Answering Service
Industry Case Study: HVAC

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SAS Knows that **Growth Depends on Availability.**

Even for established HVAC professionals, using voicemail to field missed calls can damage your bottom line. And for people who are just starting out, losing one prospective customer can easily become a make-or-break situation. That's why many HVAC contractors look to Specialty Answering Service to provide exceptional 24/7 live-operator customer support.

> If you've never used a call center, or if you are using a service and want to do a side-by-side comparison, then this HVAC industry analysis of a few of our valued clients will point you in the right direction.
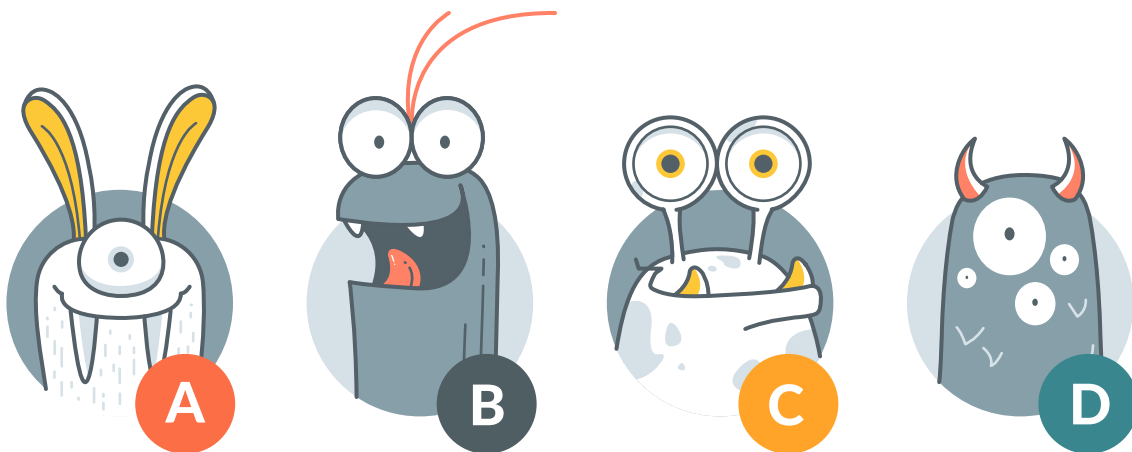
Start with **Programming Basics.**

Succinct, straightforward scripts are the key ingredient to a successful phone call. Whether you're using SAS as an answering service or virtual receptionist, guiding the operators by way of frequently asked questions or specific language to employ will ensure that calls flow smoothly for the customer and operator alike.

We've broken programming down into two parts.

Part 1

Frequently Asked Questions

Part 2

Call Handling Cross Section
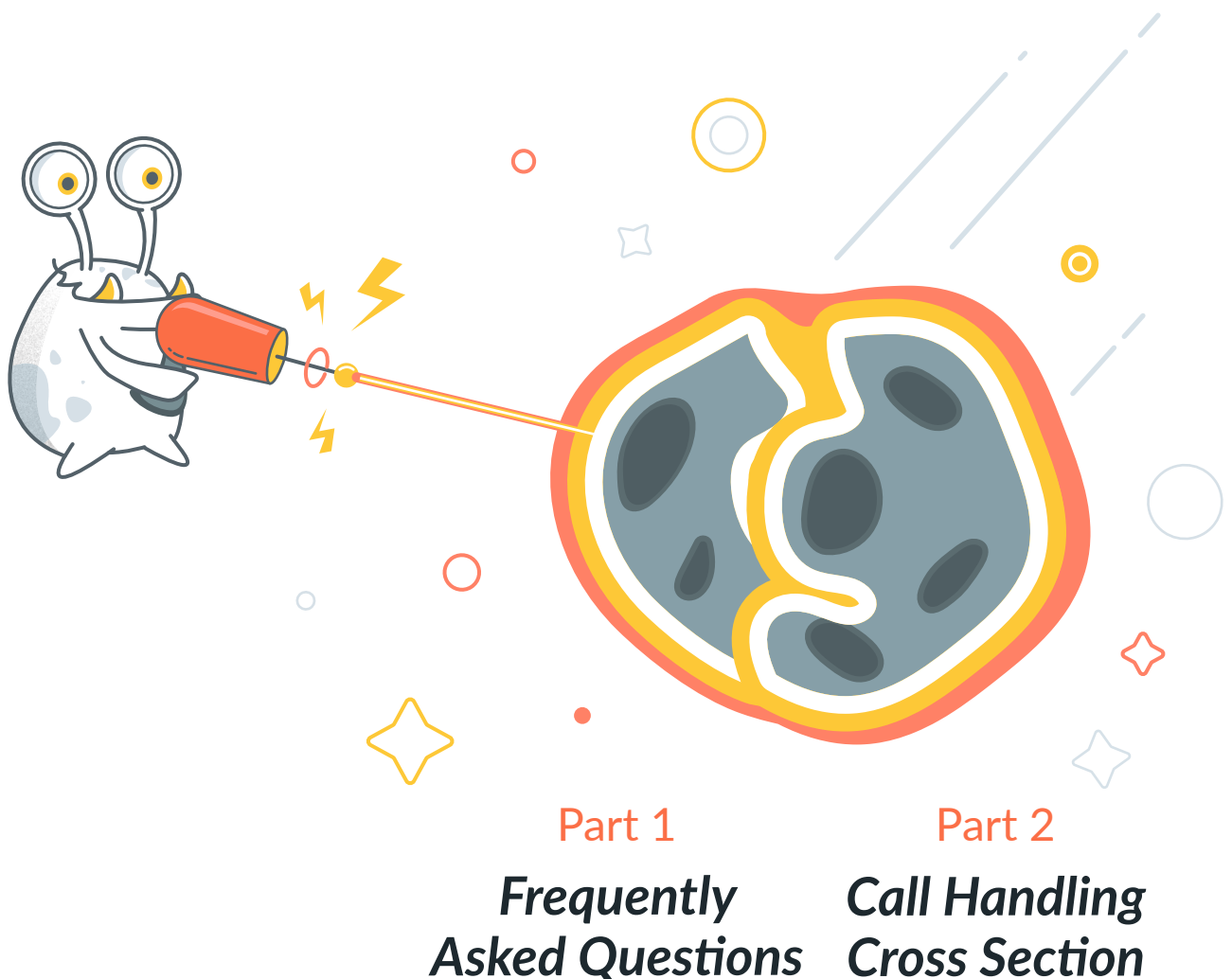
Part 1: *Frequently Asked Questions*

