

Information, Connection and Signposting Services Research

Phonepay Plus

February 2013



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Background and Methodology

ICSS Definition

- Information, Call Connection and/or Signposting Services (ICSS) are PRS that are promoted prominently on search engines such as Google or Bing, or sometimes on classified ads websites such as Gumtree, and can be defined as follows:

** 'Premium rate services (other than directory enquiry services), which provide consumers with information, advice and/or assistance relating to specific organisations, businesses and/or services that such organisations or businesses provide, or which provide connection to such organisations, businesses and/or services'*

ICSS Types

- There are two broad types of service (as defined by Phonepay Plus):

TYPE 1 – 'signposting' - number provision and/or call connection service. Type 1 services can be seen as similar to directory enquiries (DQ). However they operate on a premium rate number rather than a 118xxx number and usually offer the number of one (or a small selection of) organisations rather than the full range that a DQ service provides

TYPE 2 – 'helpline' or advice services (which may or may not include the customer providing account details so that the ICSS provider can interact with the organisation on their behalf). They do not generally offer any 'signposting'



Background and aims

- Phonepay Plus has received a number of complaints about ICSS services in the last year, some of which have resulted in regulatory activity. There is a concern for the potential of these services to cause consumer harm
- Phonepay Plus issued a public consultation which closed at the end of September. The objective of the consultation was to seek views on the putting in place of effective and proportionate controls around these services. In replying to the consultation, ICSS providers have challenged the arguments about the potential for consumer harm. Research was therefore required to ensure the consumer viewpoint was included in the debate

Specific objectives

- At an overall level research was required to understand why and how people use ICSS and how these services are perceived
- More specifically, objectives included:
 - To assess the potential for consumer harm – both in terms of direct harm (cost of using, feeling misled, delays, giving out personal data) and also indirectly undermining public confidence in the organisation they are wishing to call
 - To understand the perceived benefits of ICSS services
 - To understand how ICSS are perceived in the context of directory enquiry services – to what extent are they seen as different/similar and how, if at all, does the potential for ‘harm’ differ
 - To understand perceptions and understanding at different stages of the customer journey
 - To explore safeguards that may have helped

Overview of Methodology

	Dec '12	Jan '13	Feb '13
Step 1	Initial qualitative stage		
Step 2		Quantitative stage	
Step 3		Follow-up qualitative stage	
Step 4			Analysis & Reporting



- * Initial qualitative stage**
 12 paired-depth interviews
- In-person interviews with an accompanied 'look-up' exercise
 - Mix of ages and social grades
 - 22nd November to 20th December

- * Quantitative stage**
 6,146 online interviews
- Representative of GB adult population
 - 23rd – 31st January

- Follow-up qualitative stage**
 14 in-depth interviews with ICSS users
- 30th January – 19th February

Analysis and Reporting

** A random selection of different ICSS service examples were used in both the initial qualitative and quantitative stages to aid memory and understanding of these services*

Key Headlines

- Biggest complaint about ICSS services is the lack of transparency
- Evidence that this can result in confusion which can in turn lead to consumer harm. All ICSS services can cause confusion although to varying degrees
- Consumers believe the sites are deliberately misleading (using URLs with end organisation name, using end organisation logos / imagery and not promoting ICSS name / costs as visibly)
- Evidence of widespread impact and collective loss. c1.2m **GB adults have used an ICSS service thinking they were calling the end organisation directly
 - ❑ Evidence that consumers feel partly responsible – particularly as often in a rush
 - ❑ Irritation higher among those where money is tight
 - ❑ Also the potential for harm to the reputation of the end organisation
 - ❑ Most common searches tend to be for utilities and government departments
- Perceived degree of potential ‘harm’ from *Type 2 services is notably higher
- Consumers feel more should be done to make it clear that these services are offering premium rate directory style services
 - ❑ They then have a choice as to whether or not to use them

* Type 2 feedback was based on qualitative interviews only

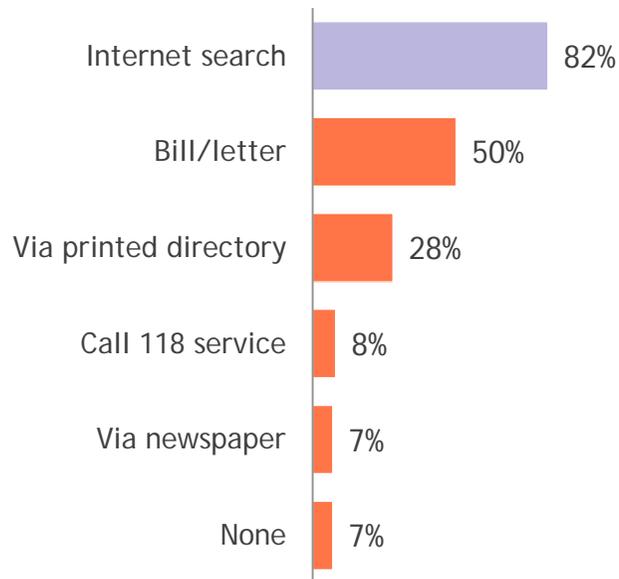
** Based on estimates made using a nationally representative sample of 6,146 GB adults

Main Findings

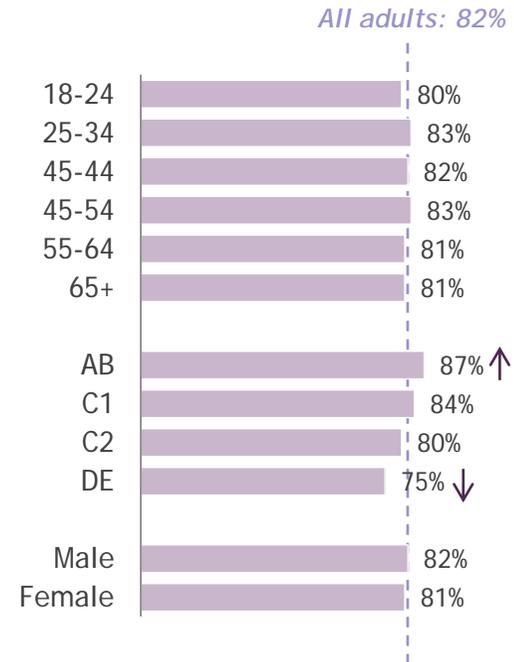
4 in 5 adults use the internet to search for telephone numbers. No differences by age. Less than 1 in 10 use 118



All methods used to find large organisations' telephone numbers



% using Internet search - by key demographics



Base = All adults (n=6,146)
 Online omnibus survey with a nationally representative sample of GB adults aged 18+

Even though two thirds are aware that the shaded areas are paid for ads, most adults still click on those results at least sometimes. Awareness much lower among over 45s and C2DEs



Ads related to [british airways telephone number](#) ⓘ

[Customer Service Number](#)
[britishairways.contactnumberuk.com/](#)
 Need to speak to Customer Services? Call our quick directory service

[BA Customer Services - 0844 496 0787](#)
[britishairways.call-direct.net/](#)
 Call Direct Now for Help & Support

[Contact British Airways - Customer Services](#)
[www.contact-direct.co.uk/british-airway](#)
 Use Our Premium Service.

