66); 084x (164); 087x (366)



\* Base size less than 100, treat with caution and as indicative only

5.11 N.B. If mentioned more than one supplier previously, response relates to main supplier

## Section 6

# Revenue generation or loss from SME use of NTS numbers

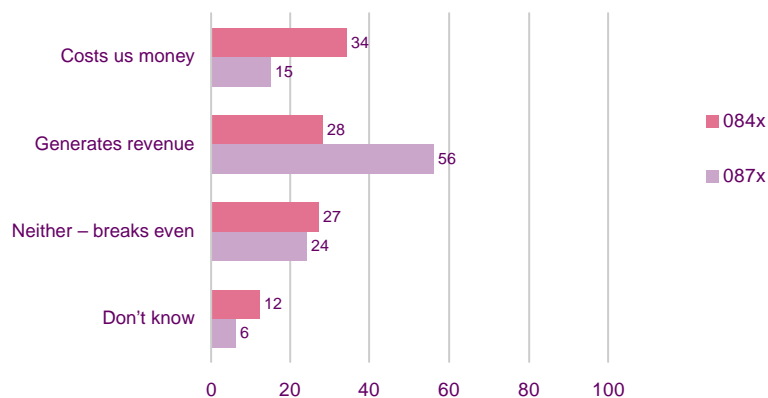
- **087x users are more likely to generate revenue than 084x users**
- **Over half of 084x and 087x users are unable to put a figure on their profit or loss but where they could it is £50 or less in the majority of cases**

## Profit and loss

- 6.1 On average, according to estimates given, 084x numbers are loss making while 087x numbers usually generate profit for the SME using them.
- 6.2 084x numbers are more than twice as likely as 087x numbers to cost the user organisation money (34% versus 15% respectively). Around one-quarter of users of both number types (084x 27%, 087x 24%) say the service breaks even, while one-third (34%) of 084x users say the service costs them money. Companies with a higher number of employees (11+) and higher turnovers (£500k or more) are significantly more likely to say their numbers generate revenue than smaller companies, which are most likely to say their numbers break even.

**Fig 6a. Revenue generation**

Base: All with 084x and/or 087x voice numbers: 084x (164); 087x (366)

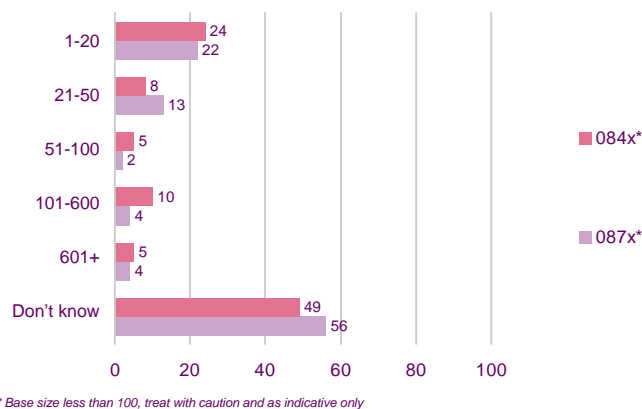


## Extent of the loss

- 6.3 In terms of putting a figure on the loss, it is again difficult to calculate an overall figure because around half of those who say their organisations make a loss from their 084x and/or 087x numbers do not know how much these numbers cost them per month. Of those who do, the amounts range from £1 to £3,000 for both number types, although for over half of those able to give a figure, it was £50 or less and was most likely to be under £20.

**Fig 6b. How much loss?**

Base: All using 084x and 087x numbers which cost them money: 084x (55); 087x (54)

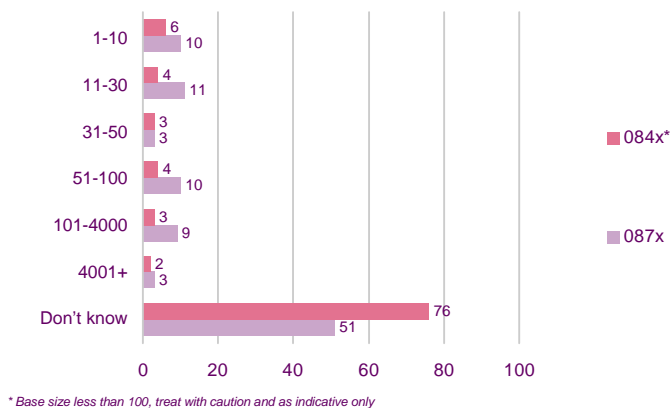


### Extent of the profit

6.4 Three-quarters of 084x users and half of 087x users could not estimate how much they make from the numbers. For those who could, figures ranged from £1 to £6000 per month for 084x users and as high as £180,000 for 087x users. Around half of users giving a figure say they make £50 or less per month.