FAQs allow our receptionists to provide general knowledge via phone rather than take a message. The majority of accounts contain details such as location, business hours, phone number, and website. Additional questions are formatted with concise, uncomplicated language.

Here's how four of our HVAC clients personalized their FAQs.

A
- Will the estimate fee go towards my bill?
- What locations do you service?

B
- What services do you
- Do you have 24/7 emergency service?

C
- Is there an after-hours fee?
- Is my flyer promotion still valid?

D
- How much do you charge per hour?
- Is there a fee just to come out?

Charging Just to Come Out: Pricing is usually the first thing that comes to mind when customers call for HVAC service. While cost will vary depending on the issue and length of the appointment, it can be beneficial to include any across-the-board service fees in your FAQs.
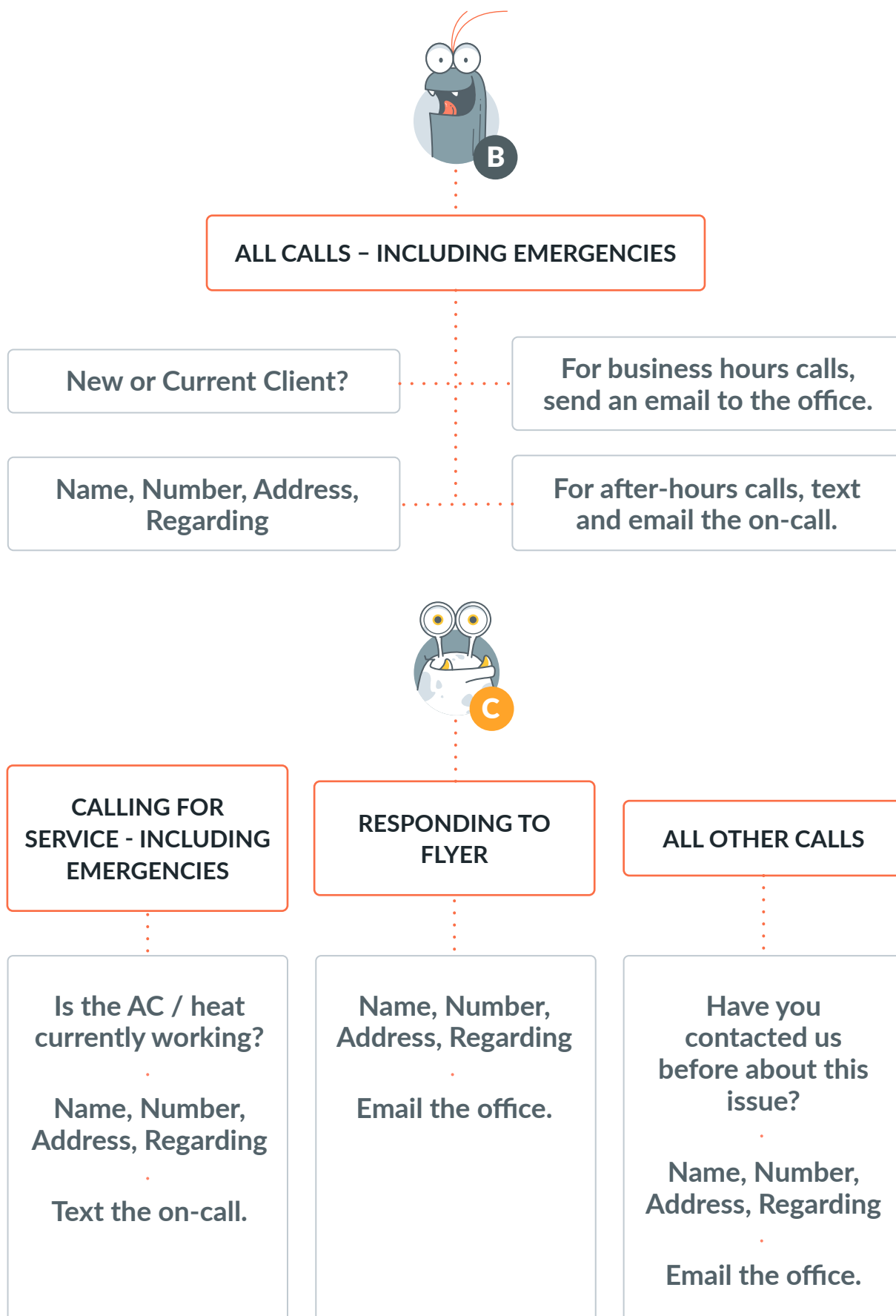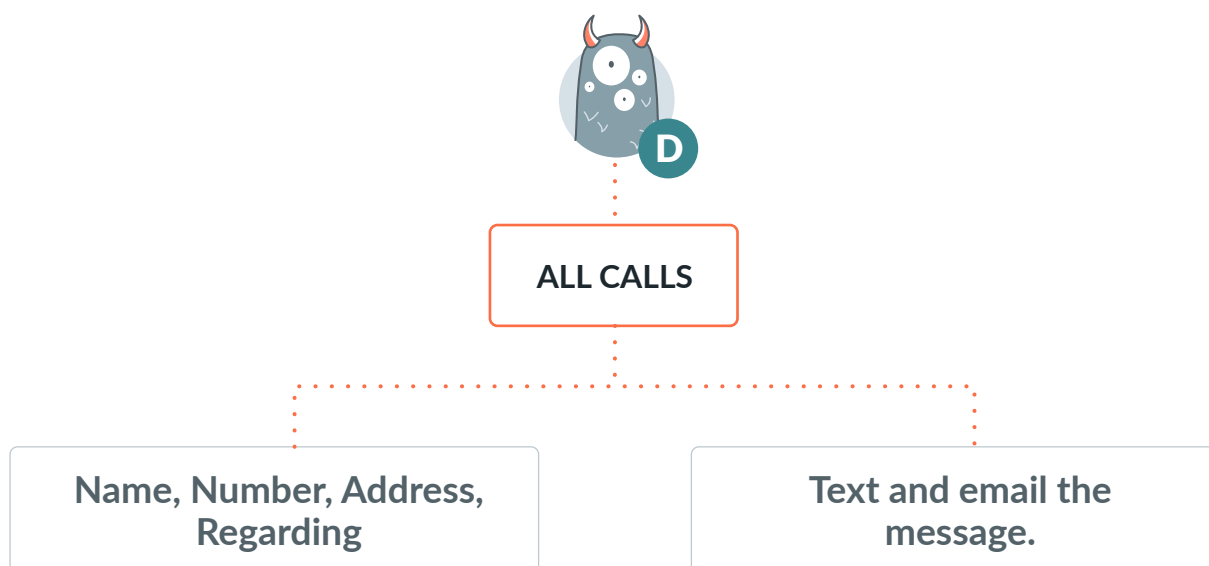
Part 2: *Call Handling Cross Section*

Call handling, or scripting, is what the operators use to interact with your customers. You might have different instructions based on the caller's question or issue, or maybe you want a basic message for all calls.

As you can see below, scripts run from simple lead capture to more involved scenarios.

ALL CALLS – INCLUDING EMERGENCIES

Is this urgent?

Urgent Calls

1. Air or Plumbing?

2. Name, Number, Address, Regarding

3. Is the unit heating / cooling?

4. Send a text and

Appointment Calls Schedule, Cancel, Reschedule

1. Air or Plumbing?

2. Name, Number, Address, Regarding

3. Send a text and email operations.

All Other Calls

1. Air or Plumbing?

2. Name, Number, Address, Regarding

3. Send a text and email operations.

B

ALL CALLS – INCLUDING EMERGENCIES

New or Current Client?

For business hours calls, send an email to the office.

Name, Number, Address, Regarding

For after-hours calls, text and email the on-call.

C

CALLING FOR SERVICE - INCLUDING EMERGENCIES

RESPONDING TO FLYER

ALL OTHER CALLS

Is the AC / heat currently working?

Name, Number, Address, Regarding

Text the on-call.

Name, Number, Address, Regarding

Email the office.

Have you contacted us before about this issue?

Name, Number, Address, Regarding

Email the office.

D

ALL CALLS

Name, Number, Address, Regarding

Text and email the message.