- For some, paid for ads can actually help foster organisation credibility because it conveys a sense of size and income
- Most consumers don't understand that end organisations' names would appear in URLs that do not belong to that organisation. This means if they appear in one specific search result then they believe they must be related to the end organisation and wouldn't appear in another search result
- Consumers don't expect a company to use lots of different URLs i.e. one URL for the inland revenue number and another for British Gas etc.

69%

Claim to be aware that the shaded area at the top of an internet search page contains paid for ads

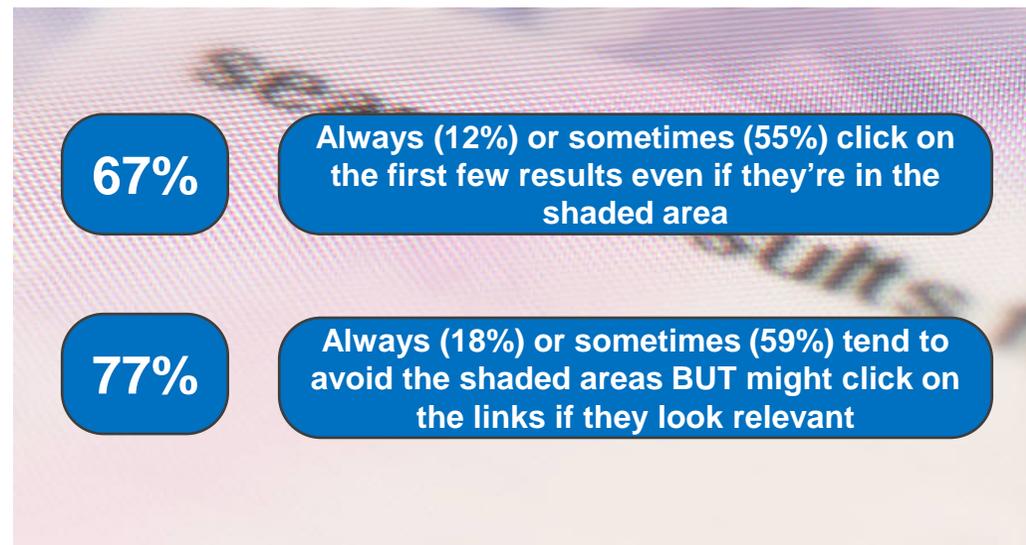
Shaded Area Awareness by key demographics



Base = All adults (n=6,146)

Online omnibus survey with a nationally representative sample of GB adults aged 18+

Qualitative feedback based on 12 paired (24 people) in-depth interviews with a selection of people who use the internet to look up phone numbers



67% Always (12%) or sometimes (55%) click on the first few results even if they're in the shaded area

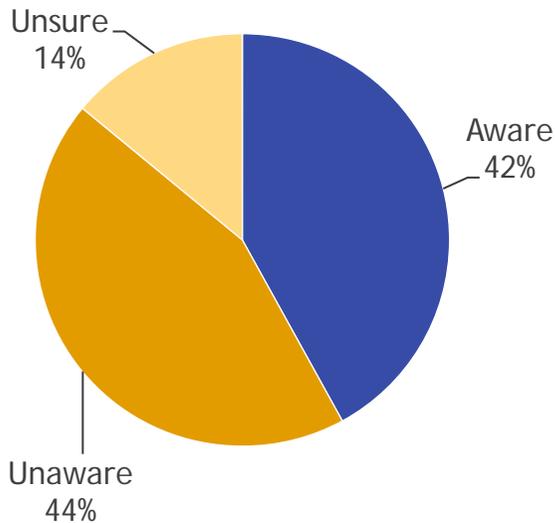
77% Always (18%) or sometimes (59%) tend to avoid the shaded areas BUT might click on the links if they look relevant

42% claim to be aware of ICSS services, falling to a third among DEs

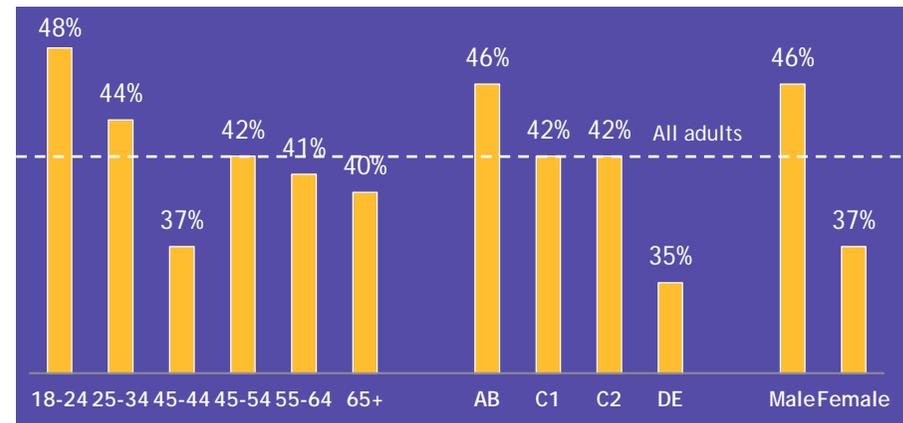


ICSS Aware: Claim to be aware that companies offering this type of service appear in internet search results

42%



ICSS Awareness by key demographics



There are those who can see ICSS services as offering a genuine (albeit relatively small) consumer benefit



27%

Agree that these services are useful

- If they are clear about what is being offered, ICSS services can be seen as an alternative to 118 directory enquires
- Appreciate that some numbers are hard to find on a company's own website
- You are paying for the convenience of getting the number quickly
- **Provided you understand** what is being offered you can choose whether or not to take 'advantage' of this
- Many choose not to and either avoid the link or click out once they inadvertently go through to the page
- Low knowledge of typical ICSS and 118 charges

However, more typically the impact of ICSS services ranges from mild irritation through to the potential to be misled



50%

Agree it's not clear what these services are offering

- Among the more 'savvy' the major irritation is that they clutter up the search pages – have to sift through to find the genuine numbers
- Or they have to come in and out of various webpages (which appear to have genuine URLs) before reaching the website they set out to visit
- These services are seen to lack transparency which means that not everyone is clear what they are entering into
- Some end up calling up an ICSS service unknowingly
- Most vulnerable when busy or are less familiar with the web
- Some services/sites are clearer than others but all sites have the possibility to create confusion
- Sites providing connection services to government-related numbers appear to be 'taking advantage' of the fact that people do not necessarily know the correct department name

Base = All adults (n=6,146)

Online omnibus survey with a nationally representative sample of GB adults aged 18+

Qualitative feedback based on 12 paired (24 people) in-depth interviews with a selection of people who use the internet to look up phone numbers

The lack of clarity around ICSS starts with a lack of familiarity with them and what they are offering

