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GfK NOP

LANDLINE NUISANCE CALLS PANEL
WAVE 2 (JANUARY- FEBRUARY 2014)

GfK NOP



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Research Overview

Background

- Nuisance calls continue to be an issue of concern for consumers, and tackling them continues to be a major work area for Ofcom as set out in the 2014/15 Annual Plan.
- Ofcom obtains information about consumers' experiences of nuisance calls (silent calls, abandoned calls, recorded sales calls and live marketing/sales calls) from the Ofcom-commissioned bi-monthly Consumer Complaints tracker, which provides data on trends in the incidence of nuisance calls¹, as well as complaints data on silent and abandoned calls from the Ofcom Consumer Contact Team (CCT) and online complaints form. However, only the first source provides a nationally representative understanding of consumers' experience of such calls; furthermore, complaints data can be impacted by external factors such as awareness of Ofcom as a body to complain to about such issues and publicity surrounding an issue or investigation.
- In 2012, Ofcom commissioned GfK NOP to undertake a research programme consisting of a bespoke panel of UK landline users who would complete a paper diary for a four week period in January to February 2013 immediately after receiving any nuisance calls². This allowed the collection of detailed information about these types of calls in 'real time' (not possible in the current 'retrospective' tracking survey), such as information on industries making these types of calls, availability of the caller's telephone number and company details, and feelings about the call.
- Ofcom commissioned GfK NOP to repeat the diary study during the equivalent time period in 2014, in order to gather more up to date real time information on experience of nuisance calls and to determine whether there had been any significant changes in the types of industries making these calls, the availability of the caller's telephone number, company details, and feelings about the call.

Research Aims

- To measure the frequency of nuisance calls UK consumers receive on their home landline phone.
- To gather 'real time' data about these types of call including date, time and duration of any nuisance calls, and a full description of the experience i.e. the company/person calling, what the call was about, and whether the caller's telephone number was identifiable.
- To identify any differences compared to the 2013 diary study.

¹ Ofcom monitors consumer experience of nuisance calls via its Consumer Complaints omnibus study, a nationally representative sample of UK landline users are asked about their personal experience of nuisance calls on their home landline phone 'in the last four weeks'. Fieldwork is carried out bi-monthly to allow Ofcom to monitor any seasonal changes. The latest wave of results can be found at <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/statistics/2014Mar/nuisance-calls.pdf>

² <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/market-data-research/other/telecoms-research/nuisance-calls-research/>

Methodology

- Recruitment of a UK nationally representative sample of 1266 people with home landline phones to undertake a diary study to record all unwanted calls³ personally received on their home landline phones across a four week period (13th January to 9th February 2014).
- Panellists were provided with a paper diary and were instructed to complete a page after receiving a nuisance call on their landline phone. A full explanation of the panel task and examples of the instructions and diary given to panellists is in Appendix 3.
- Target diary completion was n=800 participants; the number of actual completions was n=926.
- Final data was weighted back to the UK nationally representative landline-owning population by demographics and internet access using quotas derived from Ofcom's Technology Tracker (see Appendix 2).

Differences in results

- For reporting purposes, differences are noted in the report only when they are statistically significant. Differences are noted within sub-groups (e.g. age), rather than between sub-group and total sample. Statistically significant differences between 2013 and 2014 are also noted.
- Differences have been reported at the 99% confidence level, meaning that we can be 99% certain that there is a real difference between the two results; this is the most stringent standard test of significance.
- Whether or not a difference is significant is determined by the sample sizes of the two scores, and also by how close the two scores are to the average score; for example, the difference between two percentages needs to be greater the closer the percentages are to 50% in order to be significant. Additionally, the weighting of the data can have a slight impact on the significance testing.
- Due to sample sizes, findings were unable to be split by nation. However, no differences were noted between Southern England, Northern England, Midlands and Wales/Scotland/Northern Ireland combined.

Definition of call types

Panellists were provided with the following definitions in order to record any nuisance calls they may receive in the appropriate 'call type' category (see Appendix 3 for more details).

³ The term 'unwanted calls' was used in the recruitment letter, instruction sheet and paper diary provided to participants, as it was felt to be a clearer, more consumer-friendly term than 'nuisance calls'. In this report 'unwanted calls' are referred to as 'nuisance calls'.

A live marketing/ sales call	This is when there is a real person trying to sell you something, sign you up to something (including charitable donations) or promoting a product or service.
A recorded marketing/ sales call	This is when you hear a recorded message (rather than a real person) trying to sell you something or promoting a product or a service. The message may also ask you to press a button to speak to someone.
A recorded message saying that a business has tried to contact you (<i>Abandoned call</i>)	This is when you hear a recorded message saying that an organisation has tried to contact you, but that when the call was put through there was no one available to speak to you. These normally happen when a call centre dialling system automatically rings you but when you answer there is no operator available to take the call. There is nothing being sold or offered in this message.
A silent call	This is where there seems to be no one on the line, although you may hear someone talking in the background (but they are not talking to you).
Other	Some other type of call that you do not want from a business or organisation.

Executive Summary

Ofcom commissioned GfK NOP to conduct a second wave of a nationally representative sample of UK adults with home landline phones to undertake a diary study to record all unwanted calls⁴ personally received on their home landline phone across a four week period (13th January to 9th February 2014).

Panellists were provided with a paper diary and were instructed to complete a diary page every time they considered that they received a nuisance call⁵ on their landline phone. This allowed GfK and Ofcom to collect information about these types of calls in 'real time', and provided greater insight over that of a traditional (retrospective) survey - such as information on industries making these types of calls, availability of the caller's telephone number and company details⁶.

Panellists were provided with the following definitions in order to record any nuisance calls they may receive in the appropriate 'call type' category (see Appendix 3 for more details).

A live marketing/ sales call	This is when there is a real person trying to sell you something, sign you up to something (including charitable donations) or promoting a product or service.
A recorded marketing/ sales call	This is when you hear a recorded message (rather than a real person) trying to sell you something or promoting a product or a service. The message may also ask you to press a button to speak to someone.
A recorded message saying that a business has tried to contact you (Abandoned call)	This is when you hear a recorded message saying that an organisation has tried to contact you, but that when the call was put through there was no one available to speak to you. These normally happen when a call centre dialling system automatically rings you but when you answer there is no operator available to take the call. There is nothing being sold or offered in this message.
A silent call	This is where there seems to be no one on the line, although you may hear someone talking in the background (but they are not talking to you).
Other	Some other type of call that you do not want from a business or organisation.

⁴ The term 'unwanted calls' was used in the recruitment letter, instruction sheet and paper diary provided to participants, as it was considered to be a clearer, more consumer-friendly term than 'nuisance calls'. In this report 'unwanted calls' are referred to as 'nuisance calls'.

⁵ Some calls recorded as nuisance calls may have been the result of participants giving the company prior consent to contact them (e.g. ticking a consent box on a marketing form or company website)

⁶ Please see the previous section for more details of the methodology.

Frequency of nuisance calls:

- More than four in five (84%) of participating UK adults with a landline phone reported experiencing a nuisance call in the four week fieldwork period from 13 January to 9 February 2014. Two thirds (67%) reported receiving a live marketing/ sales call, three in five (61%) reported experiencing a silent call, a third (37%) reported experiencing a recorded sales call and one in seven (14%) reported receiving an abandoned call. These are similar to the levels that were recorded over the same time period in the 2013 panel study.
- Those who reported receiving any nuisance calls reported an average of nearly 9 calls (8.7) in the four week period, which equates to approximately two calls per week. Three in ten (29%) reported more than 10 nuisance calls and almost one in ten (8%) reported more than 20 nuisance calls over the four week period. Again there were no statistically significant⁷ differences here compared to 2013.
- Among all those who reported receiving them, silent calls and live marketing/sales calls were received most frequently: almost six in ten (57%) of those who received silent calls reported receiving three or more of them over the four weeks (8% reporting more than ten calls) and half (53%) of those who received live marketing/sales calls reported receiving three or more over the four weeks (7% reporting more than ten calls). For each of silent calls and live marketing/sales calls this equates to an average of about four calls (4.5 for silent calls, 4.1 for live marketing/sales calls) over the four weeks.
- Approximately one in seven (15%) of those who reported receiving abandoned calls received three or more of them over the four weeks (an average of 1.5 calls in four weeks), and a third (36%) of those who reported receiving recorded sales calls received three or more over the four weeks (an average of 2.4 in four weeks).
- As seen in 2013, a statistically significantly higher level of nuisance calls was reported by older participants (particularly 65+) compared with younger participants. In addition, among those who reported receiving nuisance calls, a higher average number of calls were reported among those aged 55-64, 65+ and those not working (an average of 11/11/10 calls in the four weeks respectively) compared to younger and working adults (an average of 6 calls for 16-34s and 8 calls for 35-54s and working adults in the four weeks). This is likely to be due at least in part to older and non-working participants being more likely to be at home to receive nuisance calls. There were no statistically significant differences in 2014 in incidence of any type of nuisance call by socio-economic group or by region.
- There were generally no statistically significant differences in the incidence of nuisance calls, overall or by type of call, amongst those who reported they were more or less likely to opt out of receiving marketing information, to give out their landline number, or to shop online (these were new questions included in the study in 2014). The only two exceptions were:
 - those who don't tend to opt out of receiving further marketing information were more likely to receive recorded sales calls (52% incidence versus 37% amongst all participants).
 - those who claim to never give out their phone number, whilst on average no less likely to receive a nuisance call, were less likely than those who said they sometimes or always give out their number to receive more than 20 calls over the 4 weeks (4% vs 13%).