The details above are just the tip of the iceberg. There are all kinds of things that you can add to your script, such as Reach On-Call, Warm Transfers, Appointment Setting, and more.
If you can dream it, there's a good chance that we can make it happen!
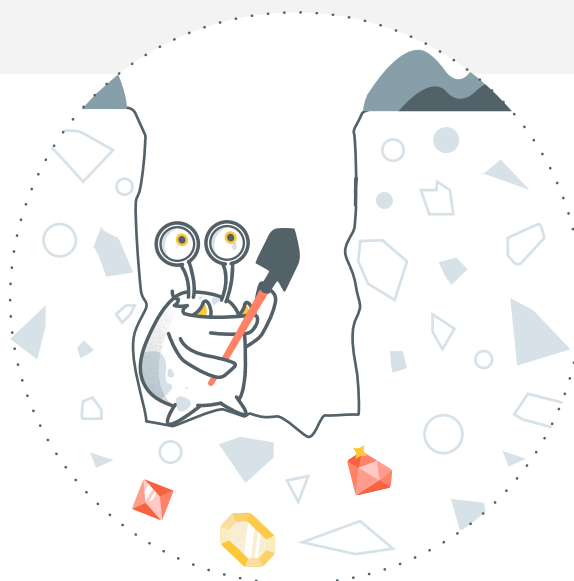
Evaluating Statistics **by Call Type.**

Depending on where you live, inbound call statistics for HVAC companies generally increase when it's hot as the blazes or cold as ice, and decrease during those comfortable weather months.

Understanding your call traffic helps SAS staff accordingly, and the data trend will give you a solid reference point for when to pick up seasonal employees.

You'll also have an indication of which months might cost you a bit more or a bit less so that you can plan ahead from a financial standpoint.

Check out the 2017 call volume breakdown for these four clients.

Whether you're looking for the total number of calls or calls segmented by type, we have you covered. Knowing peak hours will help you determine whether to use SAS 24 hours a day or just for after-hours or overflow support.

January 2017 — 26 calls: 46%, 8%, 8%, 8%, 30%

February 2017 — 42 calls: 22%, 12%, 23%, 12%, 31%

March 2017 — 55 calls: 14%, 18%, 35%, 6%, 27%

April 2017 — 51 calls: 22%, 23%, 33%, 6%, 16%

May 2017 — 62 calls: 23%, 11%, 35%, 5%, 26%

June 2017 — 104 calls: 39%, 13%, 19%, 4%, 25%

July 2017 — 108 calls: 49%, 15%, 11%, 12%, 13%

August 2017 — 84 calls: 35%, 14%, 23%, 11%, 17%

September 2017 — 67 calls: 32%, 12%, 25%, 9%, 22%

October 2017 — 45 calls: 29%, 9%, 29%, 9%, 24%

November 2017 — 52 calls: 14%, 23%, 36%, 6%, 21%

December 2017 — 37 calls: 21%, 19%, 36%, 8%, 16%

LEGEND:

- Emergency
- Service and Other Calls
- Appointments
- Message Ticket
- Info Only – Answered Question, Solicitor, Wrong Number

