



INDUSTRY PROFILE: CALL CENTRE INDUSTRY

Vital Facts

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| 4000 call centres in Australia |
| 225 000 employees 2.2% of labour force |
| Estimated value \$8.8 billion |
| Handle 66% of customer contacts |

Definition of a call centre:

A call centre uses telephone and computer technology to deliver services to customers that perform in bound and out bound services. In bound call centres generally perform servicing functions and out bound call centres perform telemarketing functions.

There are 2 types of call centres

* **In house Call Centres**

Directly employ staff in a specific section of a Company to service customers. For example Vodafone and AAPT perform call centre work themselves.

* **Contact Call Centres**

Perform outsourced work for companies variously on a permanent basis, a specific campaign or function basis, an overflow basis or to provide support to in-house work. For example Telstra outsource most of their call centre work to contact call centres.

Inside the call centre

- * Up to 400 people
- * Generally work 7 days a week, many 24 hours a day
- * Calls automatically channeled to the employee from a queue
- * Type, length and duration of call are all measured
- * All staff are under electronic surveillance
- * Majority of staff are female, about 70%
- * Average age is 23 and more than half workforce is under 34
- * Around 30% have tertiary qualifications
- * Average length of service is about 2 years

Issues for employees at call centres

- * Not being able to provide quality customer service because of tight adherence measures that mean that conversations have to be cut short.
- * Workplace environment
- * Stress
- * Monitoring
- * Lack of Rest breaks
- * Remuneration
- * Significant at risk component
- * Lack of compensation for out of standard hours work
- * Minimum wages, from \$27000
- * Lack of family friendly conditions

Award Coverage

In 2003, an award was made covering the contact call centre industry. The award was negotiated through the ACTU and took about 2 years of hard work. The award provides recognised competency based classification structure and a safety net of wages and conditions.