Call Center Connect Rate Guide 2025

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Section 1

Why Your Calls Aren't Connecting

The Problem:

If you're running an outbound call center, you've likely seen your contact or connect rates fall through the floor. Sometimes you're getting as little as 5% of calls answered—even though your list is good and your agents are trained. What's happening?

It's easy to assume something is wrong with your call center platform, but the real problem is much bigger. Over the past few years, telecom carriers have started blocking or diverting calls before they ever reach the person you're trying to contact.

The Industry Shift:

Here's what's changed:

- The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has taken aggressive steps to crack down on robocalls. Carriers now block or label calls based on patterns like high volume, low answer rates, or user complaints.
- Even if your calls are legal and ethical, they may still be flagged, mislabeled as "Spam Likely," or never delivered at all.

According to the FCC:

"Voice service providers are allowed to block calls based on reasonable analytics designed to identify unwanted calls." (1)

From T-Mobile's Scam and Robocall Report:

"T-Mobile's Scam Shield identified or blocked 41.5 billion scam calls in 2022 — a 75% increase from 2021." (2) (3)

The Real Question:

You've probably noticed this:

- When you call from your cell phone, people answer.
- When you call from your call center platform, they don't.

That's because carriers treat those calls very differently.

Your personal phone number has a good "reputation" and looks normal. But your call center's number, especially if it dials hundreds of times a day, might look suspicious to a carrier's filtering system, even if you're calling for legitimate reasons.

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Section 2

How Carriers Block or Label Your Calls

What Are Carriers Doing?

Major telecom carriers like AT&T, Verizon, and T-Mobile are no longer just passing your calls through. They now analyze each call and decide whether to:

- Let it ring normally
- Add a warning like “Spam Likely” or “Scam Risk”
- Block the call completely

These decisions are often made using third-party spam analytics tools that score your phone number’s behavior, similar to a credit score. These analytics look at:

- Call volume
- Answer rates
- Call duration
- Complaint reports from consumers
- Whether the same number is making lots of unanswered calls

If your phone number looks suspicious, even by accident, your calls might be blocked or flagged, even if you're following the rules.

Example: If your call center dials 5,000 numbers in a day and only 100 answer, a carrier might see that as a red flag.

Spam Labels vs. Call Blocking

There are two different types of interference:

Spam Labels	Call Blocking
The call goes through, but the recipient sees “Spam Likely” on the screen. Most people won’t answer a call like that.	The call is blocked by the carrier or sent straight to voicemail. The recipient never even sees the call.

According to Verizon:

“Verizon has helped protect over 94 million customers from more than 52 billion unwanted calls.” [(4)]

From the FCC:

“Voice service providers are allowed to block calls based on reasonable analytics designed to identify unwanted calls.” [(5)]

And from T-Mobile:

“Since launching Scam ID and Scam Block about 18 months ago, we tagged over 6 billion calls as ‘Scam Likely’ and blocked over 1 billion scam calls.” [(6)]

The Bottom Line

If you’re seeing a drop in contact rates, don’t blame your call center platform just yet. You might be calling from a phone number that:

- Has been flagged by a spam analytics engine
- Has poor answer rates or high volume patterns
- Was reported by a consumer, even accidentally

This is why understanding how reputation scoring works, and how to monitor or repair it, is essential for outbound call centers in 2025.

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Section 3

What STIR/SHAKEN Actually Does (and Doesn't Do)

What Is STIR/SHAKEN?

STIR/SHAKEN is a caller ID authentication framework intended to stop number spoofing. Major carriers were required to implement it on IP networks by June 30, 2021, with smaller and non-IP providers given extensions, some through June 30, 2023. All providers could either comply or submit a Robocall Mitigation Plan to avoid enforcement. [(7)] [(8)]

“The STIR/SHAKEN framework is designed to verify that a call is actually coming from the number it claims to be from.” [(9)]

Each call gets an attestation level:

A-level	B-level	C-level
The caller owns the number, and the carrier knows it.	The carrier knows the caller but not the number.	The call is being passed through from another network.