**Fig 6c. How much profit?**

Base: All using 084x and 087x for whom the number generates revenue: 084x (46); 087x (204)



### Service fees

6.5 Half (50%) of those using an 084x number pay a one-off fee for their number/s, followed by just over one-third of 087x users (36%) and one-quarter of 080x users (23%).

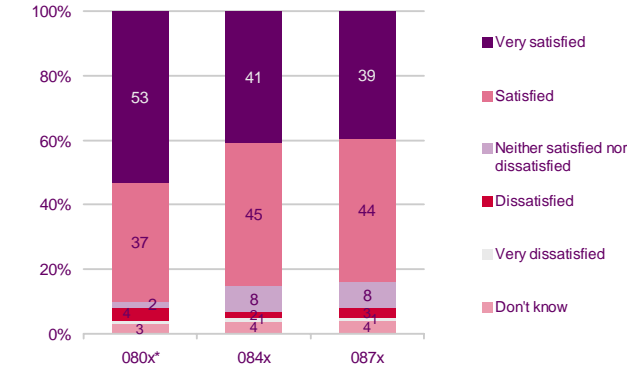
### Value for money

6.6 Despite the fact that 084x numbers tend to cost the user money, levels of satisfaction with value for money from suppliers are similar amongst 084x and 087x users but higher amongst 080x users.

Number Translation Services:

**Fig 6e. Value for money**

Base: All using numbers for voice services (500): 080x (66); 084x (164); 087x (366)



\* Base size less than 100, treat with caution and as indicative only

## Section 7

# Awareness of the cost to callers

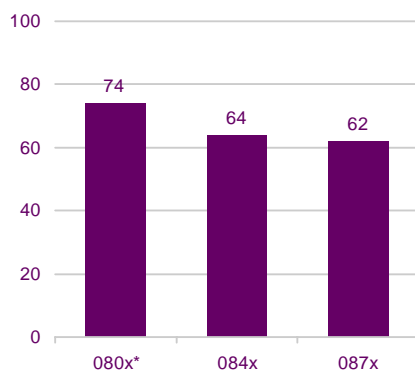
- Around two-thirds of SMEs are aware of varying call charges depending on the network the caller uses
- 0845 and 0870 users often think of call charges as 'local' or 'national' rate (respectively) rather than a specific cost per minute

### Awareness of price differentials for callers

7.1 080x users are the most likely to be aware that callers may pay different prices to call 084x/087x numbers depending on the network used, as three-quarters (74%) mention this. Awareness of these different call charges is lower amongst 084x and 087x users where less than two-thirds (64% and 62% respectively) know that callers could pay different amounts.

#### Fig 7a. Awareness of different prices

Base: All using numbers for voice services (500): 080x (66); 084x (164); 087x (366)



\* Base size less than 100, treat with caution and as indicative only

### Perceptions of price callers pay from fixed lines

7.2 The majority of 0844 and 0871 users have a good idea of how much callers pay to ring them. 0845 and 0870 users are less well-informed. Although 67% of 0845 users think callers pay 'local rate' and a further 9% think the cost is up to 5ppm or 5 pence per call, 5% think calls to their numbers are charged at a 'national rate'. Only 44% of 0870 users think calls to their numbers cost 'national rate' and a further 11% think the cost is up to 10ppm or 10 pence per call, while 10% think callers pay 'local rate' charges and one-quarter (26%) do not know how much callers pay.

