



Silence of the Cell: Assurant Call Center Ban on Mobile Phones Keeps Focus on Customers, Protects Data

Could you live without your mobile phone or tablet for a day? How about going without your handheld every day at work when it's your job to reconnect customers with new or restored mobile devices when theirs is lost, stolen or breaks?

Not many people could.

According to a 2015 Gallup Panel [survey](#) of U.S. adults, about 41 percent said they couldn't go without checking their smartphones several times an hour or more, and 11 percent admitted to checking their cell phone every few minutes.

While many people would be uncomfortable without a constant fix of texts, videos and apps, Assurant call center employees have disconnected during work hours. As part of Assurant's "clean desk policy," they are required to keep a tidy work space, free of mobile phones which are stored in personal lockers. Also gone are the traditional pen and paper.

Protecting customer information is at the heart of the "clean desk policy." It bolsters data security by removing tools that can record information and follows regulatory requirements around the handling of that data. For example, Assurant adheres to the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard, which requires all companies that handle credit card information in any way to maintain a secure environment.

"Mobile devices have become a constant companion, keeping us connected to – and sometimes distracted by – opportunities to stay in contact with the rest of the world. This policy helps ensure customers receive the undivided attention of call center employees and that their private information is protected," said Toni Buckner, vice president of claims operations for Connected Living, a business of Assurant.

"That is our paramount concern," Buckner continued. "We take every measure to make sure private information is handled with the utmost care and that agents have access to it only when it is necessary to the claims process, and there is no automated alternative for collection."

Korinne Mattingly works in an Assurant call center in Albany, Oregon helping customers stay connected to their own digital devices and lives. She is philosophic about unplugging. Having limited access to her own mobile phone allows her to relate to her phoneless customers.

"We depend on our mobile phones for everything now, so I know it can be extremely stressful to be without one," Mattingly said. "I always try to put myself in the customers' shoes and I recognize the challenges of having to live without your phone. My goal is to get them their mobile device back as soon as possible."

Assurant call center employees and service delivery teams repair or replace customers' mobile devices with a fast turnaround time and help them get their digital lives back on track.