- No-one starts out with the intention of looking for a directory service on the internet – they are looking for the direct end organisation telephone number
- So when entering an ICSS site where they see the end organisation's name and a telephone number, many assume it is their own website (or a free telephone listing service)
- Backdrop to the confusion is therefore the lack of clarity around what benefit they offer/why they are there. Only a few automatically see them as offering a service
- Can appear to be an extra layer to achieve their intended goal (i.e. going online to obtain a number)
- Potentially adding to the time taken to achieve your goal and/or adding to the cost
- 118 services are a more 'obvious transaction' – you know you are paying a premium to obtain a number. You are choosing this transaction, although you may not be aware how much it costs. 96% of those using a 118 service 'knew it was a directory enquiries service I would have to pay for'

Base = All adults (n=6,146)

Online omnibus survey with a nationally representative sample of GB adults aged 18+

Qualitative feedback based on 12 paired (24 people) in-depth interviews with a selection of people who use the internet to look up phone numbers

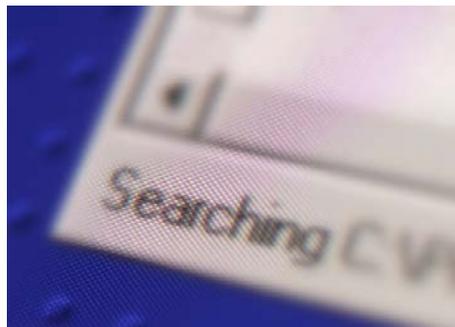
ICSS providers could do more to improve the transparency of what is being offered

The lack of clarity starts with the listings page

The name of the company/service searched for can sometimes form part of the URL – those adopting this approach lead to greater confusion

They are often towards the top of the search engines so you can click through in a rush

Not everyone understands that those in the shaded area are paid for ads



Ads related to **passport helpline** ⓘ

Passport Office - PassportOffice.ContactNumberuk.com

passportoffice.contactnumberuk.com/

Need to call to the **Passport Office** Use our quick directory service

UK Passport Information - passports-office.co.uk

www.passports-office.co.uk/

Passports Advice & Enquiry, New Passports, Renewals, Lost/Stolen

Passport helpline - Looking for the **Passport Office?**

passport.numberhelp.co.uk/

Use our directory enquiry service.

A number of factors about the sites themselves cause confusion – although some pages are easier to understand than others

The telephone number is in considerably bigger/darker font – our automatic (*system one) behaviours means we tend to focus on the goal (especially if in a hurry) without giving the site too much scrutiny

Certain terms exacerbate the confusion e.g.: ‘URL’; ‘information may be found without charge by searching in the public domain’; ‘this **information** (rather than phone no.) can also be found for free on their website’

Other print e.g. ICSS provider name, costs of the call can be quite small or faded out (white font on light grey background), easy to miss – especially from a smartphone

Many of the sites do not advertise their own brand/promote themselves as a directory service as obviously as they could do

Consumers less familiar with 09 premium rate pre-fixes and what they are being charged for them & do not understand this charging model

The use of maps, logos, head office addresses and certain imagery make the sites look more official

** System 1 is generally automatic, affective and heuristic-based, which means that it relies on mental “shortcuts.” It quickly proposes intuitive answers to problems as they arise. System 2, which corresponds closely with controlled processes, is slow, arduous, conscious, rule-based and also can be employed to monitor the quality of the answer provided by System 1.*

Some examples of the potential for confusion

Call the directory number below to obtain the:

DVLA Phone Number

09838 381 055

The information that we provide can be found without charge by searching for yourself at this [URL](#)



0901 435 0066

Calls cost £1.53 per minute with a £1.53 connection charge plus network extra's.

All information on this website may be found without charge by searching yourself within the [public domain](#).

Telephone number dominates. The term 'searching yourself in the public domain' is unclear.

Call the number below to obtain the number for the:

Inland Revenue Helpline

0907 024 1138

Please note that the information that we provide can be found without charge by searching yourself within the [public domain](#)

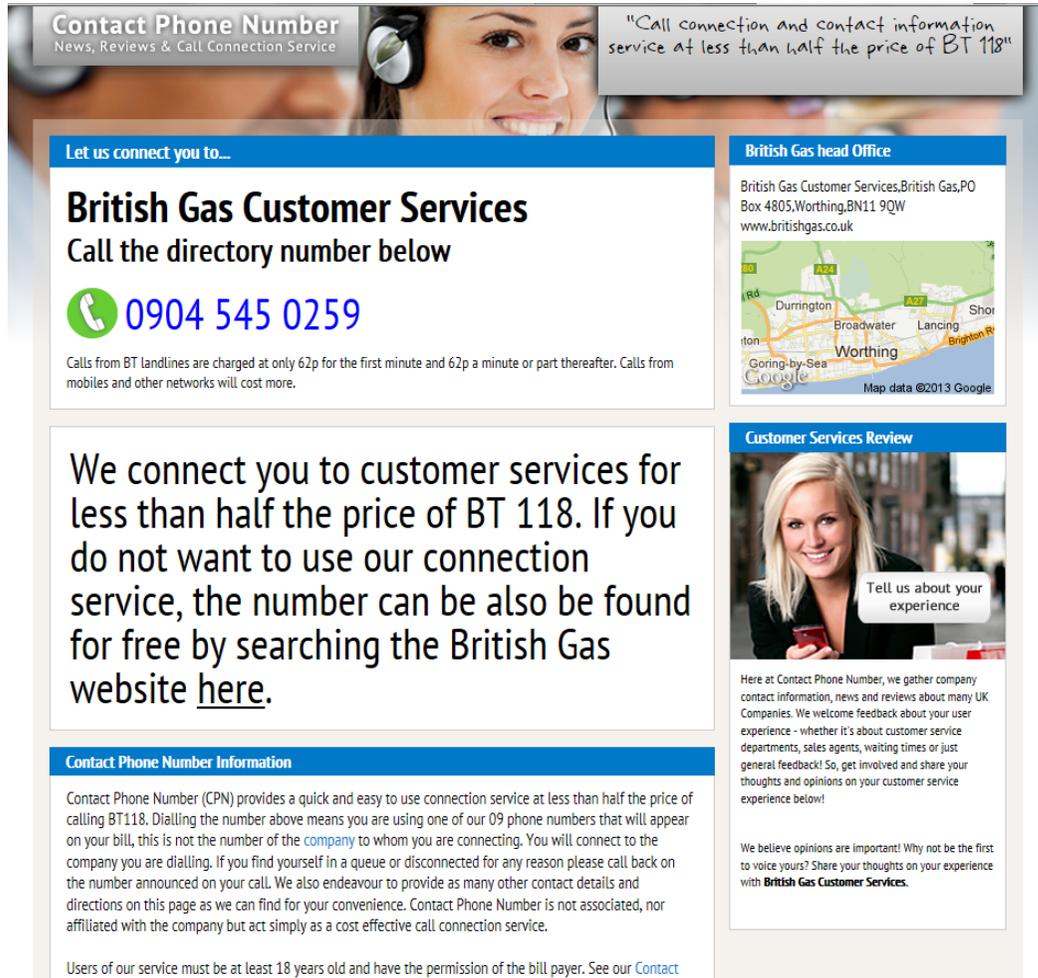
Calls cost £1.53 per minute plus network extras. You will be given the number immediately. Calls after the first minute are billed on a per second basis. Calls from mobiles and other networks may cost more.