January 2017 — 69 calls: 16%, 51%, 14%, 6%, 13%

February 2017 — 29 calls: 17%, 62%, 10%, 4%, 7%

March 2017 — 46 calls: 22%, 31%, 19%, 19%, 9%

April 2017 — 104 calls: 22%, 40%, 15%, 5%, 18%

May 2017 — 88 calls: 22%, 59%, 8%, 2%, 9%

June 2017 — 148 calls: 11%, 7%, 3%, 8%, 71%

July 2017 — 164 calls: 12%, 4%, 3%, 10%, 71%

August 2017 — 161 calls: 16%, 11%, 4%, 13%, 56%

September 2017 — 87 calls: 19%, 47%, 13%, 6%, 15%

October 2017 — 80 calls: 12%, 48%, 16%, 8%, 16%

November 2017 — 62 calls: 23%, 35%, 16%, 3%, 23%
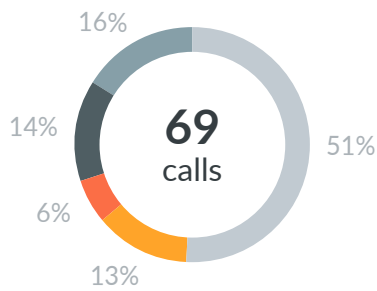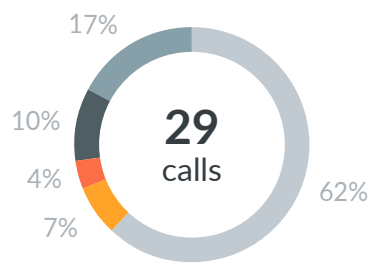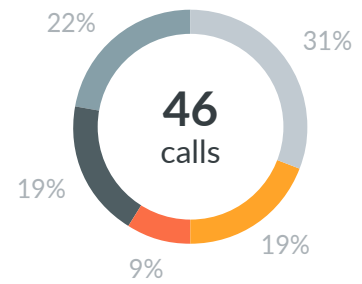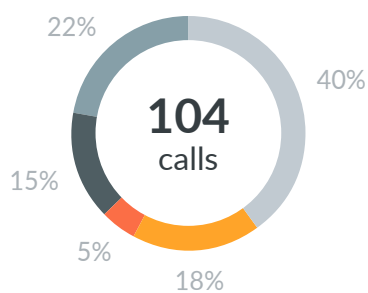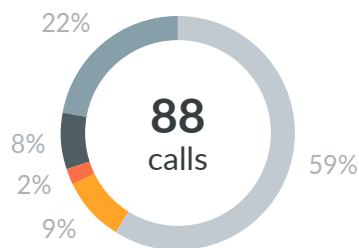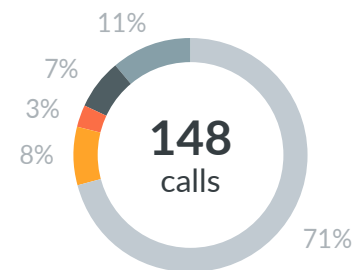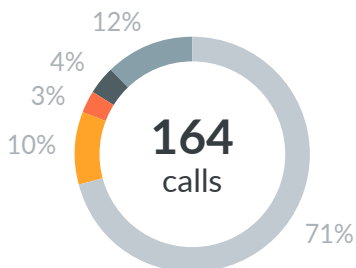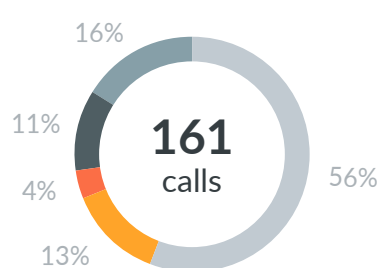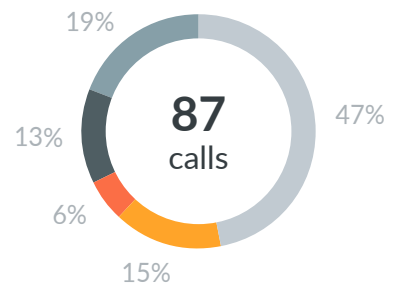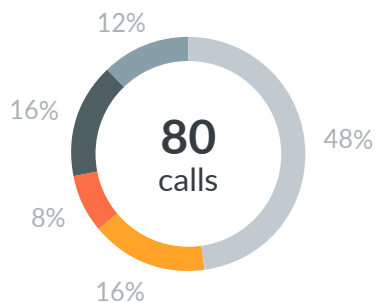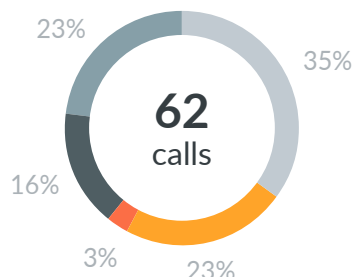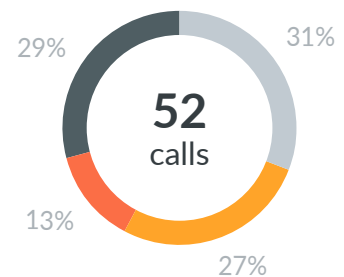
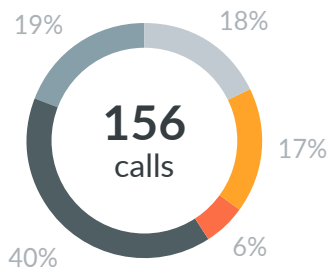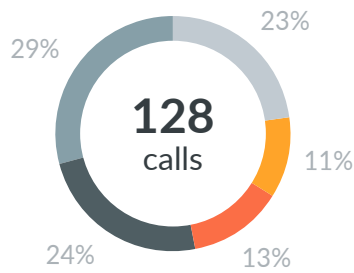December 2017 — 52 calls: 29%, 31%, 13%, 27%

LEGEND:

● Message Sent to On-Call
● Business Hours Calls
● New Client
● Message Ticket
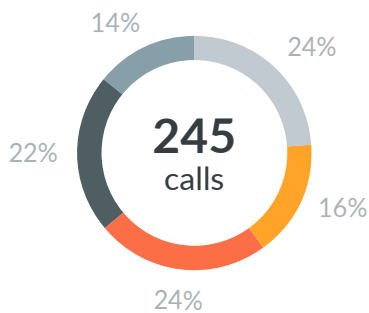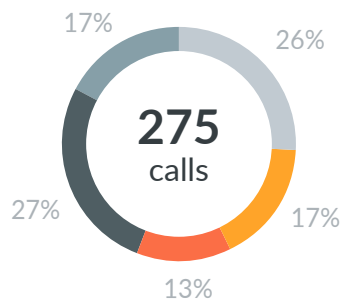● Info Only – Answered Question, Solicitor, Wrong Number