⁷ See 'Differences in results' section, p4 for explanation of the term statistically significant

- Compared with 2013 findings, there was a statistically significant increase in the proportion of nuisance calls that were silent (34% to 37%) and a corresponding decline in the proportion of nuisance calls that were recorded sales calls (14% to 12%) and abandoned calls (4% to 3%). The proportion of live marketing/sales calls remained at the same level (38%), as did 'other' types of nuisance calls (9% in 2014/ 8% in 2013), while a few (1% in 2014/ 2% in 2013) nuisance calls were not categorised by participants.

Industries making nuisance calls:

- Participants were asked, where possible, to record the name and number of the caller and the product or service being promoted. Participants provided a description⁸ of the product or service being promoted for just under half (45%) of all nuisance calls, rising to four out of five recorded sales (80%) and live marketing/sales calls (79%). Compared with 2013, there has been an increase in recording of the product or service in both recorded sales (68% to 80%) and live marketing/sales calls (72% to 79%).
- Overall, calls about Payment Protection Insurance (PPI) claims made up 13% of all nuisance calls where the product or service was recorded, followed by insurance (9%), home/ loft insulation (8%) and 'market research'⁹ (8%). PPI claims calls constituted more than a quarter (28%) of all abandoned calls and recorded sales calls, and almost one in ten (8%) live marketing/sales calls, where the product or service was able to be identified.
- Compared with 2013 there has been a statistically significant decline in the proportion of calls identified as being about PPI claims (22% to 13% overall), energy (10% to 7%) and pension rebates (4% to 1%). Meanwhile, there has been an increase in calls identified as regarding home/loft insulation (2% to 8%), solar panels (2% to 6%), other home improvements e.g. kitchens, windows (3% to 7%), phone/broadband services (3% to 5%), financial products and services (<1% to 5%), accident claims (2% to 4%), and debt collection/repayment (2% to 4%).
- The name of the company calling was recorded for a fifth (19%) of all calls; two fifths (39%) for live marketing/sales calls. There were no significant differences in the proportions of company names recorded by type of call compared with 2013. As in 2013, the top 10 company name mentions only accounted for 6% of nuisance calls.
- The telephone number of the caller - either provided on the caller display or by dialling 1471 - was recorded for a third (36%) of calls; for the remainder of calls either no telephone number was available or it was not recorded by participants. Silent calls were less likely than any other types of calls to have a telephone number recorded. In addition, silent and 'other' types of calls were more likely than live marketing/sales calls to display an international phone number¹⁰ (both 7% versus 4% for live marketing/sales calls).

Attitudes towards nuisance calls:

⁸ This is the participant's understanding of the product or service being promoted and may not necessarily reflect the actual reason for the call

⁹ This number may include calls made under the guise of market research but actually with the intention of collecting sales leads, also known as 'sugging'

¹⁰ This study is likely to underestimate the number of international calls as some organisations calling from abroad will present a UK phone number to consumers to make it easier for consumers to contact them should they wish to do so. Others may present an invalid number or withhold their number from consumers

- Participants were asked to state whether each of the nuisance calls they received was 'annoying', 'distressing', 'useful' or 'not a problem'. In 2013 participants were additionally given the option of 'worrying', but this was removed in the 2014 research as being deemed too similar to 'distressing'. In order to best compare the findings between years, the responses of 'worrying' and 'distressing' in 2013 were netted (i.e. a call that was considered both 'worrying' and 'distressing' was only counted once). While it is noted that this is not a completely like-for-like comparison, the findings do appear to be in line with changes seen in mention of other attitudes.
- The majority of nuisance calls (81%) were thought to be 'annoying'; this feeling dominates across all ages, socio-economic groups and working status. A higher proportion of silent calls (88%) were considered annoying compared to any other type of call; while a higher proportion of recorded sales and 'other' calls (81%) were considered annoying compared to abandoned calls (71%). Recorded sales calls were also considered more annoying than live marketing/sales calls (76%).
- In comparison, relatively few calls were reported as being 'not a problem' (12%) or 'distressing' (6%), and very few were considered 'useful' (1%). Although overall a relatively small proportion of calls made people feel distressed, those aged 16-24 (23%), as well as students (16%), unemployed (15%) and C1 socio-economic group (9%) were more likely than older people, working or retired people and other socio-economic groups to be distressed by nuisance calls. Silent calls were considered more distressing than recorded or live marketing/sales calls (9% vs 5% each), and were also indicatively more distressing than abandoned and 'other' calls (6% each).
- Compared with 2013, there has been a statistically significant decline in the proportion of calls considered annoying (86% to 81%) and distressing (9% to 6%) and an increase in those seen as not a problem (7% to 12%). The fall in calls considered annoying was driven by a drop in the proportion of abandoned (86% to 71%), recorded sales (94% to 81%) and live marketing/sales calls (83% to 76%) that were considered annoying, while the reduction in distressing calls comes from declines in the proportion of silent (14% to 9%) and live marketing/sales calls (7% to 5%) that were considered distressing.
- Calls about Payment Protection Insurance (PPI) were more likely to be considered annoying compared with the average rating across all nuisance calls (86% vs 81% average). 'Computer support' calls¹¹ were more likely to be reported as distressing (14% vs 6% average).
- Compared with 2013, there was a statistically significant drop in the proportion of energy calls (93% to 66%) that were considered annoying. There was also a fall in the proportion of 'computer support' calls that were considered distressing (from 36% to 14%).
- The most common reasons given (unprompted) by participants for calls being reported as annoying or distressing were that they had received a lot of calls already, or else that there was no reply when they picked up the phone. Annoyance was also due to the unnecessary interruption and waste of time, while calls that were perceived to be 'scams' were more likely to be considered distressing.
- Sales calls could be considered useful even if the subject was not of personal interest, while calls were more likely to be considered not a problem if the caller was polite and not pushy.

¹¹ 'Computer support' calls may relate to purported offers to correct or repair alleged computer errors, faults or viruses. These types of calls may include scams to gain access to a consumer's computer and gain knowledge of passwords and security information.

Incidence and frequency of nuisance calls

Participants were asked to record details every time they personally received a nuisance call on their home landline phone across a four week period.

It should be noted that some calls recorded as nuisance calls may have been received as the result of participants giving the company prior consent to contact them (e.g. ticking a consent box on a marketing form or company website).

Nuisance call incidence

Figure 1.1 (below) shows the incidence of nuisance calls reported by panel participants between 13 January and 9 February 2014.

More than four in five (84%) UK adults with a landline phone reported experiencing a nuisance call in the four week fieldwork period (13 January to 9 February 2014). Three in five participants reported experiencing a live marketing/sales call (64%) and approximately the same number reported receiving a silent call (61%), while a third (37%) reported receiving a recorded sales call and one in seven (14%) reported receiving an abandoned call.

There were no statistically significant differences in the incidence of calls, either overall or by type of call, reported in 2014 versus what was reported over the same time period in the 2013 panel study.

Figure 1.1: Nuisance call incidence

All nuisance calls	84%
Live sales calls	67%
Silent calls	61%
Recorded sales calls	37%
Abandoned calls	14%
Other nuisance calls ⁽¹⁾	28%

⁽¹⁾ Defined as "Some other type of call that you do not want from a business or organisation"
Base: All UK panel participants with landlines, Jan-Feb 2014 (n=926)

The purpose of the diary study is to measure the frequency of nuisance calls, and changes in the types of industries making these calls, the availability of the caller's telephone number, company details, and feelings about the call. In addition to this study, Ofcom monitors trends in the consumer experience of nuisance calls via its bi-monthly Consumer Complaints tracker research programme.¹² The fieldwork period for the diary exercise falls between January and March Consumer Complaints

¹² Ofcom monitors consumer experience of nuisance calls via its Consumer Complaints face to face omnibus study. Fieldwork is carried out during the first week of every second month and asks a nationally representative sample of UK landline users about their personal experience of nuisance calls on their home landline phone 'in the last four weeks'- for example, participants in March were asked about their experience of nuisance calls in the 'last four weeks'- i.e. during the month of February.

tracker fieldwork periods, and therefore data points between the two studies are not directly comparable.

Demographic profile of nuisance landline call incidence split by call type

Figure 1.2 (below) shows the demographic profile of participants who reported having received nuisance calls across the four week period.

Overall experience of nuisance calls increased with age, and those 35 years and over reported a significantly higher incidence of any nuisance calls compared with those under 35. For live marketing/sales calls and 'other' nuisance calls, incidence was also higher amongst those aged 65+ compared with those 35-54 years of age. The incidence of abandoned calls was higher amongst those under 35 and 55-64 than those aged 65+, and there was no difference in the incidence of recorded sales calls by age.

Non-working participants reported a higher incidence of nuisance calls overall, as well as a higher incidence of live marketing/sales, silent and 'other' nuisance calls.

Compared with 2013 findings, the only statistically significant difference was a decline in the incidence of abandoned calls amongst those aged 65+ (from 25% in 2013 to 7% in 2014).

