I’m Online Get Me Out Of Here

Dropouts are what we used to call them in my day. People who did not want to to conform to the society ‘norm’ and decided to drop out and live on the fringes, in a commune with like-minded non-conformists, or perhaps travelling around in an old converted bus. You get the picture!

Those hippy days may have gone for some of us but others still have that urge to opt out, get away from the rate race that is modern life, in particular the online rat race. It seems that if you are not online these days then you have by default opted out.

Don’t believe me? Try getting to speak to a human being to arrange a repair, make an appointment (for anything and everything), enquire about a bill, letter, or any matter that we humans need to attend to in order to survive and go about our business. Try finding a contact telephone number when you are making an online enquiry. Websites seem to adhere to the common principle that they have no desire to actually speak to anyone but set out all you need to know online and hide their telephone numbers in the midst of it all hoping you will give up, or go stir-crazy as you listen to their automated voice telling you all about them but not how to speak to them. You are encouraged, no left with no option, to visit their website where all your FAQs (that’s Frequently Asked Questions) will be answered. But not by a human of course.

But what if you don’t want to do everything online? What if you prefer to speak to something with a pulse, rather than a digital current? What if you are elderly and don’t know and don’t have enough time left to learn about this digital age of ours?

Before all that was digital was thrust upon us we received bills, letters, phone calls, all allowing for contact telephone details, names of who to speak to etc etc. Digital doesn’t work like that. All you need is (supposedly) there online for you, including the ever-increasing sales pitches that bend you’re ear as you wait to hear all the options you can choose from. Picking the right one can be tricky as that old reliable ‘general enquiry’ seems to have been largely replaced by ‘customer services’, a choice usually found to be anything but geared to the customer when chosen.

So what if you don’t want to be part of this digital society. What if your idea of service does not involve going up in the cloud but finding another human here on planet earth who seems to know what service is and geared up to providing it. It seems that no one up there in the digital ‘customer service ‘ cloud has thought of that option. At least it’s not in their FAQ (yes, keep up, that’s Frequently Asked Questions). Not sure why not as it’s a FAQ I seem to hear from people who are as frustrated as I am at having to speak to...well nobody really, as all customer service staff are too busy dealing with digital enquiries, from...yes you have guessed it, that digital community that you want to opt out of.

We need to talk. No really, we need to talk!

Tom Kelly

12 February 2020