Official imagery & maps

- In both examples, not clearly branded as an ICSS service
- The phrases 'the information we provide you with can be found without charge by searching for yourself at this URL' or 'within the public domain' are unclear
- Telephone number dominates and the cost and explanation of the service are in much smaller font

Although some sites are clearer in certain aspects than others



Contact Phone Number
News, Reviews & Call Connection Service

"Call connection and contact information service at less than half the price of BT 118"

Let us connect you to...

British Gas Customer Services
Call the directory number below

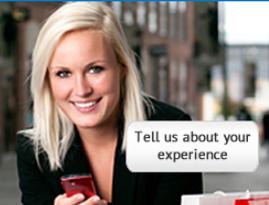
 **0904 545 0259**

Calls from BT landlines are charged at only 62p for the first minute and 62p a minute or part thereafter. Calls from mobiles and other networks will cost more.

British Gas head Office
British Gas Customer Services, British Gas, PO Box 4805, Worthing, BN11 9QW
www.britishgas.co.uk



Customer Services Review

 Tell us about your experience

Here at Contact Phone Number, we gather company contact information, news and reviews about many UK Companies. We welcome feedback about your user experience - whether it's about customer service departments, sales agents, waiting times or just general feedback! So, get involved and share your thoughts and opinions on your customer service experience below!

We believe opinions are important! Why not be the first to voice yours? Share your thoughts on your experience with **British Gas Customer Services**.

Contact Phone Number Information

Contact Phone Number (CPN) provides a quick and easy to use connection service at less than half the price of calling BT118. Dialling the number above means you are using one of our 09 phone numbers that will appear on your bill, this is not the number of the company to whom you are connecting. You will connect to the company you are dialling. If you find yourself in a queue or disconnected for any reason please call back on the number announced on your call. We also endeavour to provide as many other contact details and directions on this page as we can find for your convenience. Contact Phone Number is not associated, nor affiliated with the company but act simply as a cost effective call connection service.

Users of our service must be at least 18 years old and have the permission of the bill payer. See our [Contact](#)

The site is branded – although branding could be considerably stronger

The text explaining it is a directory service is larger – although people do not always understand the phrase ‘call the directory number’ (could be British Gas directing their call)

The text ‘the number can also be found for free by searching the British Gas website here’ is clearer

However, if you are in a rush all you see is the number, ‘British Gas Customer Services’ and a professional looking site with a map.

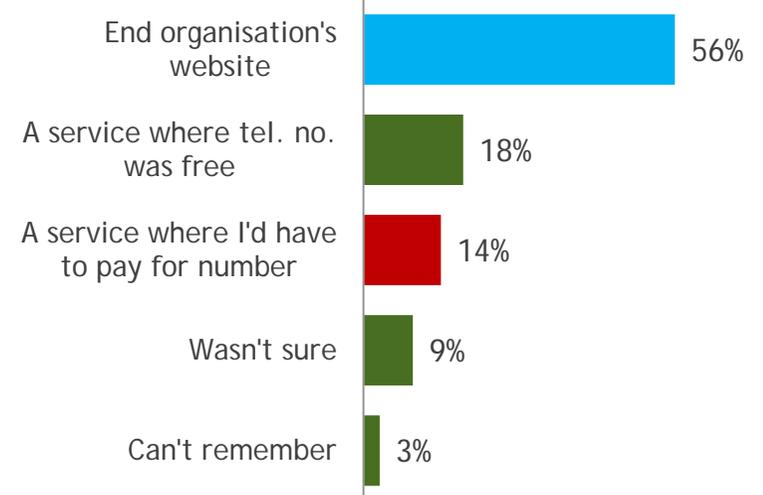
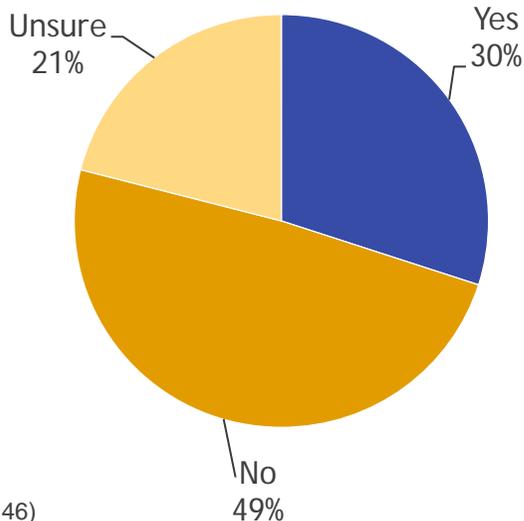
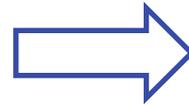
Four times as many people who click on an ICSS link think they're clicking on a link to the end organisation's website (56%) rather than a chargeable directory service (14%)



Which page did you *think* you were being directed to on last occasion clicked on one of these links?

30%

ICSS Visit: Claim to have clicked on a link to one of these websites or ones like them



The 'light bulb moment' may not come until they actually call the number, but even then not everyone fully understands

There are a number of issues with the transparency of the calls themselves

Number only providers do not inform the customer that it is a directories service they are calling. The numbers are typically given too quickly to take down/recall

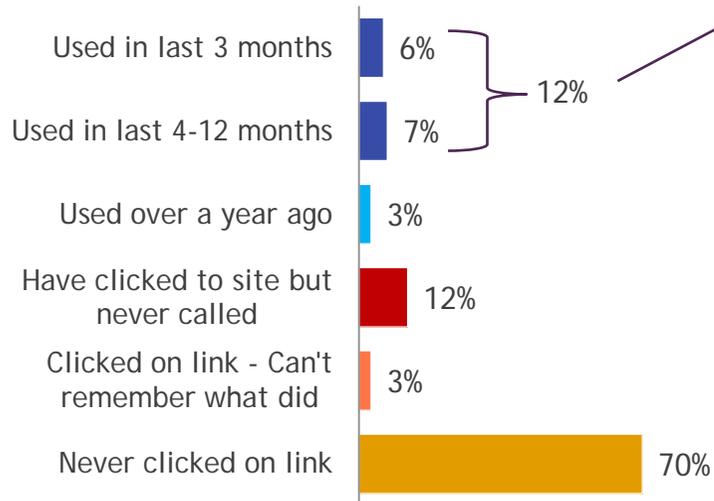
The call connection services do not always give you a choice as to whether you want to be connected through. E.g. British Gas (Contact Phone Number) says they are going to automatically put you through but 'if you want to call back later' press a key

All connection services are transparent about the call cost but they do not explain that the alternative would cost less. DVLA (Phonenumber UK) does point out that if you are put in a queue you should call back on the number given

Even on the call, not everyone is clear what they are calling/being connected to. Some think that it might be the end organisation with expensive customer services or that it is a service that allows you to jump the call queue/or call at a cheaper rate (like 'say no to 0870')

c4% have used an ICSS service in the last 12 months and, of those, over three-quarters thought they were calling the end organisation directly