January 2017 — 156 calls
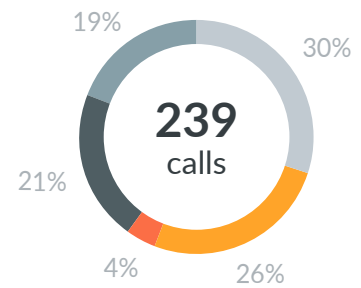- 18%
- 17%
- 6%
- 40%
- 19%

February 2017 — 128 calls
- 23%
- 11%
- 13%
- 24%
- 29%

March 2017 — 193 calls
- 27%
- 11%
- 11%
- 24%
- 27%

April 2017 — 245 calls
- 24%
- 16%
- 24%
- 22%
- 14%

May 2017 — 275 calls
- 26%
- 17%
- 13%
- 27%
- 17%

June 2017 — 239 calls
- 30%
- 26%
- 4%
- 21%
- 19%

July 2017 — 387 calls
- 28%
- 23%
- 6%
- 22%
- 21%

August 2017 — 300 calls
- 21%
- 27%
- 7%
- 23%
- 22%

September 2017 — 322 calls
- 25%
- 28%
- 6%
- 22%
- 19%

October 2017 — 181 calls
- 27%
- 18%
- 7%
- 25%
- 23%

November 2017 — 190 calls
- 26%
- 19%
- 9%
- 19%
- 27%
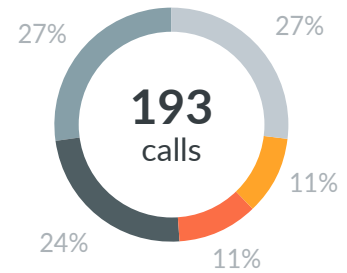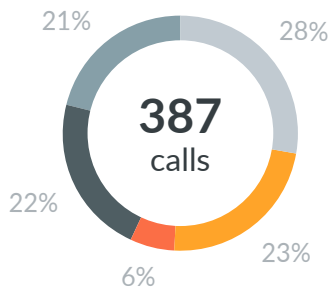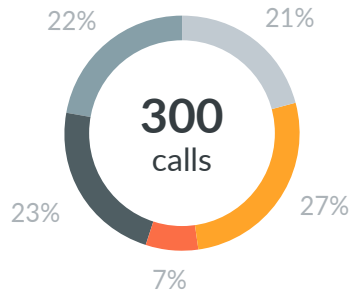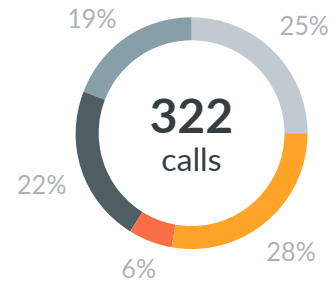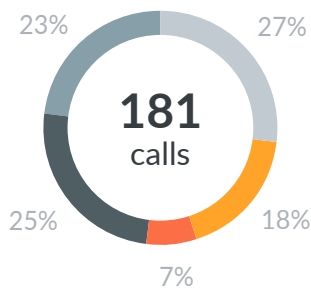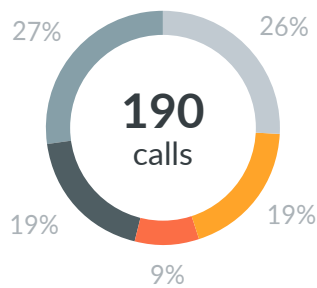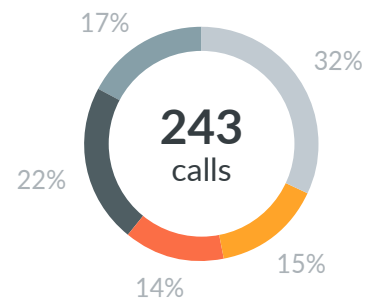
December 2017 — 243 calls
- 32%
- 15%
- 14%
- 22%
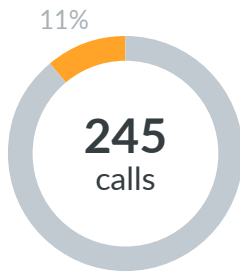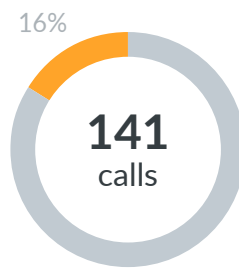- 17%

LEGEND:
- General Service Requests
- Emergency Service
- Advertising Response
- General Messages
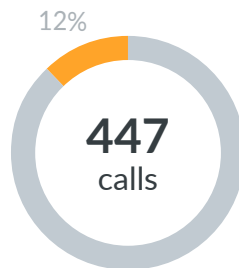- Info Only – Answered Question, Solicitor, Wrong Number
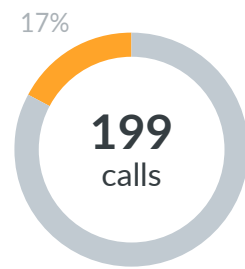
11%