Figure 1.2: Demographic profile of nuisance landline call incidence, by call type

	Total	16-34 <i>A</i>	35-54 <i>B</i>	55-64 <i>C</i>	65+ <i>D</i>	Working <i>E</i>	Not working <i>F</i>
All nuisance calls	84%	74%	85% <i>A</i>	87% <i>A</i>	93% <i>A</i>	81%	89% <i>E</i>
Live sales calls	67%	51%	68% <i>A</i>	76% <i>A</i>	82% <i>AB</i>	64%	73% <i>E</i>
Silent calls	61%	45%	61% <i>A</i>	71% <i>A</i>	73% <i>A</i>	57%	67% <i>E</i>
Recorded sales calls	37%	36%	33%	43%	44%	34%	42%
Abandoned calls	14%	16% <i>D</i>	13%	17% <i>D</i>	7% 	14%	13%
Other nuisance calls	28%	13%	27% <i>A</i>	33% <i>A</i>	45% <i>AB</i>	22%	37% <i>E</i>

A letter next to a percentage shows that the percentage is significantly higher (99% level) than the corresponding percentage for that call type (row) in the sub-group (column) of that letter

Base: All UK panel participants with landlines, Jan-Feb 2014 (n=926, 228, 365, 151, 182, 520, 406)

  indicates significant change since 2013 at the 99% level

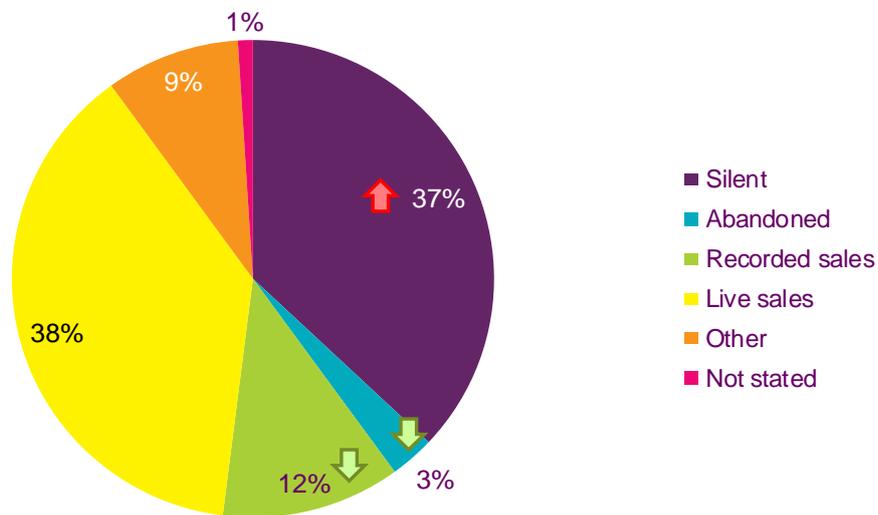
Breakdown of nuisance landline calls by type

Figure 1.3 (below) shows the proportions of each type of nuisance call received out of the total nuisance calls received over the four week period.

Over a third of total nuisance calls were live marketing/sales calls (38%) and a further third were silent calls (37%). Recorded sales calls (12%), abandoned calls (3%) and 'other' types of nuisance calls (9%) were at lower levels. A few (1%) nuisance calls were not categorised by participants.

Compared with 2013 there has been a statistically significant increase in the proportion of silent calls (34% to 37%) and a decline in the proportions of recorded sales calls (14% to 12%) and abandoned calls (4% to 3%).

Figure 1.3: Proportion of different types of calls received over four weeks



Base: All nuisance calls received by UK panel participants with landlines, Jan-Feb 2014 (n= 7112)

↓ ↑ indicates significant change since 2013 at the 99% level

Frequency of nuisance landline calls received across four weeks

Figure 1.4 (below) shows the number of calls received over the four week period by all who received each call type.

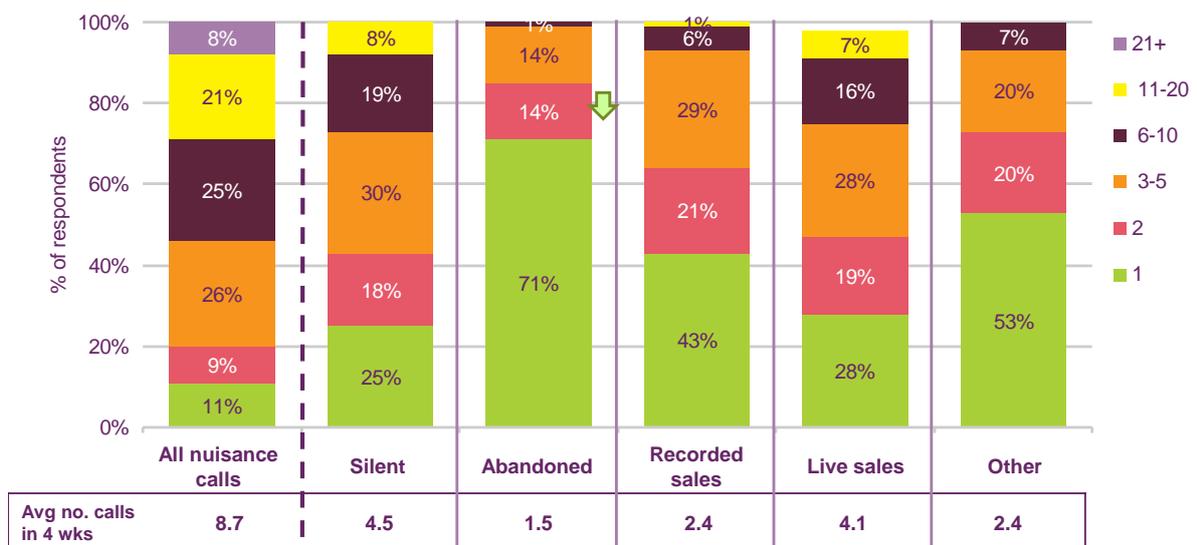
Those who received any nuisance calls received an average of about nine calls (8.7) in the four week period, or about two per week. Three in ten (29%) of those who received a nuisance call received more than 10 calls over the four week period, and 8% received more than 20 calls over the four week period. These results are not statistically significantly different compared to those for 2013.

Among all those who reported receiving them, silent calls and live marketing/sales calls were received most frequently: 57% of those who received silent calls reported receiving three or more of them over the four weeks (8% reporting more than ten calls) and 51% of those who received live marketing/sales calls reported receiving three or more over the four weeks (7% reporting more than ten calls). For each of silent calls and live marketing/sales calls this equates to an average of about four calls (4.5 and 4.1 respectively) over the four weeks.

In contrast, 71% of those who reported receiving abandoned calls received only one such call over the four weeks. Fifteen per cent received three or more of them over the four weeks (an average of 1.5 calls in four weeks), and 36% of those who reported receiving recorded sales calls received three or more over the four weeks (an average of 2.4 in four weeks). These results on incidence by type of call are also not significantly different compared to those for 2013.

As noted above, among those who received nuisance calls there were no statistically significant differences in the frequency received in 2013 versus 2014, both overall and by type of call. (The only difference year-on-year was a decline in the proportion of participants who received two abandoned calls; from 29% to 14%).

Figure 1.4: Number of calls received over four weeks amongst all who received each call type



Base: All UK panel participants with landlines who received each type of call, Jan-Feb 2014 (n=790, 581, 126, 357, 641, 274)

↓ ↑ indicates significant change since 2013 at the 99% level

Frequency of nuisance landline calls by demographics

Figure 1.5 (below) shows the number of calls received over the four week period by key demographic groups amongst all who received each call type.

Amongst all who received any nuisance calls, those aged 55-64 (11.2) and 65+ (11.0) and not working (9.9) reported statistically significantly more calls on average over the four weeks compared to younger (16-34: 5.7; 35-54: 8.1) and working (7.8) participants. The call incidence amongst 35-54s was also significantly higher than that for those under 35 years.

Figure 1.5: Number of calls received by demographics amongst all who received each call type



Base: All UK panel participants with landlines who received each type of call, Jan-Feb 2014 (n=171, 313, 138, 168, 429, 361, 473, 317)

↓ ↑ indicates significant change since 2013 at the 99% level

As shown in Figure 1.4, 8% of those who received any nuisance calls received 20 or more calls over the four weeks. Of that 8%, two thirds (66%) were aged 55+ (approximately one third each for 55-64 and 65+ age groups). The majority (70%) of those who received more than 20 nuisance calls reported 21-30 calls, with most of the remainder (22%) receiving 31-40 calls. One participant reported receiving between 61-70 calls.

There were generally no statistically significant differences in incidence of nuisance calls, overall or by type of call, amongst those who were more or less likely to opt out of receiving marketing information, to give out their landline number to companies/organisations, or to shop online. The only exceptions were:

- those who state they do not tend to opt out of receiving further marketing information were more likely to receive recorded sales calls (52% incidence versus 37% amongst all participants).
- those who claim to never give out their phone number, whilst on average were no less likely to receive nuisance calls, were less likely than those who sometimes or always give out their number to receive more than 20 calls over the 4 weeks (4% vs 13%).

(This information was not included in the 2013 study, so it is not possible to compare these results over time.)

Industries making nuisance calls

Availability of caller information

Panel participants were asked to record the type of product or service, company name and telephone number where possible for each nuisance call received. Figure 2.1 (below) shows the proportion of nuisance calls in which participants were able to identify details about the call; specifically, the type of product or service being promoted¹³, the name of the company that was calling, and the telephone number of the company calling.