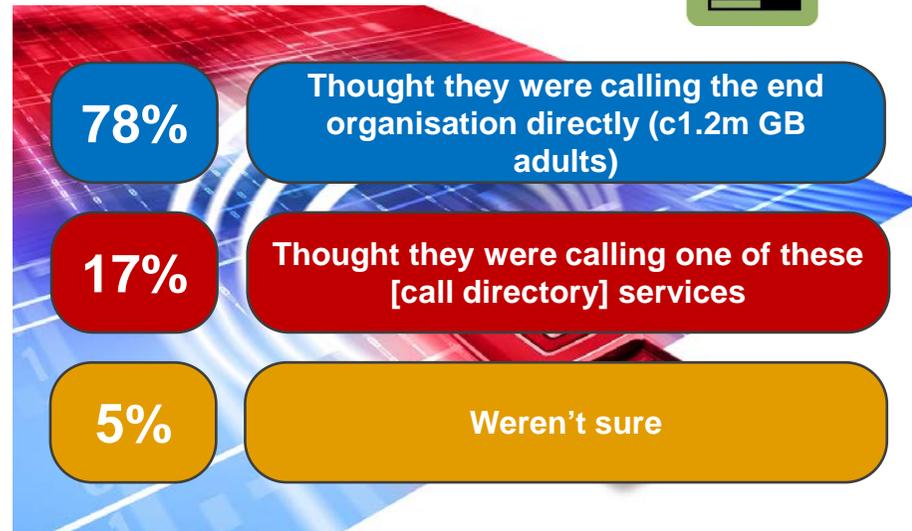
% claim to have phoned the number promoted on websites like these in the last year



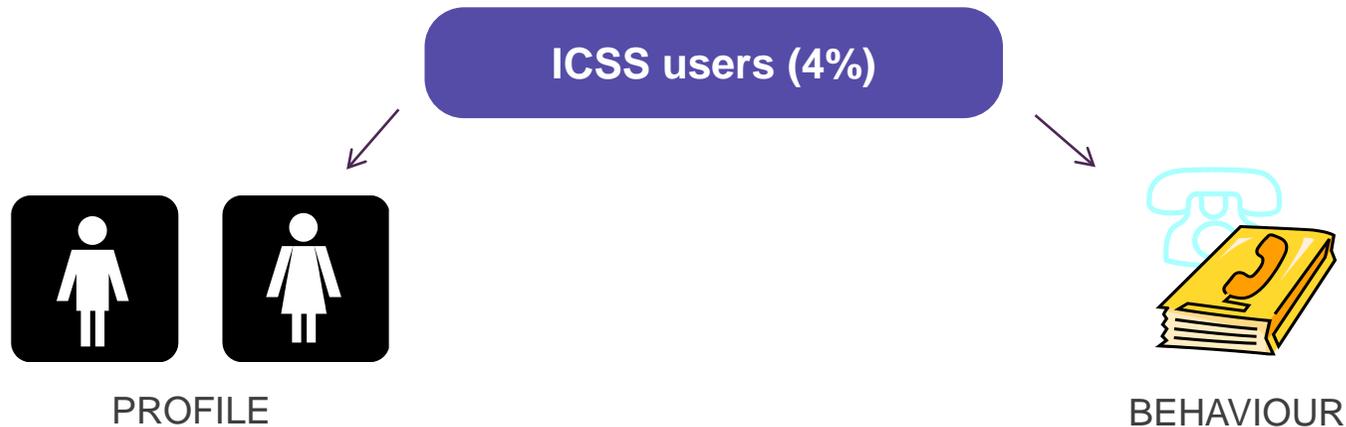
- In reality, actual ICSS usage is lower than 12%
- When asked to describe experience, it's evident that many are confusing with direct end organisation experience or 118 service

Actual ICSS usage over the last 12 months closer to 4% (*c1.6m GB adults)

...and on the last occasion:



The profile of ICSS users is similar to the profile of the adult population as a whole but are more likely to use 118 directory services



■ ICSS users are slightly more likely to be:

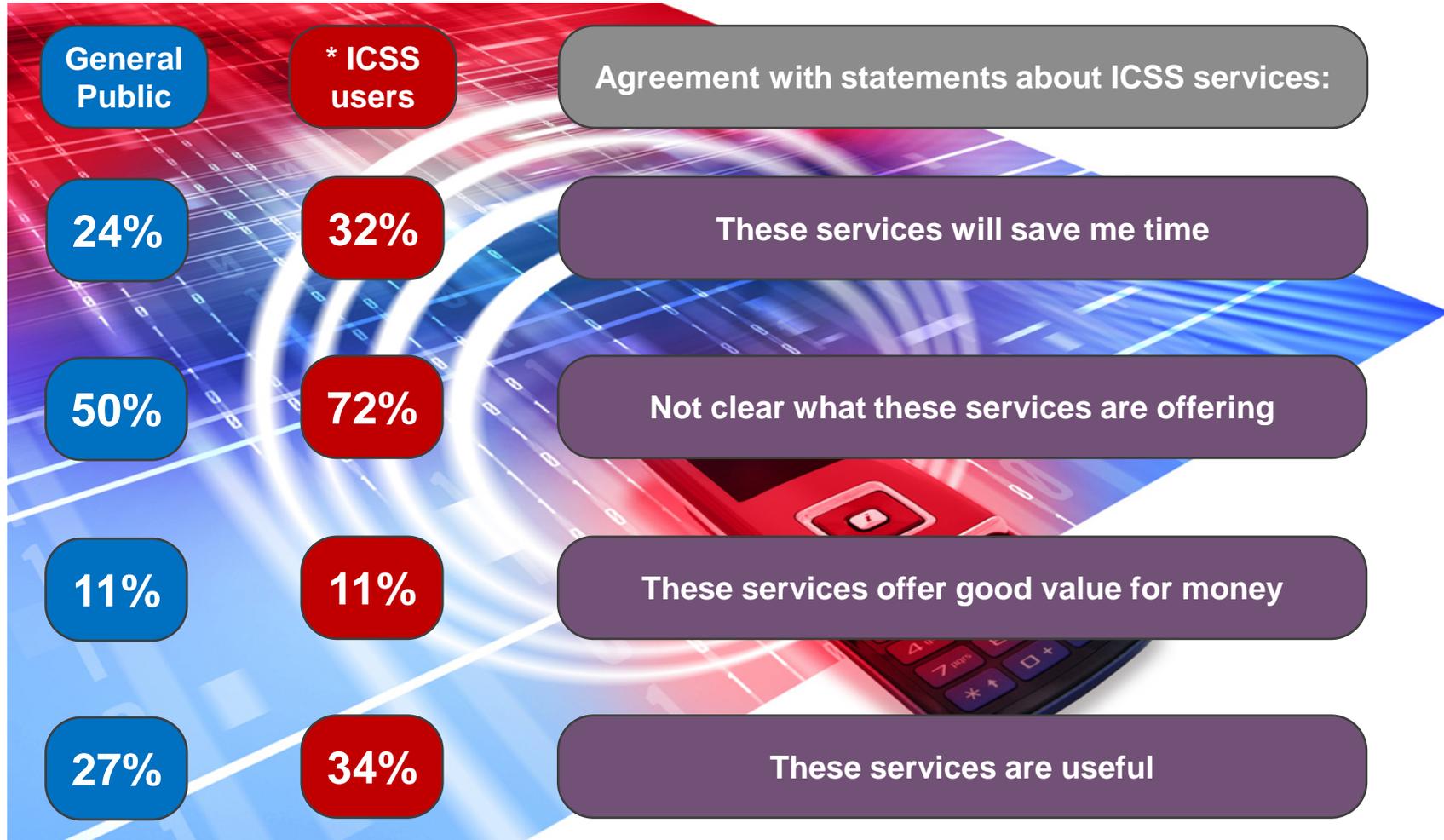
- ❑ Women (55% vs. 51% Gen. Pop)
- ❑ From social grades AB (34% vs. 27% Gen. Pop)
- ❑ *No differences by age*