**Table 2 Awareness of costs to callers**

	<b>% 0845</b>	<b>% 0870</b>
<i>Base: All with number for voice services</i>	158	359
Up to 5ppm <sup>5</sup>	8	6
Up to 5p per call	1	1
Local rate	67	10
National rate	5	44
Up to 10ppm	1	10
Up to 10p per call	0	1
Other	1	2
Nothing/free	*	0
Don't know	16	26

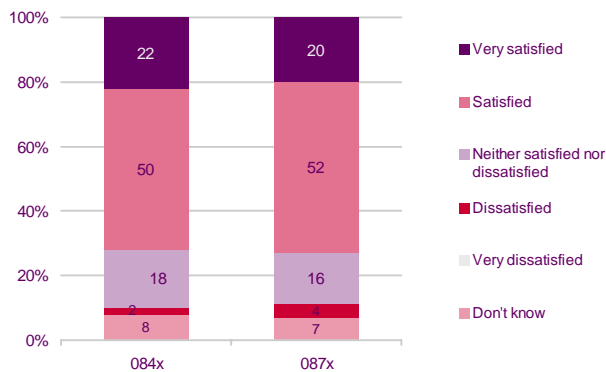
\*Denotes less than 1%

### Satisfaction with pricing

7.3 Generally, NTS users are satisfied with the prices their callers pay from fixed lines, with 73% saying they are happy.

**Fig 7b. Satisfaction with pricing**

Base: All 084x/087x using numbers for voice services who gave a response when asked how much they think callers are paying to ring their numbers (380): 084x (142); 087x (274)

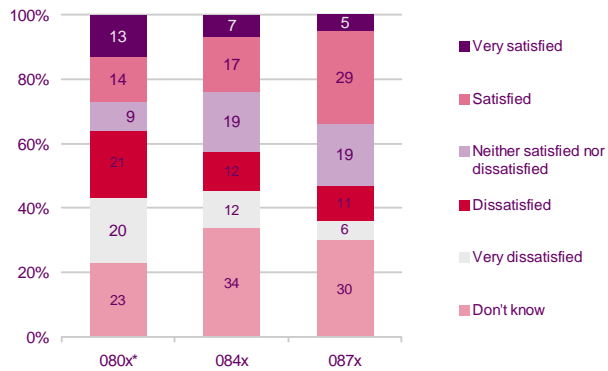


7.4 Satisfaction with pricing is much lower when the question is asked about mobile rather than fixed lines, with only a third (33%) happy with the prices callers are paying. A significantly higher number of 080x users (compared to 084x or 087x users) claim to be dissatisfied with the price callers pay from mobile networks. One-third of all NTS users responded 'don't know' to this question, indicating a lack of awareness of actual call costs from mobile networks.

<sup>5</sup> Pence per minute

### Fig 7c. Satisfaction with pricing

Base: All using numbers for voice services who gave a response when asked how much they think callers are paying to ring their numbers (380): 080x (50); 084x (142); 087x (274)



\* Base size less than 100, treat with caution and as indicative only



## Section 8

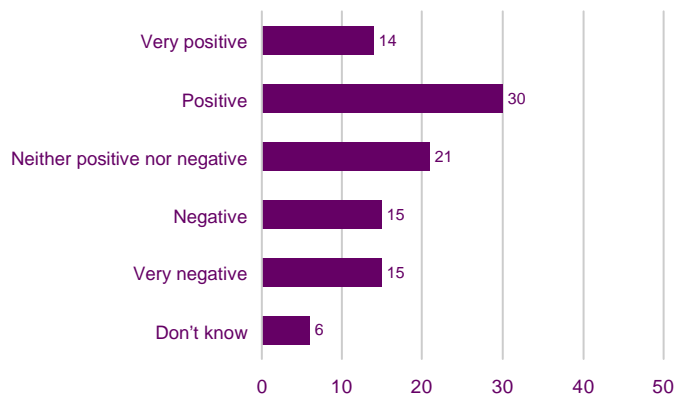
# Reactions to changing the pricing structure

### Abolishing local/national links

8.1 Reactions to abolishing the links between 084x and 087x numbers and local rate and national rate are mixed, although generally they are more positive than negative. 44% of 0845 and/or 0870 are in favour of this proposal and 30% have negative reactions.