Awareness of the product or service being promoted in the call and the name of the company calling were both a mixture of information provided by the caller and the participant's recall or ability to hear the caller properly. The caller's phone number was usually determined either by the number display on the telephone or by dialling 1471 after the call.

Overall, in fewer than half of nuisance calls was a product or service (45%), company name (19%), or a phone number (36%) recorded. These levels were not significantly different to what was seen in 2013.

Figure 2.1: Availability of caller information for total nuisance calls

	All nuisance calls
Type of product or service	45%
Company name	19%
Company phone number	36%

NB: telephone numbers provided were not checked for accuracy

Base: All nuisance calls received by UK panel participants with landlines Jan-Feb 2014 (n=7112)

As shown in Figures 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 (below) the level of information given differed by type of call; the product/ service and company name were naturally not generally available from silent calls.

Figure 2.2 (below) demonstrates the proportion of nuisance calls in which the type of product or service being promoted was recorded, by type of call. The type of product or service was mentioned in four out of five recorded sales (80%) and live marketing/sales calls (79%), as well as in half of abandoned calls (52%).

Compared with 2013, there has been an increase in identification of the product or service in both recorded sales (68% to 80%) and live marketing/sales calls (72% to 79%).

¹³ This is the participant's understanding of the product or service being promoted and may not reflect the actual reason for the call

Figure 2.2: Proportion of nuisance calls in which type of product or service was recorded, by call type



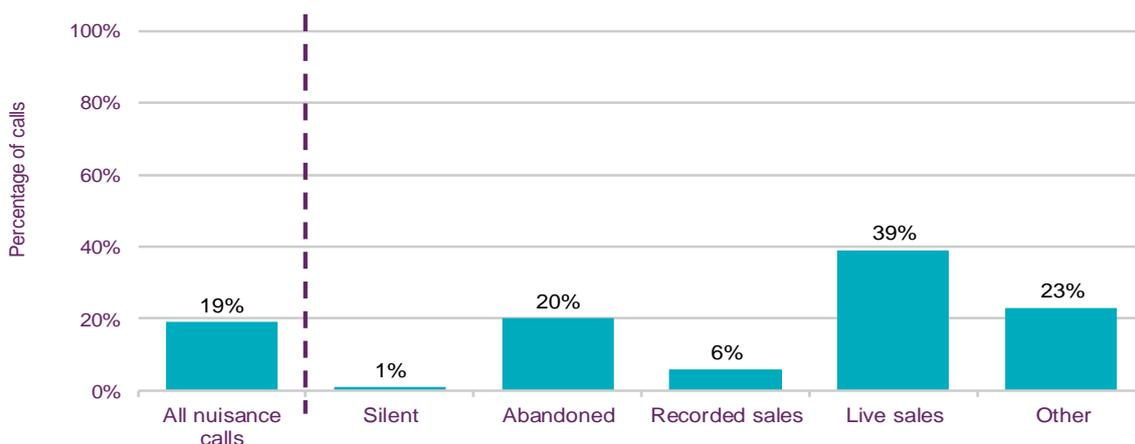
Base: All nuisance calls received by UK panel participants with landlines Jan-Feb 2014 (n=7112, 2668, 196, 852, 2698, 663)
 ↑ ↓ indicates significant change since 2013 at the 99% level

NB: 1% of nuisance calls were not categorised by participants

Figure 2.3 (below) shows the proportion of nuisance calls in which the company name was recorded, by type of call. Participants receiving live marketing/sales calls were the most likely to record the name of the company calling (39%); in contrast, participants receiving recorded sales calls (6%) and silent calls (1%) were least likely to record this information.

There were no statistically significant differences in the proportions of company names recorded by type of call compared with 2013.

Figure 2.3: Proportion of nuisance calls in which company name was recorded, by call type



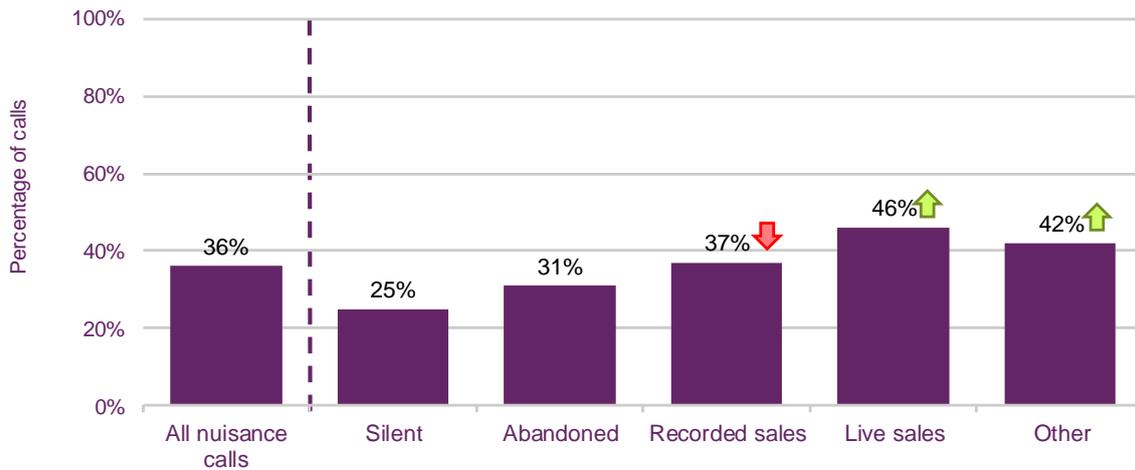
Base: All nuisance calls received by UK panel participants with landlines Jan-Feb 2014 (n=7112, 2668, 196, 852, 2698, 663)
 ↑ ↓ indicates significant change since 2013 at the 99% level

NB: 1% of nuisance calls were not categorised by participants

Figure 2.4 (below) shows the proportion of nuisance calls in which the caller’s telephone number was recorded, by type of call. A telephone number was recorded for a third (36%) of all nuisance calls; participants receiving live marketing/sales (46%), recorded sales (37%), and other calls (42%) were more likely than those receiving silent calls (25%) to have recorded a telephone number.

Compared with 2013, there was an increase in the proportion of live marketing/sales calls (41% to 46%) and ‘other’ calls (25% to 42%) for which a telephone number was recorded, but a drop in the figure for recorded sales (44% to 37%).

Figure 2.4: Proportion of nuisance calls in which phone number was recorded, by call type



NB: Telephone numbers provided or disclosed were not checked for accuracy

Base: All nuisance calls received by UK panel participants with landlines Jan-Feb 2014 (n=7112, 2668, 196, 852, 2698, 663)

↑ ↓ indicates significant change since 2013 at the 99% level

NB: 1% of nuisance calls were not categorised by participants

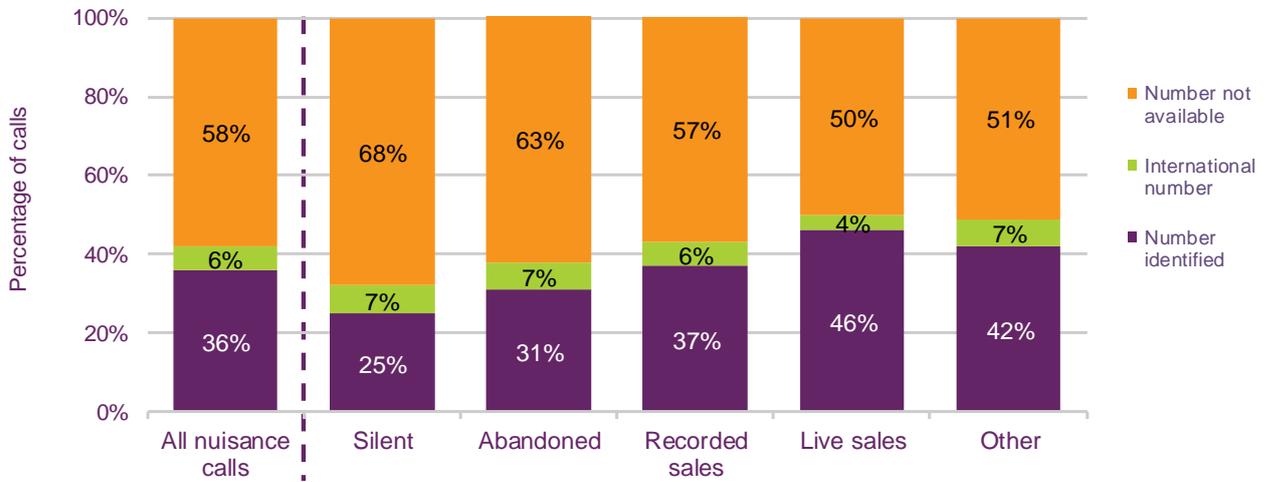
Figure 2.5 (below) shows the proportion of nuisance calls in which the caller’s telephone number was recorded, by type of call, as seen in Figure 2.4, and additionally the proportion of calls in which the telephone number was identified as an international call.¹⁴

Silent and ‘other’ types of calls were more likely than live marketing/sales calls to be recorded as being an international number (both 7% versus 4% for live marketing/sales calls).

International numbers were not identified in the same way in 2013 so the levels cannot be compared.

¹⁴ This study is likely to underestimate the number of international calls as some organisations making calls from abroad will present a UK phone number to consumers to make it easier for consumers to contact them should they wish to do so. Others may present an invalid number or withhold their number from consumers.