■ ICSS users are more likely to:

- ❑ Use 118 services (20% vs. 8% Gen. Pop)
- ❑ Use Internet searches to get phone numbers (92% vs. 82% Gen. Pop)
- ❑ Be aware shaded areas are paid for ads (38% vs. 31% Gen. Pop)

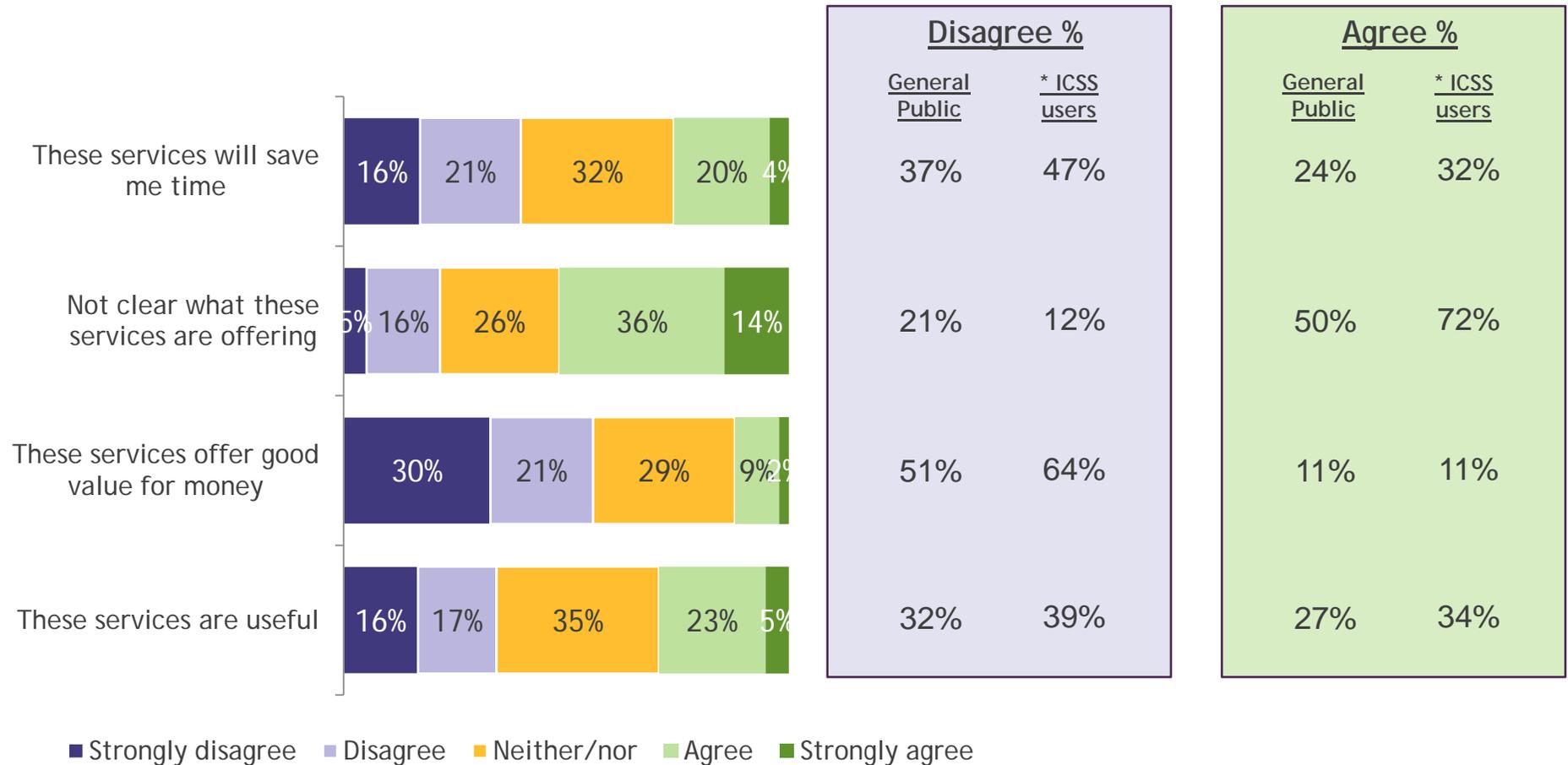
Suggests that ICSS users search for telephone numbers more regularly than non-ICSS users

A third feel ICSS services save time and are useful, although only 1 in 10 think they offer good value for money



Base = All adults (n=6,146), * used ICSS service in last year (n=201)
Online omnibus survey with a nationally representative sample of GB adults aged 18+

ICSS users feel more negatively about ICSS services than Internet users as a whole



Among those who unwittingly use a Type I service there is evidence of consumer harm

Need help over the phone with eBay?
 Call The Helpline Service and speak to one of our trained UK advisors.



Call now for immediate assistance.

> **Helpline: 0905 915 0100** (open 24 hrs)
 > **Visit: eBay.co.uk**

Calls to the above number are charged at £1.53 per minute plus network extras with a £1.53 connection charge. When calling the number you will be connected to one of our live advisors who will assist you with your query. You may be able to locate contact information for eBay for free on their website.

- We can help with eBay issues/problems
- No automated systems or queues
- Speak to a live, UK based advisor



General information UK
UK Tax Office Information

For UK Tax Help Call: **09131 300035**
Call cost £1.53p per minute plus network extras

Home | Income Tax & Allowances | Self Employment | VAT Registration | Tax Credits & Refunds | Personal Allowances

WELCOME TO TAX INFORMATION

This website provides relevant information about tax queries, business, self employment & VAT. We are not affiliated with any government agency if you wish to contact the HMRC directly [click here](#) we are an information website. Getting the right tax information can be problematic, follow our advice we are sure you will find the perfect route for your tax queries.

Call our Helpline for information on:

- How to find out how much tax you owe or if you are due for a tax credit?
- Self assessment including declaring yourself self employed & payments on account
- Registering for VAT along with information on payments and refunds
- How to pay your tax over the phone or online
- Current income tax rates and tax bands in the UK

The UK Tax bands for individuals and businesses are constantly changing year on year, the HMRC provides a range of tools and tax calculators along with a wealth of information to help you assess which tax band which you currently reside. The Island revenue will be able to tell you your tax band along with how much tax is due.