245 calls

89%

January 2017

16%

141 calls

84%

February 2017

17%

199 calls

83%

March 2017

18%

489 calls

82%

April 2017

12%

447 calls

88%

May 2017

9%

631 calls

91%

June 2017

15%

834 calls

85%

July 2017

14%

753 calls

86%

August 2017

23%

1,074 calls

77%

September 2017

14%

479 calls

86%

October 2017

25%

282 calls

75%

November 2017

18%

312 calls

82%
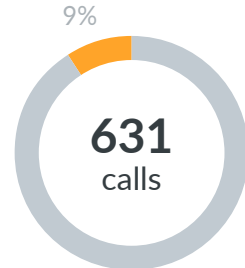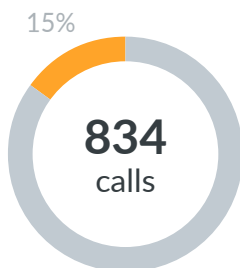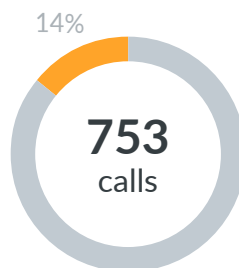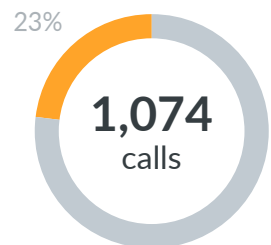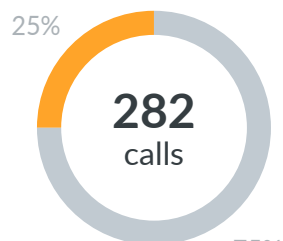
December 2017

LEGEND:

○ Emergency

● Service and Other Calls

Putting it All Together
Call Volume Statistics.

Taking an average of the data for all four HVAC clients, in 2017, we answered approximately:

3,000
CALLS

totaling
7,159
MINUTES

with a typical length of
2.35
MINUTES PER CALL
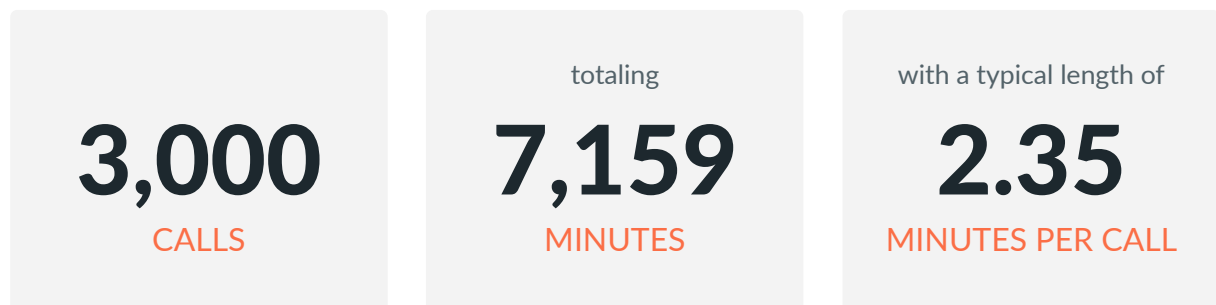
Client	A	B	C	D
Answered calls	1,559	1,528	2,975	5,937
A total minutes	2,878.05	3,611.88	8,657.05	13,487.97
Average call length minutes	1.85	2.36	2.91	2.27

The Cost for **Amazing Service.**

At SAS, we strive to provide cost-effective service that is designed to improve your day-to-day operations and make your life easier.

Based on our data, the average HVAC company can expect to pay around:

$**603**
PER MONTH

&

$**7,240**
PER YEAR

Consider this. According to Glassdoor.com, the average salary for a full-time receptionist is around $29,000. That's more than twice the annual invoice total for our busiest HVAC clients, and it doesn't take into account overhead costs such as insurance and equipment!