Figure 2.5: Proportion of nuisance calls in which phone number was identified as international, by call type



NB: Telephone numbers provided or disclosed were not checked for accuracy. Classification of calls as being international was done by panel participants

Base: All nuisance calls received by UK panel participants with landlines Jan-Feb 2014 (n=7112, 2668, 196, 852, 2698, 663)

NB: 1% of nuisance calls were not categorised by participants

Product or service being promoted where identified

Figure 2.6 (below) shows the proportions of nuisance calls that were promoting different products and services, for all calls in which participants were able to provide a description of this. As discussed in Figure 2.1, participants were able to provide a description of the product or service being promoted in just under half (45%) of all nuisance calls.

Overall, calls about PPI claims made up 13% of all nuisance calls where the product or service was identifiable, followed by insurance (8%), home/loft insulation (8%) and 'market research'¹⁵ (8%). PPI claims calls constituted more than a quarter (28%) of all abandoned calls and recorded sales calls, and almost one in ten (8%) live marketing/sales calls, where the product or service was able to be identified.

Compared with 2013 there has been a decline in the proportion of calls identified as being about PPI claims (22% to 13% overall), energy (10% to 7%) and pension rebates (4% to 1%). Meanwhile, there has been an increase in the percentage of calls identified as regarding home/loft insulation (2% to 8%), solar panels (2% to 6%), other home improvements e.g. kitchens, windows (3% to 7%), phone/broadband services (3% to 5%), financial products and services (<1% to 5%), accident claims (2% to 4%), and debt collection/repayment (2% to 4%).

Figure 2.6: Product or service being promoted by call type, where identified

	All calls where product identified	Abandoned	Recorded sales	Live sales	Other
PPI claim	13% ↓	28%	28% ↓	8% ↓	4%
Insurance	9%	8% ↑	3%	11%	3%
Home/Loft insulation	8% ↑	17% ↑	19% ↑	5%	3%
Market research	8%	-	1%	8%	31% ↓
Other home e.g. kitchen, windows	7% ↑	3%	9% ↑	6%	3%
Energy company	7% ↓	3%	5% ↓	8%	7%
Solar panels	6% ↑	3%	9% ↑	5% ↑	1%
Phone/Broadband	5% ↑	6%	3%	6%	2%
Financial services/products	5% ↑	3%	1%	6% ↑	4%
Accident claims/compensation	4% ↑	3%	1%	5%	3%
Computer maintenance/support	4%	-	1%	4%	11%
Debt collection/repayment	4% ↑	4%	15% ↑	1%	3%
Charity	3%	1%	-	3%	3%
Claim/Refund (unspec)	1%	1%	-	1%	1%
Loans/Loans refund	1%	8%	1%	1%	-
Banking/Credit card	1%	3%	2%	1%	2%
Pension rebate/refund	1% ↓	1%	-	2%	1%
Others	13%	8%	2%	19%	18%

NB: This was the participant's understanding of the product or service being promoted and may not reflect the actual reason for the call.

'Other' includes all products/services comprising less than 2% of total calls and includes e.g. Newspaper subscriptions, TV insurance, health products, wine investments, legal services, time shares. Percentages are not displayed where value is less than 1%. Base too low to show for silent calls

Base: All nuisance calls received by UK panellists where product/service was identified Jan-Feb 2014 (n=3055, 100, 653, 2044, 235)

↓ ↑ indicates significant change since 2013 at the 99% level

¹⁵ This number may include calls made under the guise of market research but actually with the intention of collecting sales leads, also known as 'sugging'

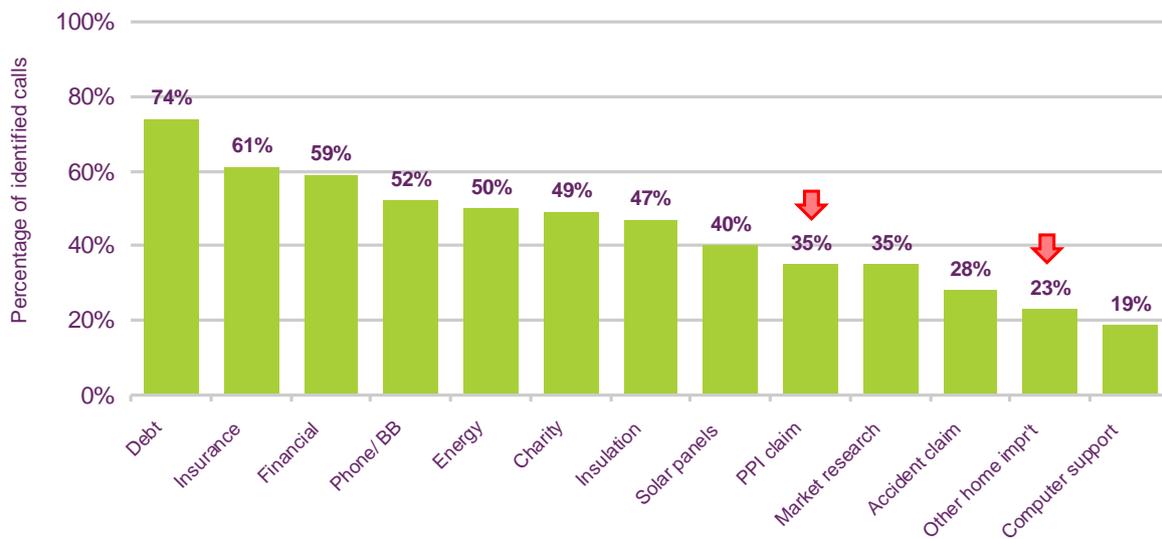
Disclosure of phone number by key products or services being promoted

Figure 2.7 (below) shows the proportion of nuisance calls for which a telephone number¹⁶ was recorded by type of product or service being promoted, where this was identified.

Amongst calls where a description of the product or service being promoted was given (45% of all calls – see figure 2.1), those calls for which a telephone number was most likely to be recorded related to debt (74%; predominantly debt repayment or management), insurance (61%) and financial products or services (59%). Calls regarding computer support were least likely to have the caller’s telephone number recorded (19%).

Compared with 2013, there was a decline in the proportion of calls regarding PPI claims (62% to 35%) and other home improvement such as kitchens and windows (60% to 23%) in which a telephone number was recorded.

Figure 2.7: Proportion disclosed phone number by main types of product/ service promoted



* Base size below 100 - treat as indicative only

NB: This was the participant’s understanding of the product or service being promoted and may not reflect the actual reason for the call.

Base: All nuisance landline calls where participant was aware of product or service being promoted, Jan-Feb 2014 (138, 283, 160, 151, 226, 86*, 275, 190, 405, 250, 131, 205, 118)

↑ ↓ indicates significant change since 2013 at the 99% level

¹⁶ Availability of a telephone number for a call does not guarantee that this is a number that can be used to re-contact the caller

Attitudes towards nuisance calls

Attitudes to nuisance calls by call type

Figure 3.1 (below) shows attitudes to nuisance calls by type of call. Participants were asked to use the following categories to describe their attitudes: 'annoying', 'distressing', 'useful' and 'not a problem'. It was a prompted list and more than one response could be selected for any call (thus the totals may sum to more than 100%), although only occasionally was more than one attitude selected.

In 2013 participants were additionally given the option of 'worrying', but this was removed in the 2014 research as being deemed too similar to 'distressing'. In order to best compare the findings between years, the responses of 'worrying' and 'distressing' in 2013 were netted (i.e. a call that was considered both 'worrying' and 'distressing' was only counted once). While it is noted that this is not a completely like-for-like comparison, the findings do appear to be in line with changes seen in mention of other attitudes.

The majority of nuisance calls (81%) were thought to be annoying. Relatively few calls were reported as being not a problem (12%) or distressing (6%), and very few were considered useful (1%).

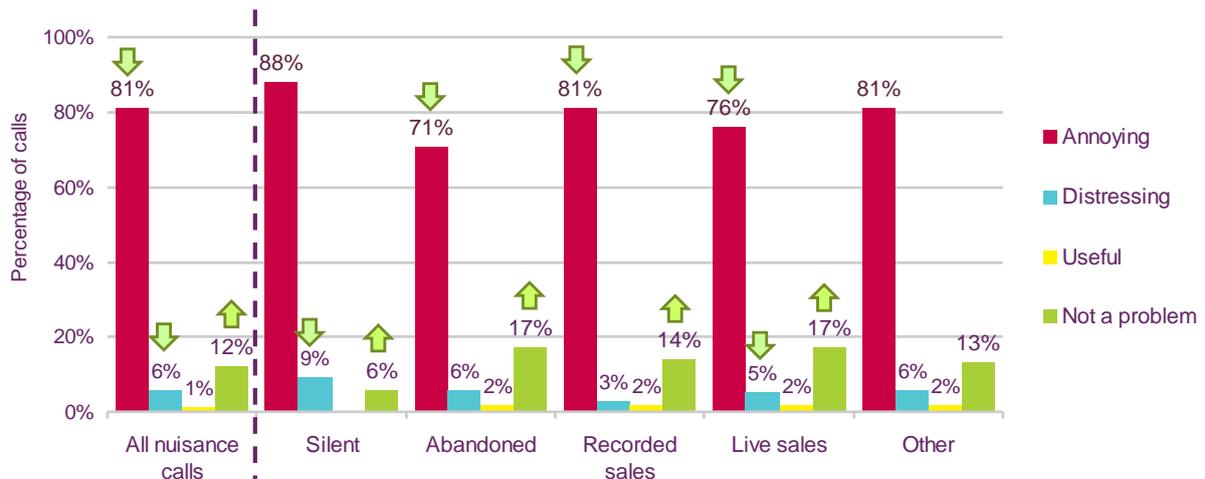
The feeling that these calls were predominately annoying dominates across all ages, socio-economic groups and working status. Although overall a relatively small proportion of calls made people feel distressed, those aged 16-24 (23%), as well as students (16%), unemployed (15%) and C1 socio-economic group (9%) were more likely than those 25+, working or retired people and other socio-economic groups, to report being distressed by nuisance calls. Retired people (3%) and those aged 65+ (3%) were less likely to feel distressed compared with full-time employed, students, unemployed and those under 55 years.