Those who are already self employed or are looking to become self employed please remember that being self employed will require that you make payments on account for the following tax year, we would recommend thinking very carefully about self employment as in many cases it will often work out cheaper for individuals to form a limited company in order to avoid paying hefty payments on account for the up-coming financial year.

More information on Income Tax, Self Employment & Tax Credits / Refunds
Call: 09131 300035

We are not affiliated with government agencies, content provided may be free elsewhere.

- The costs vary significantly from £1 to £30 and this has a bearing on the level of annoyance
- *“It is not something I am likely to do all the time and anyway I will be more careful next time.”*
- *“It was just a few pounds extra on the bill, I was a bit annoyed when I realised but it (the feeling) did not hang around.”*
- *“I got a charge of over £6 for a quick call. I was shocked and disgusted. Since then i have been very careful. I thought it was totally unfair.”*
- They can also feel a little silly and/or that it was their fault
- *“I was in a rush, I would probably have spotted it otherwise”*
- *“My wife is always telling me I should be more careful about what I do on the Internet.”*
- However, almost everyone is left feeling that these services should be more transparent
- Also clear evidence of the potential for organisational harm with many thinking they called the end organisation directly

There are those who are left feeling considerably more angry about the whole experience

Need help over the phone with eBay?
Call The Helpline Service and speak to one of our trained UK advisors.

Call now for immediate assistance.

Helpline: 0905 915 0100 (open 24 hrs)
Visit: eBay.co.uk

Calls to the above number are charged at £1.53 per minute plus network extras with a £1.53 connection charge. When calling the number you will be connected to one of our live advisors who will assist you with your query. You may be able to locate contact information for eBay for free on their website.

- We can help with eBay issues/problems
- No automated systems or queues
- Speak to a live, UK based advisor

Lines open Sun - 5pm

For UK Tax Help Call: 09131 300035
Calls cost £1.53 per minute plus network extras

General information UK
UK Tax Office Information

The Helpline Service provides live telephone support. By calling this service you will be deemed impartial and to the best of our knowledge, we are not a technical support company, we are not connected to HMRC. Time Corporation Ltd, Unit 116, 186 St Albans Rd

Our advice

Tax Due & Tax Refunds | **Self Employed** | **VAT Registration**

Call our Helpline for information on:

- How to find out how much tax you owe or if you are due for a tax credit?
- Self assessment including declaring yourself self employed & payments on account
- Registering for VAT along with information on payments and refunds
- How to pay your tax over the phone or online
- Current income tax rates and tax bands in the UK

More information on Income Tax, Self Employment & Tax Credits / Refunds
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- Some felt angry about being “deliberately misled” (especially high cost calls)
- In many cases people who had used the service had needed to make a call quickly and had therefore been a bit more “off their guard”
- Many were not aware they had been charged until they had seen their phone bill and then initially blamed the end organisation or, in one case, blamed 118 (because they thought 118 was only directory service available and so it must have been them)
- People generally don’t complain for three key reasons:
 1. They don’t know who to complain to
 2. They think it will be too much hassle
 3. They feel a “bit stupid” for having called the number

Case Study – Call to LG Customer Service

25 years old / female



Kerry is 25 years old with one young child living in Norfolk. Partner is working full-time

- Uses internet daily for Facebook, online shopping, printing out pictures for colouring for her young son. Also used from time to time for telephone number searches
- Used to use 118 services but now too expensive and so now uses internet searches and, if possible, company paperwork (bills) to locate telephone numbers

- LG washing machine stopped working and she tried to find the number from her LG paperwork without success
- Typed 'LG customer service phone number' into Google and clicked on what looked like an official link
- This took her to a site with an LG logo and an 09 number. She felt it looked official and thought she was calling LG directly
 - The operator offered to put her through and quoted the price. At this stage, she still thought she was calling LG (she wasn't told it was a directory service) but the operator offered her an 016 number instead
 - She thought she had called an expensive LG line and it was only when she looked back at the site she realised it was a directory service
 - The call took no more than 2 minutes and cost £4.50
- She didn't complain because she didn't know who to complain to and thought it would be a lot of effort



Kerry was very angry about the whole experience. She feels the site should make it much clearer that it is not the end organisation but a directory service. The use of the LG logo was felt to be deliberately misleading

Case Study – Call to British Gas

40 years old / male



Victor is 40 years old living alone near Halifax. He is currently unemployed

- Uses the internet daily for job searches and emailing his CV but has only recently bought a PC and is not very computer literate
- Never uses directory enquiry services – uses Yellow Pages, internet searches and, if possible, company paperwork (bills) to locate telephone numbers

- Had to call British Gas because when he tried to charge his gas meter key online the transaction failed
- Typed what he thought was the correct URL to get to the relevant British Gas page but this failed and so he used Google instead
- This took him to a site he thought was the British Gas website and offered him a telephone number. He called the number thinking he was calling British Gas
 - The operator offered to put him through and quoted the price which he accepted but only looking back did he realise this was a call directory service (not a British Gas call centre)
 - The call took no more than 2 minutes and cost c£3.00
 - When he saw the bill he realised it wasn't British Gas but then thought it must have been a 118 service (as he didn't think there were any other call connection services)
- He didn't complain because, although he was angry, it wasn't a huge amount of money and it would take time



Victor was fairly angry and quite confused about the whole experience. He felt the site should have made it much clearer that it was not British Gas but a directory service and that the person putting the call through should have made it clear that they work for a call directory service

Case Study – Call to Comet

70 year old / female



Sue is 70 years old living alone as a widow. She is a retired magistrate.

- She feels quite confident on the internet, using it to look up information as and when required
- Only uses 118 directory services if she draws a blank online. May use 'Yell.com' or do a search on the company name or type of service required.

- Had to call Comet as had a query about an electrical product purchased from them
- Typed in Comet and thought that she went through to the Comet website
- When calling the number she thought it was some sort of connection service to different branches or offices with Comet
- When she got the bill she was surprised and worked out this is what it was
- She was annoyed and surprised that Comet was using a third party to make money out of their calls
"I thought it was rather a fiddle."
- Still under the belief that it was Comet that had been at fault
- Did not consider complaining but is more careful now about calling numbers with an 09 prefix or a prefix she does not know



Sue was annoyed about the experience and now she is retired she feels she can not afford to make too many mistakes like this. When discovering it is a directories style service the irritation continues – *"If I had wanted to call directories I would have done so, I did not know these services even existed which is why I thought Comet was behind it."*

Case Study – Call to British Gas Customer Service

23 year old male



Jamie is 23 years' old – he's a graduate and is currently looking for work

- Uses internet daily for many activities including Facebook, work related issues, hobby (photography), shopping, etc.
- Tends to use Google as primary means for getting telephone numbers and is generally happy to do some 'research' online to track down the number he wants

- Jamie was sharing a house with friends – when some people left he had problems sorting out the account/bill with British Gas. The problem gradually escalated – and Jamie got more and more stressed by the situation
- Eventually – when he was very stressed – he decided he wanted to phone BG customer service and 'just get it sorted'.
- He used a Google search on his Smartphone – and then just phoned the first number he saw (at the top of the list)
- After dialling he was put through, having been told the cost was 'about a £1 a minute'
- He was OK with the experience; 'it was only a couple of quid, and wasn't really misleading'
- If he hadn't been so stressed he would have looked further – but at the time he made the call, his overriding need was to make the call as fast as he could. So in this sense, it provided him with a service 'it's there for a purpose'



Jamie was reasonably satisfied with the whole experience – he didn't believe that he'd lost a lot of money, and didn't think that he'd been misled.

