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01. Introduction



We asked CHOICE members to score 32 everyday annoyances on a scale from zero to 10 - zero meaning the experience did not annoy them at all, and 10 meaning it annoyed them tremendously.

We gathered 400 responses on the first day our email was sent out and the top three complaints were, not surprisingly, all consumer- and/or product-related:

- hidden fees
- having problems returning a faulty product under warranty
- being put on hold or not being able to speak with someone on the phone.

The results are comparable to a similar survey conducted by our US sister publication, Consumer Reports, which found Americans are most peeved by hidden fees, being put on hold/not getting a human on the phone and tailgating (which ranks fourth for Australians).

Overall, Aussies loathe being ignored or disregarded by customer service or sales staff. "I hate having to talk to a robot or go through endless phone menus when all I want is to talk to a real person," says one CHOICE member. "I don't appreciate being told to go to the website while on hold," says another. "If the question could be answered from the website, I wouldn't be calling!"

Other findings

- Women are more irritated than men by most gripes. Men are more likely to be frustrated by



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time-related annoyances such as long queues and traffic jams.

- The older people are, the more annoyed they are with being put on hold and getting no response to their complaints.
- Those who live in rural and regional areas are annoyed by the same things that bug city-dwellers.

Politicians who don't answer questions directly came up frequently in the open section of our survey and traffic grievances were often cited, such as drivers who don't indicate or merge properly. Many members were also annoyed with telemarketers who call their home during dinner, even when they're on the Do Not Call register.

Several decried barking dogs in their neighbourhood as well as uncollected dog poo. Americanisations such as "cell phone" instead of "mobile phone" also rattled some respondents.

<http://www.choice.com.au/reviews-and-tests/money/shopping-and-legal/shopping/what-annoys-australians.aspx>