**Fig 8a. Pricing structure change (1)**

Base: All using 0845 and/or 0870 numbers for voice services (494)

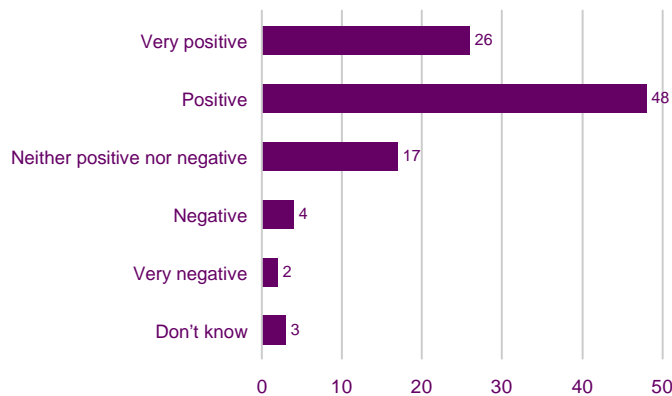


## Standardising prices

8.2 Changing the pricing structure, so that all callers on a given network would pay the same price, invokes a more positive reaction. Three-quarters of all 0845/0870 users (74%) are positive towards this proposal, while just 6% are negative and 17% are ambivalent.

**Fig 8b. Pricing structure change (2)**

Base: All using 0845 and/or 0870 numbers for voice services (494)

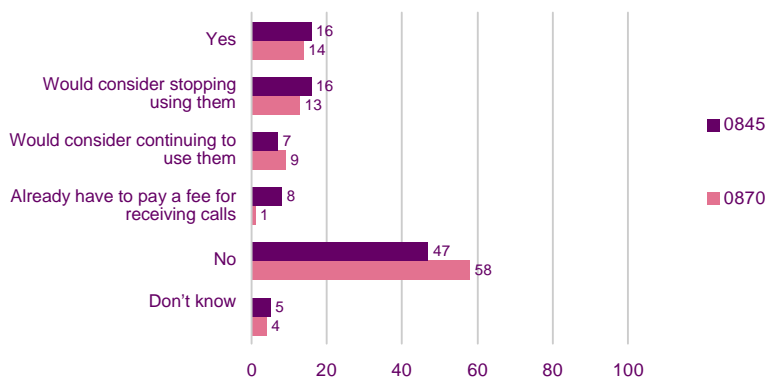


## Paying to receive calls

8.3 Just under half (47%) of 0845 users and more than half of 0870 users (58%) would not be prepared to use their number(s) if their organisation has to pay to receive calls. At present, just 8% of 0845 users and 1% of 0870 users already claim to pay a fee per call.

**Fig 8c. Paying to receive calls**

Base: All using 0845 for voice services (158); All using 0870 for voice services (359)

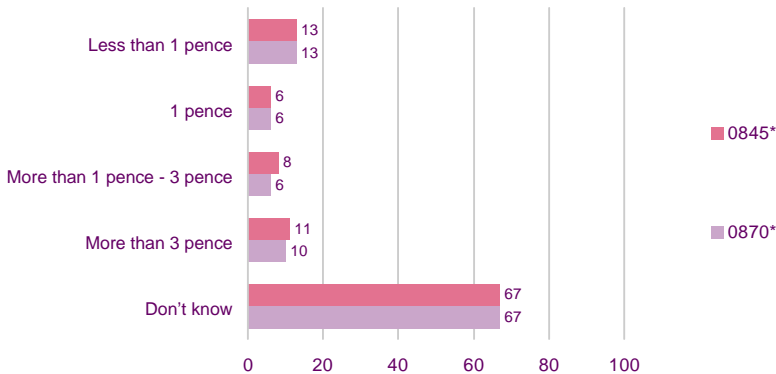


8.4 Of those who would be prepared to pay to receive calls, two-thirds of 0845 and 0870 users (both 67%) cannot give a figure. Prices range from one-hundredth of a penny to 5 pence per call for 0845 users and three-hundredths of a penny to 50 pence per call for 0870 users, although the majority for both groups is 1 penny or less.

Number Translation Services:

**Fig 8d. Amount prepared to pay for receiving calls**

Base: All who would still use the number if they had to pay to receive the call; 0845 (37); 0870 (84)



\* Base size less than 100, treat with caution and as indicative only

## Annex 1

# Questionnaire

**S1a. First of all, to ensure we interview a cross section of organisations could you please tell me how many employees your company employs within the UK? Single code. Prompt if necessary**

1 only  
2-5  
6-10  
11-25  
26-50  
51-75  
76-100  
101-200  
201-250  
251 or more  
Refused

**S1b. And could you please tell me the annual turnover or sales of your organisation? Single code. Prompt if necessary**

