

The real cost of the retail WISMO problem... and how to reduce it

There are now more shoppers online than ever before, and new consumer habits that are here to stay. The influx of customer enquiries and the demand on inundated contact centres are likely to be a permanent feature, unless retailers and brands take action.

81% of customers say tracking is important to them

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We've found that, for some retailers, 80% of all customer contacts ask 'where is my order' (WISMO) or 'where is my return' (WISMR).

Not only that, but a staggering **97% of consumers** we surveyed stated that knowing where their delivery is, is important.

Customers want to be able to access delivery or returns tracking information, and if they can't find this easily, they'll be reaching out to you, the retailer. It's no wonder that WISMO and WISMR are front of mind for lots of teams internally, from customer service teams dealing with the enquiries to the logistics and carrier teams responsible for a smooth final mile delivery.

So, here's the real cost of WISMO, and some tips to help you reduce it.



First, the baseline for customer enquiries

When weighing up the true cost of WISMO, there are two key factors to look at:

1. The cost you can see

On average we find the cost for each WISMO or WISMR contact often sits between £4 and £6.

Working out how much these contacts are costing you at a first estimation is pretty simple; look at how many contacts you're getting in a set time period – if you categorise your calls, see how many contacts are related to tracking enquiries. Then establish, even as an estimate, how long it takes you to resolve one tracking enquiry in contact centre agent minutes – then work out how many full-time employees this takes per year.

Here is the direct monetary cost of your WISMO and WISMR calls.

2. The cost that you can't see (as easily)

This is where identifying the real cost of WISMO and WISMR becomes a little more complex.

45% of customers won't shop again following a poor delivery experience, which equals a high potential for churn and serious revenue lost. Plus, every disappointing delivery experience or unresolved customer enquiry turns a promoter into a detractor – and 93% of customers read online reviews before buying.

It's important to consider falls in other CX metrics you're tracking, such as NPS and CSAT, as well as negative reviews (both onsite, offsite and on social media) – all of this massively impacts brand reputation, loyalty and new customer acquisition.

It's not all doom and gloom though; 90% of customers would choose to shop again following a positive delivery experience. And that's what to strive for.

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What causes the contacts?

We know that high WISMO and WISMR rates are clearly expensive problems to have. But this is where we have to look to the source.

The two most common causes of WISMO and WISMR are:

- Teams don't have access to delivery performance insight they can act on, meaning they can't handle issues proactively or keep customers informed of any delays or issues.
- Customers don't have easy access to the delivery or returns insight they need, and so are having to reach out.

A high volume of tracking-related customer contacts are often a direct outcome of a poor customer post-purchase experience and the limited visibility retailers and brands have on delivery status and performance. Now, this is where we can make the positive, impactful change.

Strategies for WISMO reduction

So, how can retailers do it, in practice?



Short chats, deep insight, big impact.

Every episode of the Sorted Retail Sessions podcast taps into behind-the-scenes (and usually hard to reach) knowledge from the people powering the industry. Debate, speculation, strategy and honest discussion – on demand.

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Call Deflection.

The concept of 'call deflection' conjures misleading images; customers being bounced through different systems, being sent round the houses by pre-recorded robots telling them to 'press the hash key', trying to speak clearly to interactive voice response systems that don't seem to understand. But call deflection isn't about avoiding calls at all. It's about working smarter, not harder, to create a 5* customer experience.

Audio and phone contacts are the highest cost channel by far, and most resource intensive too. Agents can only deal with one customer at a time by phone, requiring long queues at times of high volume, and slow systems delay resolutions even longer, with customers sat in silence or on hold whilst the operator tries to manoeuvre through inefficient portals.

Communicating with your customers through lower cost or more efficient channels immediately helps to streamline customer service operations. With live chat or WhatsApp, an agent can handle multiple enquiries at once.

Going one step further and allowing your customers to self-serve the information they need means they often don't have to contact you at all (more on that point later...).

