

The Collector Chronicle

North American Recovery

September/October 2024

America's Collection Authority

LAST MONTH'S LUCKY WINNER

The lucky winner of our client prize for August is Southwest Dental. They have been using our agency since 1999! We will be sending them a gift basket from the Harry & David's. Enjoy!



THIS MONTH'S PRIZE

This month we will be giving away a gift basket from the Harry & David's. Each client who sends new accounts during the month of October will have their name entered into a drawing. At the end of the month, we'll draw a name, and if it's yours, you'll win the gift basket!

Don't miss out on your chance to win!

***Send new accounts before the
end of the month!***

Good luck!!

Harry & David

Two is Better Than One

By: David J. Saxton

President, North American Recovery

If you're like most people, you don't answer a call from an unknown number. You just don't. Which is an interesting modern development. Back in the day, before mobile phones and answering machines, my siblings and I would race to the phone as fast as we could every time it rang. We couldn't wait to answer every call. It was exciting. We didn't know who was calling or what they wanted (no caller ID back then either), so we would fight to answer the phone.

Then answering machines came along. Now we could screen our calls. So we did. If it was someone we wanted to talk to, we would pick up. If not, we would pretend no one was home—which never actually happened—I have eight brothers and sisters ... Someone was always there, but the answering machine gave us the "power" to decide if we wanted to talk to that person or not.

Finally the mobile phone appeared. Within a short time, everyone had one. At first, none of the people you knew were saved in your phone, so you went back to answering every call. (You also answered unknown numbers because it was cool to be talking on a mobile phone. Any chance to do that was welcome.)

But technology continued to march forward. We started to save contacts, and when a friend or relative called, their name appeared. And this is

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where things started to get weird. People started to develop a strange phobia around answering a call from an unknown number. People (like my wife) will tell you, "If it's important, they will leave a message." But I don't buy it. I think there's something else that's keeping most people from answering an unknown call. I have a few ideas, but that's a topic for a different article.

Regardless of the reason, most people don't answer calls from an unknown number. This causes major problems for collection agencies. Most agencies, that is, but not ours. Here's why.

We know our number is unknown to everyone we call, so we plan for it. First, we don't leave a message. We would like to, but many collection agencies have been sued because they left a message. The risk is too high so we don't do it. But that doesn't negatively affect our results.

Instead of leaving a message, we hang up and call right back. And when you think about it, if you received a call from an unknown number, and they didn't leave a message but called you right back, you would probably answer. Why? Curiosity. Humans are instinctively curious. We want to know "why." We want to solve problems. We want answers. The thought process goes like this. "That's the same number that just called me. I wonder why they are calling back. I think I'll answer." Telemarketers don't call twice. Robocalls don't call twice. It must be a human, so they answer, and it works like a charm!

We use our understanding of basic human psychology to our advantage. Calling right back

after someone doesn't answer is entirely within all state and federal collection laws, so we aren't doing anything wrong or improper. If we called back a third time, that would be pushing it, so we limit it to one callback. And boy does it work!

We don't keep official stats of how often a second call is answered, but every collector who uses this technique swears by it. They wouldn't make calls any other way.

This article probably isn't going to change anyone's mind when it comes to answering an unknown number. However... If you ever get two back-to-back calls from an unknown number, remember your friends at North American Recovery.

— Dave



The Collector Chronicle is published monthly by NORTH AMERICAN RECOVERY for prospective and current clients. Please direct questions or comments to the editor, Dave Saxton, at DaveSaxton@North-American-Recovery.com.

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