Under £50,000  
£50,000 – £ 75,000  
Over £75,000 – £100,000  
Over £100,000 – £250,000  
Over £250,000 – £500,000  
Over £500,000 – £1million  
Over £1 million – £2 million  
Over £2 million – £3 million  
Over £3 million – £5 million  
Over £5 million – £7 million  
Over £7 million – £10 million  
Over £10 million – £20 million  
Over £20 million – £50 million  
Over £50 million  
Don't know  
Refused

**S1c. Is your annual turnover under or over £50,000? Single code**

**S1d. Thinking generally, which of the following does your organisation use for its fixed line telephone services? Please include all you use but do not include mobile phone companies. Read out. Code all that apply**

BT  
NTL  
Telewest  
Cable and Wireless  
Colt  
Energis  
MCI Worldcom  
Other specify

Number Translation Services:

Don't know / can't remember

**S1e. Does your organisation have any telephone numbers that begin with 080 (e.g. 0800, 0808), 084 (e.g. 0845/0844), 087 (e.g. 0870/0871) or 09 (e.g. 090/091)? (For example, as a main or additional telephone number or a fax number.)**

**S2. And can you tell me which of these types of numbers your organisation has? Just tell me the 4-digit code at the start of the number. Code all that apply. Prompt with list**

0800  
0808  
0844  
0845  
0870  
0871  
09xx  
Other  
Don't know

**S3. What do you use your (insert numbers mentioned at s2) number(s) for?  
Interviewer: excluding '09' numbers. Read out. Code all that apply**

For incoming telephone calls  
Internet dial-up  
Fax number  
Other. Do not read out  
Don't know / can't remember. Do not read out

**Question 1.** *What type or types of services do you offer on your (insert number type(s) mentioned at s2) phone number(s)? Interviewer: excluding '09' numbers.*

**Question 2.** *(If mentioned more than one number type at S2)  
Thinking generally about the (insert number types from S2) numbers your organisation uses, why do you use them instead of normal telephone numbers with local codes?  
(If mentioned one number at S2)  
Why does your organisation use your (insert number type from S2) number?*

**Question 3a.** *Would you consider using normal telephone numbers with a local area code (i.e. Geographic numbers) to offer your services rather than (insert number type(s) from S2) numbers?*

**Question 3b.** *Why do you say this?*

**Question 4a.** *Overall, do/does your (insert number at S2) number cost your organisation money or generate some revenue?*

**Question 4b.** Including any ongoing service fees, approximately how much does the 084/087 (as applicable) (insert number type from S2) number cost your organisation per month? Please exclude any one-off payments you made for your numbers

**Question 4c.** Including any ongoing service fees, approximately how much does the 084/087 (as applicable) (insert number type from S2) number generate for your organisation per month? Please exclude any one-off payments you made for your numbers

**Question 5.** Did you have to pay an initial one-off fee to your service provider to have or to operate your (insert number type from S2) number(s)?

**Question 6.** How satisfied are you with the overall value for money you get from the company (companies) that provide(s) you with your (insert number types from S2) numbers? Read out scale. Single code. If respondent says they use more than one company at ask them to refer to their main supplier

Very satisfied

Satisfied

Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

Dissatisfied

Very dissatisfied

Don't know. Do not read out

**Question 7a.** How many (insert number from S2) phone numbers and phone lines do you use to receive calls?

I'm interested in the total number of lines. If you have several lines used for one number please include all of these

Repeat for each number type mentioned at S2

If 'don't know': Is that...

Don't know – Haven't got the information to hand (could possibly get hold of it)

Don't know – Don't think of it in this way / don't keep records

**Question 7b.** On average, how many calls do you receive each month on your (insert number type from s2) number(s)

Repeat for each number type mentioned at s2

If 'don't know': Is that...

Don't know – Haven't got the information to hand (could possibly get hold of it)

Don't know – Don't think of it in this way / don't keep records

**Question 7c.** On average, how many minutes of calls per month do you receive on your (insert number type from s2) number(s)

Repeat for each number type mentioned at s2

If 'don't know': Is that...

Don't know – Haven't got the information to hand (could possibly get hold of it)

Don't know – Don't think of it in this way / don't keep records

**Question 9a.** Thinking about the number(s) you have just mentioned, from which company did you obtain that number/those numbers (delete as appropriate)?