With the continued rise of the omnichannel contact centre, in line with customer expectations rising exponentially, there are plenty of options for savvy retailers to choose from. Whether it's chat, chatbots, emails, SMS, social channels or more, the important takeaway here is that every retailer or brand must pick the channels most relevant to their specific customers.

Author and retail commentator Miya Knights told the **Sorted Retail Sessions podcast** that 'retailers mistakenly think omnichannel means that they need to be everywhere – but they don't have to be everywhere, they just have to be where their customers expect them to be'.

Re-commerce brand musicMagpie is a firm believer in ensuring contact centres speak to shoppers in the right places. Johnathan Beirne, musicMagpie Head of Customer, chatted to us and shared advice in a **blog about how he manages his busy service channels**.

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Self-service & automation

Self-service allows your customers to access the insight they need wherever they are in their post-purchase journey.

With **post-purchase tracking software**, you should get access to branded tracking pages as standard, so customers can consume fully-branded updates at their whim regardless of which carrier is delivering their parcel. Alternatively, embedding tracking directly in your own apps or websites keeps all interactions exactly where you want them.

Whatever method you choose, you'll be sure to increase digital and brand engagement and truly own your delivery experience. Forrester sums this up perfectly:

"Great customer self-service delivers much more than just call deflection. If done properly, it allows you to digitally engage with your customers to empower them with answers and advice that deepen their engagement with the brand — positively influencing their satisfaction, retention, and advocacy".

But the pull of putting the power in the customer's hands by giving them access to their own tracking hub doesn't need to be the only way.

Automation can be used to embed tracking updates directly into your automated comms channels, ready to update customers whenever they ask. For example, if you use chatbots through onsite live chats, the bots could share the link to a tracking page helping your customers without any agent interaction at all.

Even better, there's no need to wait for the customer to enquire at all.

Automated updates, communications and notifications keep your customers informed every step of the way; meaning the shopper knows where the delivery or return is before they even ask. Post-purchase tracking providers will effortlessly support this, whether that's through comms partners or triggers via API or webhooks. With no effort, you're keeping your customers completely up to date.

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Getting actionable, accurate delivery performance data and insight can be tricky

Informed and proactive teams

Now contact volumes have been reduced, you can make sure your customer service teams have the info they need to quickly and efficiently resolve any WISMO or WISMR queries that do arise.

Getting actionable, accurate delivery performance data and insight can be tricky and, often, we hear that retailers and brands only hear about issues when the phone rings. They struggle to access the tracking they need, having to log into multiple systems to check on progress – which negatively impacts both average handling time and first contact resolution.

With **post-purchase tracking software**, you get access to CS-friendly dashboards and delivery performance reporting that keeps teams on track of issues and performance across all carriers.

Teams should be able to set-up escalation management, such as alerts and warnings when a parcel 'may be late' or 'is missing', allowing agents to proactively resolve issues before they touch customers or NPS and CSAT scores.

Post-Purchase Tracking And Communications
= Customer Contact Reduction.

We've included a calculator in your toolkit so you can check how much time and money you could save with post-purchase tracking software.

A fully connected delivery experience

Interested in how much time and money you could save on WISMO and WISMR reduction, with post-purchase tracking software like Sorted Track?

[Book a chat](#)

About Sorted

Good delivery experiences aren't good enough

It takes an outstanding delivery experience to differentiate.

And that's where Sorted's Delivery Experience Platform comes in.

Retailers and brands are supported by our industry-leading tech when they **deliver** goods and **analyse** post-purchase performance, and when they empower customers to **track** deliveries and **return or exchange** parcels effortlessly.

Retailers around the world trust our Delivery Experience Platform to foster business growth through five-star delivery experiences, and the results speak for themselves. Sorted customers convert more at the checkout, build stronger connections and engagement with shoppers, and use delivery experience as a tool to drive loyalty, sales, insight and, ultimately, competitive edge.

Ship

Get total control of your carrier management & offer your customers better delivery choice.

[Find out more](#)

Track

Get all your shipment tracking data in one place & proactively communicate with your customers.

[Find out more](#)

Return

Get labels & automate your entire customer returns process, including refunds and exchanges.

[Find out more](#)



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