

BT Business reports that digital stalking turns off UK business



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Author: Dan Thomas

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BT Business released the results of new research that show that companies are in danger of driving away business and wasting time on unproductive communications because they are failing to understand customers' different digital personality types when they are dealing through email or other communications channels.

Nearly a third (30%) of the workers surveyed* feel harassed by the sheer number of messages people send them while many also admit that they themselves are never sure of the best way to contact people, implying that companies are missing out on the opportunity to unify their communications technology, and on the personal and business benefits that can bring.

At the same time, workers appear to be increasingly managing working relationships through social and business networks. One in 10 people surveyed have customers and clients as friends on personal social networking sites such as Facebook. This trend is particularly true for younger people, with almost one in six (15 per cent) of the 18 to 24s surveyed saying they use or would use these tools to manage customer relationships, compared to just two per cent of 45s or over. Similarly, six times as many 18 to 24 year olds use or would use microblogs such as Twitter to manage customer relationships compared to 45s or over.

These are some of the key findings of the BT Business research which sought to understand how people are using modern communications tools to build business relationships. The research involved input from one of the UK's leading psychologists Gladeana McMahon.

Gladeana explained: "It's important that people recognise the difference between communicating virtually and face-to-face. We often read others' body language to gauge what they are really saying, adapting our response to get a better result. In the virtual world we don't have the same clues to help us modify our behaviour so we must try to identify 'digital personality types' in other ways to ensure business success. Similar to people thinking

before they speak, people need to think before they click to avoid inappropriate communications."

"It's great to see businesses taking up new technology to build profitable relationships but many are missing out on the opportunity to get rid of the clutter and unify their communications," said Bill Murphy, managing director at BT Business.

"[Unified communications](#) can empower employees to intelligently tune their communications to the preferences and behaviour patterns of different personalities by creating a sense of presence in a virtual world. With three quarters of the UK's small businesses now operating some form of flexible working, to maximise the benefits it's important for businesses to look at how they can help staff to be more productive, while at the same time saving money by eliminating wasteful messaging."

Notes to Editors:
All figures are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 3473 workers in organisations with less than 500 employees and employed for at least 3 months. Fieldwork was undertaken between 2nd and 8th December 2008. The survey was carried out online. The figures have not been weighted.

About

BT

BT is one of the world's leading providers of communications solutions and services operating in 170 countries. BT consists principally of four lines of business: BT Global Services, Openreach, BT Retail and BT Wholesale.

BT Business understands the challenges that small and medium sized businesses face in the current climate, and supports cost control, improved productivity and winning business through core product collections including [business broadband](#), [internet domains](#), [web hosting](#), data and voice networks, IT solutions and mobile services.

Contact Details: Dan Thomas
Senior press officer
BT Group Newsroom
BT Centre
81 Newgate Street
London
EC1A 7AJ
020 7356 5369
www.bt.com/newscentre