**Question 9b.** You mentioned that you obtained your (insert number type from s2) from (insert provider mentioned at q9a). Why did you obtain this number from (insert provider at q9a)?

**Question 9c.** Ask if multicode at q9b, others go to q10  
And which of these reasons is the most important?

**Question 10.** Why do you use more than one provider for your (insert number from s2) numbers?

**Question 11.** How did you get the number(s)? Were you sold your (insert number type from s2) number(s), i.e. Did someone approach you with the idea or did you proactively seek the number yourself?

**Question 12a.** Have you ever changed the supplier you buy your (insert number type(s) from s2) number(s) from?

**Question 12b.** Why did you change suppliers?

**Question 12c.** Overall, how satisfied were you with the process of changing your service provider? Read out scale. Single code

Very satisfied

Satisfied

Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

Dissatisfied

Very dissatisfied

Don't know Do not read out

**Question 12d.** Did you experience any difficulties or problems when you switched companies? If so, what were they?

**Question 12e.** Why have you never changed providers?

**Question 13.** How satisfied are you with the quality of service you receive from the company that provides your (insert number type(s) from s2) number(s), taking all aspects of its service into account? Read out scale. Single code

Very satisfied

Satisfied

Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

Dissatisfied

Very dissatisfied

Don't know Do not read out

**Question 14a.** How much do you think callers are paying to call your (insert number from S2) from a fixed line?

**Question 14b.** How satisfied are you with the price callers pay to your (insert number types from S2) number(s) from fixed line phones, for example BT? Read out scale. Single code

Very satisfied  
Satisfied  
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied  
Dissatisfied  
Very dissatisfied  
Don't know Do not read out

**Question 14c.** And how satisfied are you with the price callers pay to phone your (insert number types from s2) number(s) from mobile phones? Read out scale. Single code

Very satisfied  
Satisfied  
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied  
Dissatisfied  
Very dissatisfied  
Don't know Do not read out

**Question 15.** Different callers may pay different prices for calls to 084 or 087 numbers dependent on which network they call from. Before now were you aware of this?

**Question 16.** How important is it to your organisation that callers get good value for money when calling your (insert number type(s) from s2) number(s)? Read out scale. Single code

Very important  
Important  
Neither important nor unimportant  
Unimportant  
Very unimportant  
Don't know Do not read out

**Question 17a.** Currently 0845 and 0870 calls are often promoted as local rate and national rate calls respectively. What would be your reaction to abolishing the link between local or national calls for these numbers and allowing a choice of retail prices for these calls? In practice this would mean that for new 0845 or 0870 numbers your organisation would be able to choose the price the caller pays on the bt network, whereas for existing numbers the telecoms supplier would choose the retail price. Read out scale. Single code

Very positive  
Positive  
Neither positive nor negative  
Negative  
Very negative  
Don't know Do not read out



**Question 17b.** *And what would be your reaction to changing the pricing structure so that all callers on a given network would pay the same to dial any 0845/0870 number, for example 5 pence per minute or 10 pence per minute respectively? Read out scale. Single code*

Very positive  
Positive  
Neither positive nor negative  
Negative  
Very negative  
Don't know Do not read out

**Question 18a.** *Would you still use the (insert number from s2) number(s) if your organisation had to pay to receive the call?*

**Question 18b.** *What is the maximum your organisation would be prepared to pay per call received before you stopped using your (insert number from S2) number?*

**Question 19.** *How important would you say having the (insert number type(s) from s2) number(s) is/are to your organisation? Read out scale. Single code*

Very important  
Important  
Neither important nor unimportant  
Unimportant  
Very unimportant  
Don't know Do not read out

**Question 20a.** *Does your organisation currently publicise a number with a local dialling code as an alternative to the (insert number type(s) from S2) so that callers have a choice of which number to use?*

**Question 20b.** *As I mentioned previously, different callers pay different amounts to call your (insert number from s2) which means that in practice it can often cost more to call an 084 or 087 number than calling a normal local or national phone number.*

*Given this, in the next 12 months, how likely is your organisation to consider publicising a normal phone number with a local dialling code in addition to the (insert number(s) from s2) number(s) so callers can choose which number to dial? Read out scale. Single code*

Very likely  
Likely  
Neither likely nor unlikely  
Unlikely  
Very unlikely  
Don't know Do not read out