Client

AVERAGE COST PER MONTH & PER YEAR

| | Average Monthly Cost |
| | 2017 Invoice Total |

A — 251.46 — 3,017.54

B — 321.00 — 3,851.97

C — 699.66 — 8,395.92

D — 1,141.23 — 13,694.87

$
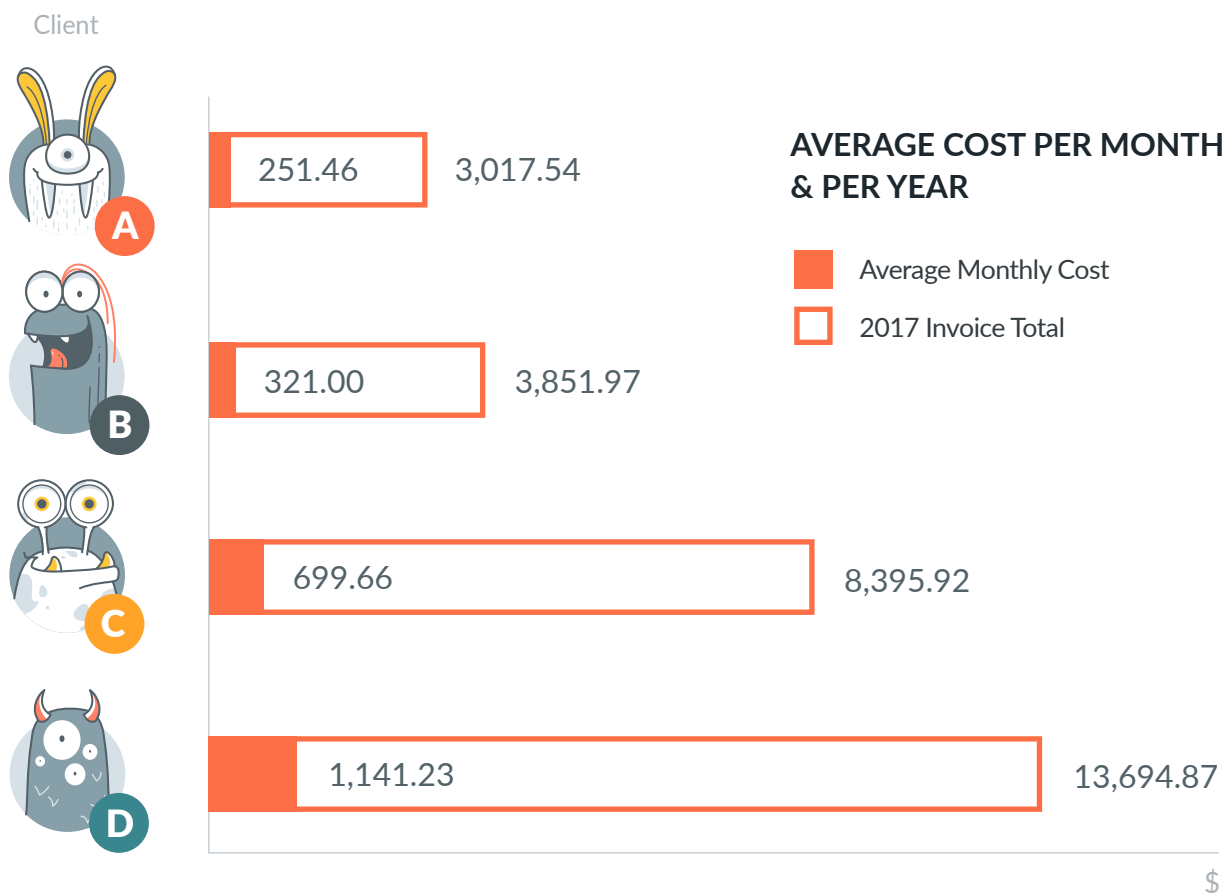
Gaining **Perspective.**

Ultimately, what are the benefits of using Specialty Answering Service over having an answering machine manage your missed calls? Reviewing the call and cost data as a whole, the answer is clear.

If you're looking for ways to justify cost, this generalization will do the trick:

- You receive 3,000 calls per year.

- As a result of your busy schedule, you miss 500 of these calls, or about 17%.

- Instead of leaving you a voicemail, callers just dial the next HVAC contractor in the

- We'll guesstimate that 400 calls would have resulted in a service appointment.

- According to Thumbtack, the average cost for HVAC repair is between $60 and $80 per hour. So, we'll go with $70.

- The average cost of having SAS capture the missed calls might be somewhere around Client C's invoice total. We'll round it up to $8,500.

Now, let's imagine *two scenarios:*

If Services Calls Last 1 Hour

- 400 appointments x $70 = **$28,000**

- $28,000 - $8,500 **=** $19,500

If Service Calls Last 2 Hours

- $70 x 2 = **$140**

- 400 appointments x $140 = **$56,000**

- $56,000 - $8,500 = $47,500
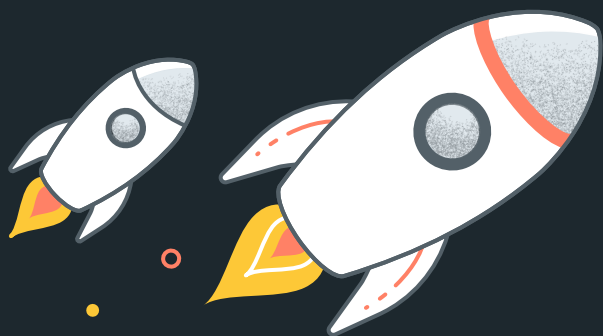
Without SAS:

You lose $**28,000** per year.

You lose $**56,000** per year.

With SAS:

You gain back $19,500 of the revenue that blew out the window when your answering machine picked up.

You'll have $**47,500** net revenue.

Taking You **Farther, Faster.**

With Specialty Answering Service on your side, you will have the freedom to worry less about what you're missing and the time to focus on paving the road ahead.

Contact SAS today, and get ready to open the door to more business, happier customers, and a healthier bottom line!