A higher proportion of silent calls (88%) were considered annoying compared to any other type of call; while a higher proportion of recorded sales and 'other' calls (81%) were considered annoying compared to abandoned calls (71%). Recorded sales calls were also considered more annoying than live marketing/ sales calls (76%). Silent calls were also considered to be more distressing (9%) than recorded and live marketing/sales calls (both 5%) and were less likely than other call types to be considered useful (0%) or not a problem (6%).

Compared with 2013, there has been a decline in the proportion of overall calls considered annoying (86% to 81%) and distressing (9% to 6%), and an increase in those seen as not a problem (7% to 12%).

The overall fall in those considered annoying was driven by declines in the proportion of abandoned calls (86% to 71%), recorded sales (94% to 81%) and live marketing/sales calls (83% to 76%) that were considered annoying. The overall reduction in calls recorded as distressing comes from declines in the proportion of silent (14% to 9%) and live marketing/sales calls (7% to 5%) considered distressing. The increase in calls being not a problem is due to increases for all types of calls apart from 'other'.

Figure 3.1: Attitude to nuisance calls by call type



Base: All nuisance calls received by UK panel participants with landlines, Jan-Feb 2014 (n=7112, 2668, 196, 852, 2698, 663)

↓ ↑ indicates significant change since 2013 at the 99% level

NB: 1% of nuisance calls were not categorised by participants

Attitudes to nuisance calls by industry type

Figure 3.2 (below) shows participants' attitudes to nuisance calls by the type of product or service that was being promoted, for calls where the product/service was identified.

The majority of nuisance calls (81%) were considered to be annoying, regardless of industry type. However, calls about Payment Protection Insurance (PPI) were significantly more likely to be considered annoying compared to the average rating across all nuisance calls (86% vs 81% average). Calls regarding insurance, 'other' home improvements, energy, phone/ broadband and charities were statistically significantly less likely to be considered annoying (72%/72%/66%/66%/58% respectively) compared with the average for all nuisance calls (81%).

Computer support calls¹⁷ were the most likely type of call to be rated as distressing (14%), and this was statistically significantly higher than the average for all nuisance calls (6%). Calls regarding accident claims and charities were also relatively more likely to be considered distressing (8% and 7% respectively), even though calls from charities were least likely to be considered annoying (58%). Calls regarding insurance (1%) and 'other' home improvements (0%) were significantly less distressing versus the average.

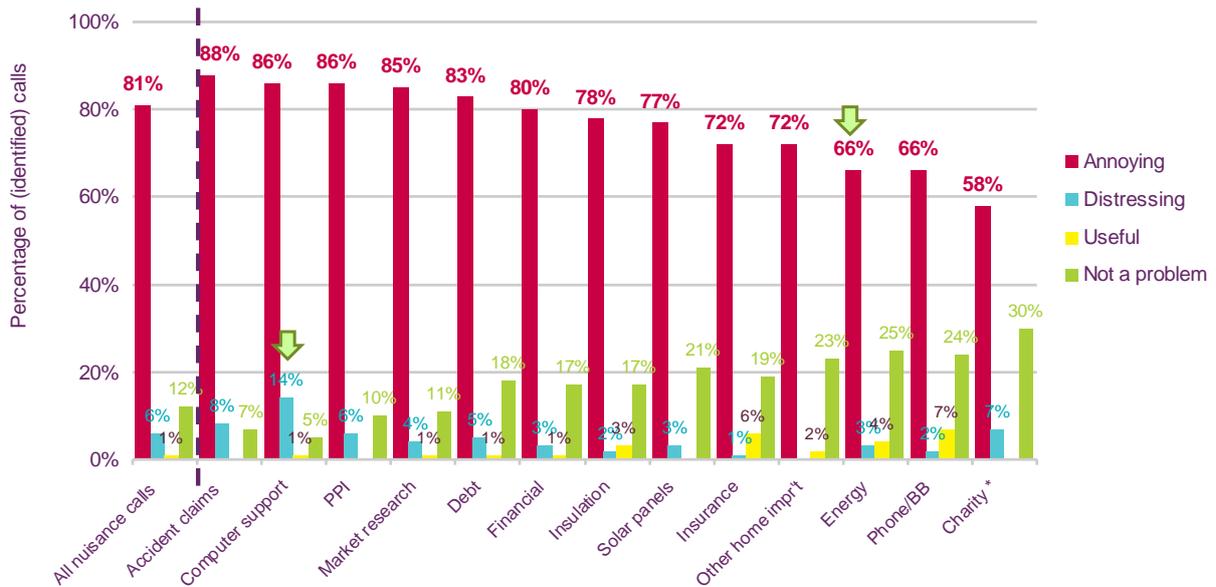
Although the majority of all nuisance calls were considered annoying, some types were more likely than average to be reported as useful: phone/broadband (7% vs 1% average), insurance (6%) and energy (4%) or as 'not a problem': charities (30% vs 12% average), energy (25%), phone/ broadband

¹⁷ 'Computer support' calls may relate to purported offers to correct or repair alleged computer errors, faults or viruses. These types of calls may include scams to gain access to a consumer's computer and gain knowledge of passwords and security information.

(24%), 'other' home improvements e.g. kitchens, windows (23%), solar panels (21%) and insurance (19%).

Compared with 2013, there was a statistically significant drop in the proportion of energy calls (93% to 66%) that were considered annoying. There was also a fall in the proportion of computer support calls that were found to be distressing (from 36% to 14%).

Figure 3.2: Attitudes to nuisance calls by industry type



* Base size below 100 - treat as indicative only

NB: This was the participant's understanding of the product or service being promoted and may not reflect the actual reason for the call.

NNB: 2013 data for 'worrying' and 'distressing' has been netted as 'worrying' was not included in the 2014 research

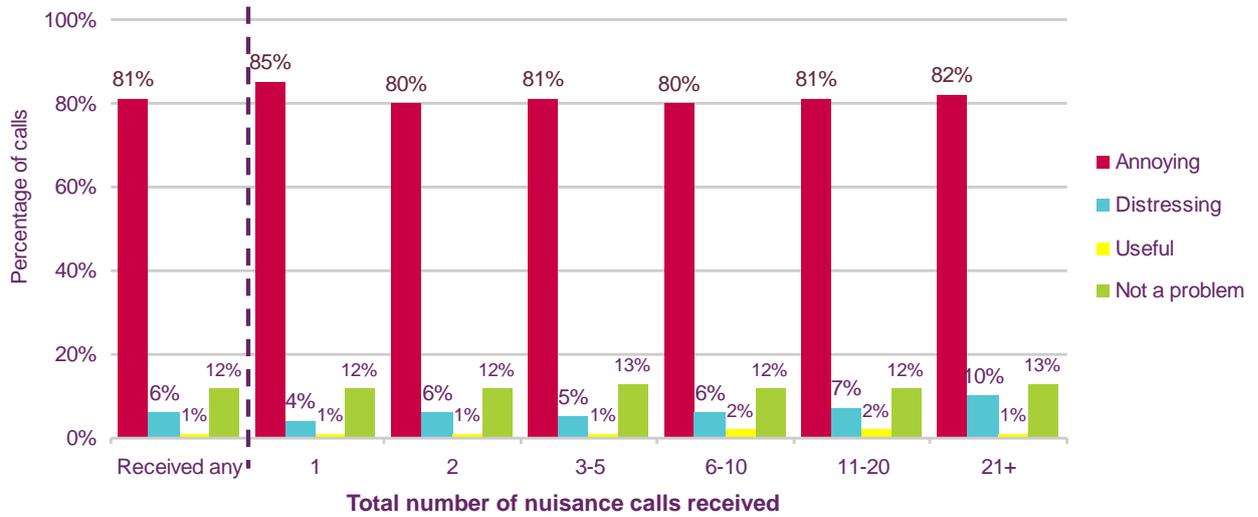
Base: All nuisance calls received by UK panel participants with landlines, Jan-Feb 2014 (n=7112), where product/service identified (n=131, 118, 405, 250, 138, 160, 275, 190, 238, 205, 226, 151, 86*)

Attitudes to nuisance calls by number of calls received

Figure 3.3 (below) shows participants' attitudes to nuisance calls by the total number of calls they received over the four week period.

There was some indication that those who received more nuisance calls were more likely to have a call that they rated as distressing; participants who received more than 20 calls were more likely than those who received one or 3-5 calls to have calls rated as distressing (10% vs 4%/5% respectively).