What STIR/SHAKEN Can Do

- Stop spoofed robocalls
- Improve caller ID trust
- Help carriers trace the source of bad traffic

If you’re calling from a real number that’s properly registered and signed with A-level attestation, it may show a green check mark or “Verified Caller” to the person you’re calling.

T-Mobile launched its Caller Verified display (the green check or badge) in early 2019, initially available on Samsung Galaxy Note9 devices. As STIR/SHAKEN adoption grew industry-wide, the feature expanded across networks. It signals that the call has been authenticated and is not spoofed. [(10)]

What STIR/SHAKEN Can't Do

🚫 It does not stop your calls from being labeled as spam

🚫 It does not stop your calls from being blocked

🚫 It does not mean your call will get answered

"STIR/SHAKEN authentication does not prevent calls from being blocked based on analytics." [(11)]

The Takeaway

STIR/SHAKEN is a good start, but it's not a magic bullet. You still need to:

- Keep your phone numbers clean
- Monitor your call behavior
- Follow dialing best practices

Section 4

What Is False Answer Supervision (“Dead Air” Calls)?

The Problem

Have your agents ever picked up a “connected” call... only to hear silence, music, or a strange recording? That might not be a technical glitch or a bad lead. It could be something called False Answer Supervision, or FAS for short.

FAS is a form of telecom fraud where a call is marked as “answered,” but the person on the other end never actually picked up.

Instead of connecting to a real consumer:

- The call might go to a fake voicemail recording
- The carrier might play music or silence
- The system still logs the call as answered, so you get charged, and your agents waste time

Why This Happens

Some wholesale carriers or middlemen commit FAS to make money off short-duration calls. Here’s how:

1. They receive your outbound call.
2. Instead of sending it to the recipient, they send it to a fake “honeypot.”
3. They send a signal to your call center platform that says the call was answered.
4. They play dead air or a fake message so the call lasts a few seconds.
5. You get billed as if the call was real.

False Answer Supervision (FAS) is a telecom fraud where a call is billed as “answered” even when no real connection is made. Fraudsters manipulate voice networks—often wholesale VoIP carriers—to trigger an answer signal during ringing or to play a fake audio (like voicemail or silence), then bill for the call despite no consumer interaction. This typically happens on disconnected or invalid numbers and is intentionally used to generate revenue through short, fake call connections. [(12) (13)]

How to Tell if It's Happening to You

- Here are some warning signs of FAS:
- Your "connected" calls have short durations
- Agents report hearing nothing, music, or a robotic voice
- You have a high volume of "answered" calls, but low talk time
- Most "answered" calls are disconnected by the agent, not the recipient

What You Can Do

- ✅ Ask your carrier for call logs or Call Detail Records (CDRs)
- ✅ Log agent feedback for "dead air," "music," or "recording"
- ✅ Rotate or replace carriers if you suspect fraud
- ✅ Work with a provider that can monitor and block FAS routes in real time

For a technical deep dive on how to detect and prevent FAS, see: i3forum's Fraud Classification v4.0 (detection & dispute workflow), BICS's Telecom Fraud whitepaper (FAS variants and mitigation), and Flowroute/BCM One's FAS guidance (practical detection checks). [(14) (15) (16)]

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Section 5

What SIP Codes Tell You About Call Blocking

What Are SIP Codes?

Every time your call center platform places a call over a VoIP network, it gets a response code from the carrier called a SIP code (Session Initiation Protocol). This code tells your system what happened to the call.

If your calls are being blocked, rejected, or flagged as spam, the SIP code can give you valuable clues.

Think of SIP codes as error messages that help you understand why your call failed — or if it didn't really connect.

