



More Detailed Information on Discrepancies with the Call Report:

Sensing whether an answer has been made by an answering machine, a voice mailbox or a live person is not an exact science and each of these three possibilities have different characteristics that further complicate the process.

Basically the decision is based on timing. If the initial answer is a short duration and then there is silence then the system decides that it was a live answer and begins to play the prompt. If the initial answer duration is for more than a few seconds then a decision is made that a voice mailbox or answering machine has answered and the system waits for a period of 3.5 seconds of silence before playing the prompt.

Where errors start to show up are if a live person answers with a radio or television blasting out in close proximity to the phone then there is no period of silence and therefore the message may never play and since the system could not sense a "short duration answer" then it decides that the call was answered by an answering machine and will so mark the column.

Also if the person says hello every few seconds the message may never play either. We have run tests before with users where we called their cell phone and their desk phone. If the user answered one of them, and allows the other to continue ringing, we have found that the message will not play until the ringing stops. In this case, the call report will say that an answering machine answered the call since there was not a short duration of sound and then silence.

Another thing that can happen is that if the answering machine message has a short duration of sound and then a period of silence for a few seconds and then picks up again then the system will read this as a live person and play the prompt. According to the length of the prompt vs. the balance of the answering machine message you will have a recording of silence or of a partial message on the answering machine.

In voice mailboxes whereby it is necessary to enter a mailbox number the system will not do this. However, as soon as there is a period of silence the prompt will be played to dead air space.

ALERTNOW Technical Support


Rapid Notification Service™
(800) 213-7168
admin@alertnow.com

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