Figure 3.3: Attitudes to nuisance calls by number of calls received



Base: All nuisance calls received by UK panel participants with landlines, Jan-Feb 2014 (n=7112, 795, 715, 1743, 1780, 1507, 567)

Reasons for attitudes to nuisance calls

Figure 3.4 (below) shows the main reasons given by participants for their attitudes to nuisance calls. The main reasons given (unprompted) for why those feelings were chosen are highlighted for each type of feeling. The figures do not total to 100% for each type of feeling, as participants could name any number of reasons.

The most common reasons given by participants for calls being considered annoying or distressing were that they had received a lot of calls already, or else that there was no reply when they picked up the phone. Annoyance was also due to the unnecessary interruption and waste of time, while calls perceived to be ‘scam’ calls were more likely to be considered distressing.

Calls were most likely to be considered useful if they were sales calls, even if the subject was not of personal interest, while calls were more likely to be seen as not a problem if the caller was polite and not pushy.

Figure 3.4: Reasons for attitudes to nuisance calls

Reasons given for feeling about call	All participants	Feeling about call			
		Annoying	Distressing	Useful	No problem
They keep phoning/ Have had many of these calls	14%	16%	22%	4%	3%
Silent calls/ No reply	13%	15%	20%	-	4%
Disturbed unnecessarily/ Had to stop what I was doing	11%	14%	7%	1%	1%
Irritating/ Frustrating/ Annoying/ Nuisance	10%	12%	16%	-	1%
Subject/product not relevant/of interest to me	8%	8%	4%	13%	13%
Time wasting	7%	8%	1%	-	1%
Caller hung up/ Answered phone and hear a click	5%	6%	7%	1%	3%
They do not listen when you say "I'm not interested"	5%	5%	7%	-	1%
I didn't ask them to call	4%	5%	2%	1%	-
Scam call	4%	4%	8%	3%	-
Unknown caller	4%	4%	6%	-	1%
They try to sell you something/ Sales calls	3%	3%	2%	14%	4%
Not suitable time (Sunday, late at night, early morning etc.)	3%	4%	4%	1%	-
Could not understand caller/ accent	3%	3%	2%	-	-
They weren't pushy/ No hard sell/ Accepted no for answer	2%	-	1%	1%	10%
Caller was polite/ courteous/ pleasant	2%	-	1%	1%	11%
Insurance/ PPI	1%	2%	2%	5%	1%
Upsetting/ Distressing/ Frightening	1%	1%	14%	-	-
Caller withheld number	1%	2%	6%	-	-

All comments above 1% shown, or where higher level by attitude

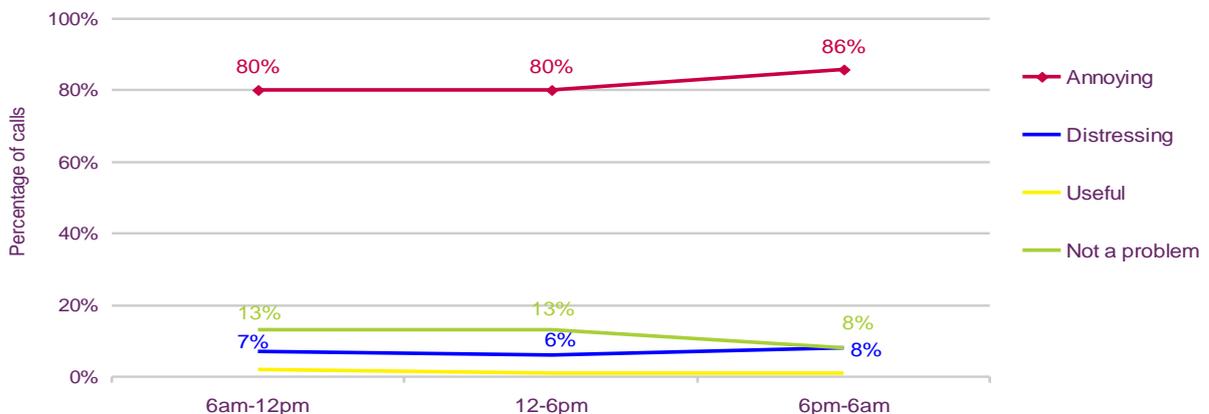
Base: All nuisance calls received by UK panel panellists with landlines Jan-Feb 2014 (n=7112, 5765, 443, 96, 889)

Attitudes to nuisance calls by time of day received

Figure 3.5 (below) shows participants' attitudes to nuisance calls by the time period during the day that they received the calls. Calls between 6pm and 6am were more likely to be considered annoying than those at other times of the day, and also less likely to be 'not a problem'.

Compared with 2013, calls were less likely to be considered annoying or distressing, and more likely to be 'not a problem', between 6am to 6pm

Figure 3.5: Attitudes to nuisance calls by time of day received



Base: All nuisance calls received by UK panel participants with landlines, Jan-Feb 2014 (n=7112)

Appendix 1: Methodology

Methodology

- A UK nationally representative sample of 1266 people with landline telephones in the home were recruited to participate in a diary study to record all nuisance calls personally received on their home landline phones across the four week period 13th January to 9th February 2014.
- To reflect the UK population, the panel was split by whether participants used the internet or not; the online section of the panel was recruited from GfK's Consumer Panel - in line with national online access levels, this constituted the majority of the panel (86%). The offline segment of the panel (14%) was recruited face-to-face in-home.
- During recruitment, and also in the diary instructions to the recruited panellists, potential participants were told that it didn't matter how many or few nuisance calls they received, but that we were just interested in obtaining a representative sample of UK landline users in order to accurately evaluate the incidence of these types of calls.
- Panellists were given a paper diary and instructions about how to complete it. They were asked to complete a page of the diary, in as much detail as possible, straight after each nuisance call that they personally received on their home landline telephone. The diaries were 40 pages in length and panellists were told that they could contact GfK to request further pages if required (an example of the diary page is shown in Appendix 4).
- The target diary completion level was n=800 participants; the actual number of completed diaries was n=926. Data was weighted back to the UK nationally representative landline owning population by demographics and internet access.

Significant differences:

- For reporting purposes, differences are noted in the report only when they are significant – so if they are not mentioned there is no significant difference. Differences are noted within sub-groups e.g. age, rather than between sub-group and total sample. They have been reported at the 99% confidence level, meaning that we are 99% certain that there is a real difference between the two results; this is the most stringent standard test of significance.
- Whether or not a difference is significant is determined by the sample sizes of the two scores, and also by how close the two scores are to the average score; for example, the difference between two percentages needs to be greater the closer the percentages are to 50% in order to be significant. Additionally, the weighting of the data can have a slight impact on the significance testing.

Appendix 2: Panel sampling frame & quotas

Panel Sampling Frame (Landline owners)

		GfK Panel	Ofcom Quotas ¹⁸
Gender	Male	48%	47%
	Female	52%	53%
Age	16-24	11%	11%
	25-34	16%	16%
	35-44	20%	20%
	45-54	16%	16%
	55-64	17%	37%
	65+	20%	
Working Status	Working full time (30+ hrs)	41%	41%
	Working part time (8-29 hrs)	17%	17%
	Not working - retired	23%	23%
	Not working - unemployed	4%	4%
	Not working - student	5%	5%
	Not working - housewife/ disabled/ other	10%	10%
SEG	AB	28%	28%
	C1	30%	30%
	C2	19%	19%
	DE	23%	23%
Region (GOR)	East Midlands	7%	7%
	Eastern	10%	10%
	London	12%	12%
	North East	4%	4%
	North West	10%	10%
	Scotland	8%	8%
	South East	15%	15%
	South West	10%	10%
	Ulster / Northern Ireland	3%	3%
	Wales	5%	5%
	West Midlands	9%	9%
	Yorks & Humber	8%	8%

¹⁸ Taken from the Ofcom Technology Tracker, Wave 2 2013

Appendix 3: Panel questionnaires

Recruitment questionnaire

	INTRODUCTION: Hello my name is from GfK NOP Research. We are conducting research on behalf of the Office of Communications (Ofcom) into unwanted calls. Unwanted calls can include silent calls, recorded messages left by companies, or marketing/sales calls. May I ask you a few questions? This will only take a few minutes.		
S6	Do you have a landline telephone in your home that you use to make and receive calls? SINGLE CODE	(54)	
	Yes	1	S7
	No	2	
	Don't know	3	CLOSE
S7	Do you or does anyone in your household have broadband internet access at home e.g. via a PC, laptop or tablet? SINGLE CODE	(55)	
	Yes, have access and use at home	1	CLOSE
	Yes have access but don't use at home	2	
	No, do not have access at home	3	S8
	Don't know	4	
S8	Thinking about your landline phone, in the last 6 months have you personally received a silent call? This means when you answer the call you hear silence - if a recorded message was heard, please do not count this as a silent call. SINGLE CODE	(56)	
	Yes	1	S9
	No	2	
	Don't know/can't remember	3	S10
S9	On average, how many silent calls does your household receive on the landline each month? SINGLE CODE	(57)	
	None	1	
	1	2	
	2	3	
	3	4	
	4	5	
	5	6	
	6-10	7	
	11-20	8	
	21-30	9	
	30+	10	
	Don't know/can't remember	11	S10
S10	We are looking for people to record a few details of any calls like this, and other types of unwanted calls, that they receive over a period four weeks in the new year. This research will help Ofcom to understand how many of these types of calls are occurring, and whether Ofcom needs to take any action regarding the companies making them. It doesn't matter how many or how few calls you receive, or if you receive none at all, we are just looking for a representative selection of UK households to participate. Would you be interested in taking part in this project? SINGLE CODE	(58)	
	Yes	1	S11
	No	2	CLOSE
S11	Can I just check if you are likely to be away from home for more than 5 days and nights during the period from 13th January to 9th February ? SINGLE CODE	(59)	
	Yes	1	THANK & CLOSE
	No	2	INTRO
	Don't know	3	

