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Real estate inquiries often fail to reach agents

By Amy Connolly

A new study found many real estate inquiries go unanswered or take too long to reach an agent, highlighting gaps in lead response and follow-up.

A buyer or seller reaches out. Then waits. And then waits some more.

A new study said real estate professionals may be losing business simply because potential customers aren't getting connected to an agent quickly enough.

Pied Piper's 2026 Real Estate Lead Handling Effectiveness Study tested 2,198 phone and website inquiries to local offices representing 21 large real estate brands. The results showed substantial gaps in how inquiries were handled, particularly online, the customer-experience research firm found.

When customers called looking for an agent, 97% of calls connected with someone. But only 53% quickly reached a representative who could handle the inquiry, and just 33% actually communicated with an agent during that initial call.

The missed connections didn't stop there. Nearly three-quarters of phone inquiries received no follow-up by phone, text or email within 24 hours.

Website inquiries had an even tougher time:

- 68% received no response within 24 hours.
- Only 18% resulted in communication with an agent within that time.
- Just 10% heard from an agent within an hour.
- Nearly 1 in 10 online inquiry forms didn't work properly.

"New real estate clients often consider several options before choosing who to work with," said Cameron O'Hagan, vice president of metrics and analytics at Pied Piper, customer-service research firm Pied Piper. Delayed responses, he said, can give customers enough time to connect with someone else.

That makes responsiveness more than a customer-service issue. It can be a business-development issue.

The study found that some offices simply handed callers an agent's name and number, putting the burden on the customer to make another call. Pied Piper said stronger performers were more likely to make the connection themselves or proactively follow up.