Key SIP Codes to Know

SIP Code	Meaning	What it Tells You
200	OK - call was successfully answered	Good - the call reached someone or voicemail
487	Requested terminated	The call was canceled before completion (often by the call center platform or consumer)
603	Declined	The call was rejected
607	Unwanted	The consumer (or their phone/app) flagged your call as spam or blocked it
608	Rejected by analytics	The carrier blocked your call based on spam/scam analysis

"Codes 607 and 608 were specifically designed to help identify when calls are blocked due to analytics or user preferences." (17)

Why These Codes Matter

If your system shows a spike in blocked calls, it likely means your calls are being:

- Rejected automatically by phone apps
- Blocked due to spam reputation
- Flagged as unwanted by users

“The FCC requires providers to send immediate call blocking notifications using SIP codes. This rule went into effect on January 31, 2022, allowing SIP 603, 607, or 608 as valid codes. In 2025, the FCC adopted an update requiring all providers to use SIP 603+ exclusively for analytics-based blocking, with a compliance deadline of March 24, 2026.”

Sources:

FCC Fourth Report and Order (Dec. 2020) [(18)]

Notification rule effective date (Jan. 2022) [(19)]

Final rule mandating SIP 603+ (March 2025) [(20)]

How to Use This in Practice

- ✅ Create dashboards to track trends over time
- ✅ Watch for sudden spikes in blocked responses
- ✅ Use this data to adjust your dialing strategy or rotate out flagged numbers

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Section 6

How to Track Patterns and Spot Issues in Your Metrics

Why Your Metrics Matter

If your connect rate is falling, your data can tell the story. You already collect information like call duration, answer rate, and agent disposition. The trick is knowing how to interpret that data to detect:

- Carrier blocking
- False Answer Supervision (FAS)
- Spam labeling
- Poor list quality

When you know what to look for, you can fix issues faster and stop wasting time and money.

Metrics to Watch

Answer-Seizure Ratio (ASR)

- This is the % of calls that are marked “answered.”
- A very low ASR (e.g., 5–10%) might mean your calls are being blocked.

Average Call Duration (ACD)

Short calls (under 10 seconds) that end quickly can indicate:

- Spam filtering apps auto-answering then hanging up
- Voicemail interception

“Many FAS schemes result in answer signals within a few seconds, but no actual conversation—making extremely brief call lengths a trusted red flag.” [(21)]

Disposition Codes

Train your agents to mark special categories like:

- “Dead air”
- “Music or recording”
- “Robotic or pre-recorded voice”

A spike in these can confirm you're getting fake or blocked connections.

Who Hung Up?

- Most FAS calls are disconnected by the agent (not the consumer).

Carrier or Area Code Patterns: Use call detail records (CDRs) to see:

- Which carriers are blocking your calls
- Which area codes have the worst performance

Use a Scorecard or Dashboard Track weekly stats like:

- Blocked calls
- ASR
- Average call duration
- Disposition patterns (dead air, short calls, etc.)
- Contact rate by campaign or number

This helps you quickly identify problems like:

- A specific number that’s been flagged
- A carrier filtering your campaign
- A surge in call diversion or voicemail filtering

💡 **Tip:** Ask your carrier or platform to provide carrier-level breakdowns if you don’t already see them.

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Section 7

Caller ID Reputation and How to Protect It

What Is Caller ID Reputation?

Every phone number has a reputation score, just like a credit score. This score determines whether your outbound calls:

- Get delivered cleanly
- Get labeled as “Spam Likely” or “Scam Risk”
- Get blocked before they even ring

Your reputation is determined by analytics companies used by the major carriers (AT&T, Verizon, T-Mobile) — including firms like Hiya, First Orion, and TNS.
These companies track:

- Volume of outbound calls
- Answer rates
- Call durations
- Consumer complaints or blocks
- Whether the number receives return calls

If your number shows up on spam call reporting apps (like RoboKiller or Truecaller), it can tank your reputation fast.

