## BUSINESS BASICS FOR CATALOG RETAILERS

Catalog retail is a world all it's own.  Many considerations that other retailers don't have to deal with are of utmost importance to a catalog retailer. To name a few, the ordering process, warehousing and shipping must be streamlined for maximum efficiency. Maintaining a top notch inventory control and receiving department is also very crucial to business success.  Above all, however, a catalog retailer must have a quality business phone system. Considering the fact that the majority of customers will reach you over the phone, it is paramount to be able to not only handle call volume during peak times, but also to provide your customers service representatives with the features they need to do their job well. Business phone systems should be capable of not only putting your customers in touch with you, but also offer routing flexibility, voicemail and forwarding options for the administrative side of your company. Often, the difference maker for catalog retailers is not the products they sell, but the service behind those products. People who want to buy will have questions regarding an item that a simple picture and brief description will not answer. Most companies have service reps who take orders and product specialists who are familiar with the inventory. It is essential for the product specialists to have access to a phone system that will accurately and easily allow them to receive and transfer calls between departments. After the initial contact by the sales representatives, the most common transfer of waiting customers will be to product specialists and hopefully back to the sales reps. A customer who is dropped accidentally during this transfer is likely to not call back. Additionally, customers who are made to hold for extended periods of time without an automated message thanking them for their patience are a primary example of lost revenue that could be curtailed by the proper business phone system. All in all, a well thought out business phone system is an integral necessity for any company, but it is especially important for catalog retailers.

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