INTRO	<p>Thank you for agreeing to help us with this research. We would like you to fill out details in this diary for each unwanted call you receive.</p> <p>Please note we are only interested in calls received on your home landline, and calls that are answered by you personally, and over the period 13th January to 9th February. We would like you to send the diary back to us as soon as possible after the 9th of February. We will send you a postage-paid, addressed envelope in early February that you can use to send us your diary.</p>		
S12	<p>Just to confirm, are you happy to take part? SINGLE CODE</p>	<p>(60)</p> <p>Yes 1</p> <p>No 2</p>	<p>CONTINUE</p> <p>THANK & CLOSE</p>
CL INTRO	<p>We would just like a few more details in order to classify the information we receive from you. Please note that your individual information will not be passed on to anyone, it will just be used to classify your responses.</p>		
CL4	<p>Do you currently use a service provided by your communications provider or other equipment to block unwanted calls e.g. BT's anonymous call rejection service, TrueCall or BT Handset? READ OUT. MULTI-CODE EXCEPT NO/DK</p> <p>Yes, Truecall or other similar service 1</p> <p>Yes, BT handset with caller blacklisting facilities 2</p> <p>Yes, service provided by communications provider e.g. anonymous caller rejection 3</p> <p>Yes, other service (please specify _____) 4</p> <p>No 5</p> <p>Don't know 6</p>	<p>(64)</p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p> <p>4</p> <p>5</p> <p>6</p>	CL8a
CL8a	<p>Often, when signing up to a new product or service, such as a credit card or travel insurance, the terms and conditions include a section asking if you are happy to receive further marketing information.</p> <p>How often, if at all, do you opt-out of receiving any further marketing information, for example by ticking a box saying you do not want to be contacted?</p> <p>REVERSE SCALE EXCEPT DK, OR PROMPT TO CODE. SINGLE CODE</p> <p>Always 1</p> <p>Sometimes 2</p> <p>Hardly ever 3</p> <p>Never 4</p> <p>Don't know 5</p>	<p>(66)</p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p> <p>4</p> <p>5</p>	CL8b
CL8b	<p>And, [using the same scale], how often, if at all, do you give out your home landline number when asked for a phone number by businesses or charities? (for example on websites or application forms)?</p> <p>REVERSE SCALE EXCEPT DK OR PROMPT TO CODE. SINGLE CODE</p> <p>Always 1</p> <p>Sometimes 2</p> <p>Hardly ever 3</p> <p>Never 4</p> <p>Don't know 5</p>	<p>(67)</p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p> <p>4</p> <p>5</p>	CL5
CL5	<p>In the last year, have you complained to Ofcom or the Telephone Preference Service (TPS) or to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) or to your landline provider about unwanted calls? MULTI CODE</p> <p>Yes, to Ofcom 1</p> <p>Yes, to the TPS 2</p> <p>Yes, to the ICO 3</p> <p>Yes, to landline provider 4</p> <p>No, none of these 5</p> <p>Don't know 6</p>	<p>(65)</p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p> <p>3</p> <p>4</p> <p>5</p> <p>6</p>	CL7
	<p>Thank you for your time. Once again, please be assured that all your responses will be used anonymously.</p>		



Recruitment letter

January 2014

Dear Diary Panellist

Thank you for agreeing to take part in our research on unwanted calls - your participation is very much appreciated.

With this letter you will have received a diary in which we would like you to write down details of any unwanted calls you personally receive on your home landline phone between **Monday 13th January** and **Sunday 9th February**. Please also include any of these sorts of calls that you receive on your home landline answer phone during this period. The first pages of the diary include some more information about the types of calls we are interested in.

It doesn't matter how many or how few of these calls you receive, as long as you record the date, time and as many details as you can of all the ones you do get. We suggest that you keep the diary next to your landline phone so that you can write down the details straight away during or after any unwanted calls.

There is space in the diary to record around 35 unwanted calls. If you receive more than this over the four week period, please continue to record them - just write down the call details in the same format on a separate piece of paper, or you can contact GfK and we will post you another booklet.

We would also like you to mark the days and regular time periods when you are **not at home** over these four weeks (on page 3 of the diary) - this is to help us understand why some people receive more unwanted calls than others.

Once again, thank you for your participation.

Diary introduction

Dear Diary Panellist

Thank you again for agreeing to help us find out more about unwanted calls. It is very important that you write down as many details as you can about every unwanted call that you **receive yourself** on your **home landline telephone** (we are not interested in calls received by other people in your household, nor in calls to your mobile phone). Please also include any of these sorts of calls that you receive on your **home answer phone**.

It doesn't matter how many or how few of these calls you receive, as long as you record any you do get. The time period we are interested in is from **Monday 13th January to Sunday 9th February 2014** inclusive - please do not record any calls received before or after this time.

There are some simple steps to follow when completing each diary page:

- ✓ Please answer **all 9 questions for each unwanted call**, even if the answer is 'Don't know'.
- ✓ If the call does not fit into a category provided at **Q3 please tick 'other'** and write in your answer.
- ✓ At **Q5** we ask you to **write down the name of the company calling** - if this is not mentioned by the caller please remember to ask.
- ✓ At **Q6** we ask that you write down the phone number you were called from as this helps us track the source of the call. If the caller's telephone number is not available on your handset, **please dial 1471 for free after the call and record the number if it is available**. If this doesn't work, please tick 'Number not available'. If the number shows up as international or withheld, please tick the corresponding boxes.
- ✓ At **Q7** we are especially interested in understanding whether the unwanted calls you have received are **from organisations which you have dealt with before or you may have previously given consent to contact you**. By giving consent we mean things such as ticking or unticking boxes on leaflets, forms or on the internet saying that you give permission for a company or their trusted partner to contact you about products or services they are offering.
- ✓ At **Q8** please tick **all the boxes that apply to record how you felt** about the call.
- ✓ At **Q9** please tell us what it was about the call that made you tick the box/es at Q8

As you will see from the diary pages in this booklet, we have split out different types of unwanted calls that you might receive:

- 1. A live marketing/sales call from a business or organisation** There is a real person trying to sell you something, sign you up to something (including charitable donations) or promoting a product or service.
- 2. A recorded marketing/sales message promoting a product or service** When you answer you hear a recorded message (rather than a real person) trying to sell you something or promoting a product or a service. The message may also ask you to press a button to speak to someone.

3. A recorded message saying that a business or organisation has tried to contact you When you answer you will hear a recorded message saying that an organisation has tried to contact you, but that when the call was put through there was no-one available to speak to you. These normally happen when a call centre dialling system automatically rings you but when you answer there is no operator available to take the call. There is nothing being sold or offered in this message. Please make sure you listen to the whole of the message to check whether the name of the organisation is given.

4. Silent calls: this is where there seems to be no one on the line, although you may hear someone talking in the background (but they are not talking to you). *If you get a silent call where there seems to be no-one on the line, it is important that you do not put the phone down straight away. Please say something (for example, 'Hello') and then hold on for at least 5 seconds to see if a recorded message or person comes on the line. If this doesn't happen then please record it as a silent call.*

5. Some other type of call that you do not want from a business or organisation.

During or by the end of the diary period, could you please complete the following:

If you were away from your home for a whole day (e.g. left home before 9am and returned after 9pm or did not return that night) during the time you were keeping this diary, please mark with a cross (X) the day or days that you were away.

	MON	TUES	WEDS	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
January	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	27	28	29	30	31		
February						1	2
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

And using the grid below, please let us know if you were regularly not at home during any of these time periods. For example, if you were regularly out on Wednesday evenings, please cross the corresponding box below. Please also include here the regular time periods when you were at work in another location (i.e. not working at home).

	MON	TUES	WEDS	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
Morning							
Afternoon							
Evening (up to 10pm)							

Thank you - this will help us to understand differences in the number of unwanted calls people are receiving.

Diary page

1. Date of call: Jan/ Feb
 (please write in date & cross out one month)

2. Time of call:
 (please tick one) 6am-12pm 12pm-6pm 6pm-6am

3. Type of call (Tick one of the boxes and describe below)
 Please see explanation at the front of this diary if unsure of call type.

- Live marketing or sales call**
- Recorded marketing/sales message promoting a product or service**
- Recorded message saying a company has tried to contact you**
- Silent** (please say hello and wait for at least 5 seconds to check)
- Other** e.g. market research (please write in)

4. Product or service being promoted or sold, if any: (Please write in)

5. Name of company calling: _____
 (You can ask for this if it is not given)

6. Phone number of caller: _____
 (Please call **1471** - for free - and write down phone number, OR tick a box below)

- Number not available** **International number** **Number withheld**

7. If the name of the organisation is known have you... Yes No Not sure

Ever dealt with this organisation before?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Given this organisation permission to call you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Feeling about call: (Please tick all appropriate)

Annoying **Distressing** **Useful** **Not a problem**

9. Just briefly, why did you feel that?