“Analytics platforms assign spam ratings to phone numbers based on historical calling behavior, user feedback, and call performance metrics.” (22)

What Hurts Your Caller ID Reputation?

⛔	High call volumes with low answer rates
⛔	Short calls or frequent hangups
⛔	Calling the same number too many times in a short window
⛔	Consumers blocking or reporting your number
⛔	Using caller IDs that don't accept return calls

How to Monitor and Protect It

✅	Register your numbers with the Free Caller Registry: *https://www.freecallerregistry.com/*
✅	Use trusted number providers with STIR/SHAKEN A-level attestation
✅	Monitor for spam flags using tools like: *https://calleridreputation.com/* *https://www.numeracle.com/*
✅	Rotate your numbers responsibly
✅	Fix flagged numbers quickly

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Section 8

How to Improve Call Delivery

(Without Blaming Your Call Center Platform)

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Why It’s Not (Usually) the Call Center Platform’s Fault

If your connect rates are low, it’s tempting to think the problem is your dialing platform. But in most cases, the call center platform is working fine — your calls are just being blocked or diverted by carriers or spam filters before they ever reach the person you're calling.

Instead of switching software, take action where it matters: your dialing behavior, phone number management, and compliance.

8 Proven Ways to Improve Your Connect Rate

✅	Use STIR/SHAKEN and A-Level Attestation [(23)]
✅	Rotate Numbers (Smartly)
✅	Register with the Free Caller Registry [(24)]
✅	Use Branded Caller ID (Where Available) • T-Mobile [(25)] • AT&T (delivered via TransUnion/Neustar “TruContact Branded Call Display”) [(26)]
✅	Keep Call Volume Per Number Low
✅	Respect Call Frequency and Timing • Florida [(27)] • Oklahoma [(28)]
✅	Make Your Calls Valuable and Recognizable
✅	Monitor and React Fast

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Section 9

2025 Best Practices for Compliance and Call Delivery

Why Compliance and Delivery Go Hand in Hand

In 2025, outbound calling success isn't just about using the right technology — it’s about playing by the rules, maintaining transparency, and earning trust from both carriers and consumers.

Compliance Rules That Affect Your Call Delivery

📌 Federal Rules (TCPA, TSR)

📌 State “Mini-TCPA” Laws

Best Practices for Outbound Call Success in 2025

✅ Always Use Valid, Reachable Caller IDs

✅ Keep Consent Records

✅ Scrub All Lists

✅ Make Opt-Out Easy

✅ Monitor Complaints and Spam Reports

✅ Brand Your Caller ID

Proactive Monitoring = Better Deliverability

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Section 10

Wrap-Up and How CallShaper Can Help

The Bottom Line

Outbound calling is more complex than ever. It's not just about what you say or when you dial — it's about how your calls are judged before they even ring.

This guide has walked you through:

- Why your calls may not be getting through
- What tools and signals can reveal the problem
- How to fix or prevent call delivery issues
- What best practices will keep you ahead in 2025

How CallShaper Can Help

CallShaper is more than a call center platform, it's a transparent, compliance-first platform built for the realities of today's outbound environment.

✓ Real-time access to decline codes and call outcomes
✓ Tools to monitor and respond to delivery issues
✓ Easy integration with vetted STIR/SHAKEN carriers
✓ Support for branded caller ID and responsible number rotation
✓ Built-in compliance tools to help you manage opt-outs, call pacing, and abandonment rates

To learn more or request a demo: ***https://www.callshaper.com***

💡 Final Tip:

Stay Current

Carriers update their rules. The FCC issues new guidance. States pass new laws. To succeed in outbound calling in 2025, your team needs to monitor your data, follow the rules, and adapt fast.

Disclaimer:

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1) https://www.fcc.gov/call-blocking-tools-and-resources androidheadlines.com+15fcc.gov+15fcc.gov+15time.com+7docs.fcc.gov+7fcc.gov+7
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