Case Study – Call to O2 Customer Service

51 year old male (and 15 year old daughter)



James is 51 years' old – he's married with three children (only 1 living at home: 15 year old daughter to second wife), currently unemployed and awaiting a knee operation

- Uses internet daily for many activities including email, news and looking up telephone numbers
- Tends to use Google as primary means for getting telephone numbers although used to use 118 when he was working

- James' daughter had recently taken out a new PAYG mobile phone with O2 and had to call O2 customer service about an issue with the phone (just before Christmas)
- James looked up the O2 customer service number on his PC. He picked the first result from the search results (and is now sure it wasn't the O2 website even though O2 was prominent)
- He read the (09) number out to his daughter who called from her mobile. She was on the phone for about 10 minutes until her query was dealt with by O2. She can't remember being told it was a paid for call or being connected
- When she tried to make another call later that day she realised that she'd already used up her £20 credit. They called O2 (on a different number) to see what had happened
- O2 told them that they had used an external premium rate number, the call had cost £20 but that they would refund them the £20
- He was relieved and grateful to O2



James was reasonably satisfied with the whole experience (because O2 fixed the problem) but will be much more wary next time

* Type 2 Services seem to offer considerably greater potential for consumer harm



The screenshot shows the eBay Helpline Service website. At the top, it says "Need help over the phone with eBay?" and "Call The Helpline Service and speak to one of our trained UK advisors." Below this is a red rotary phone icon and the text "Call now for immediate assistance." It provides a helpline number "0905 915 0100 (open 24 hrs)" and a website "eBay.co.uk". It states "Calls to the above number are charged at £1.53 per minute plus network extras with a £1.53 connection charge." It lists services: "We can help with eBay issues/problems", "No automated systems or queues", and "Speak to a live, UK based advisor". Below this is a photo of a call center and the UK Tax Office logo with the number "09131 300035". It says "Lines open Sun - 6pm" and "Calls cost £1.53 per minute plus network extras". There is a navigation menu with "Home", "Income Tax & Allowances", "Self-Employment", "VAT Registration", "Tax Credits & Benefits", and "Personal Finance". A disclaimer states "We are not affiliated with government agencies, content provided may be free elsewhere & is not deemed as professional advice, callers must be 18 or over". Below this is a "WELCOME TO TAX AND BENEFITS" section with a "Our advice" icon. It lists "Tax Due & Tax Refunds", "Self Employed", and "VAT Registration". There is a "More information on Income Tax, Self Employment & Tax Credits / Refunds" section with the call number "09131 300035". A disclaimer at the bottom says "We are not affiliated with government agencies, content provided may be free elsewhere."

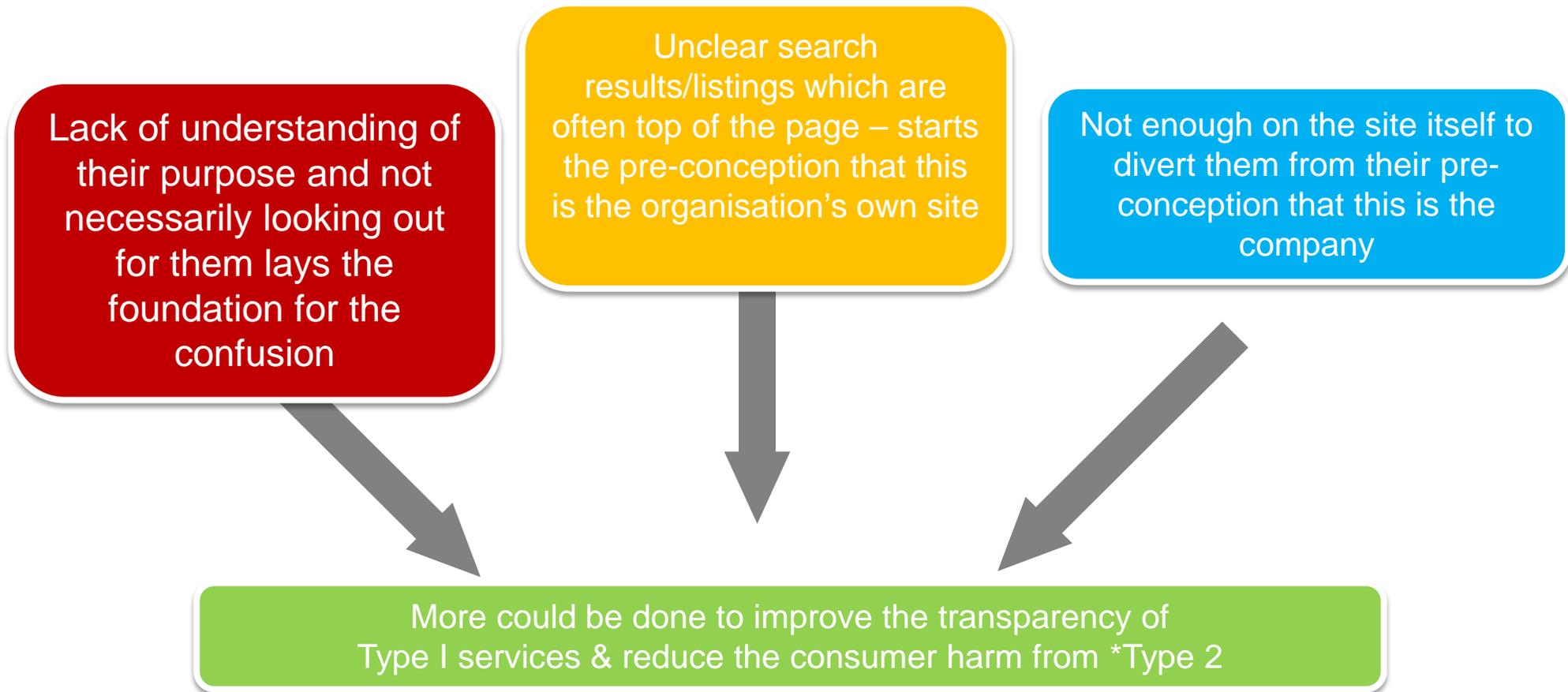
- The costs of mistakenly using one are considerably higher
- Not always clear what they are getting and who is providing the service
- Seem to use tactics to ‘deliberately’ keep people on the phone
- The information provided is either too generic to be helpful (e.g. UK Tax Office) or misleading (eBay)
- The eBay service is asking for quite a bit of personal information – left with a degree of anxiety over how that will be used

No consumer benefit seen & assumed to exist purely to make money

* Type 2 feedback was based on qualitative interviews only

Summary

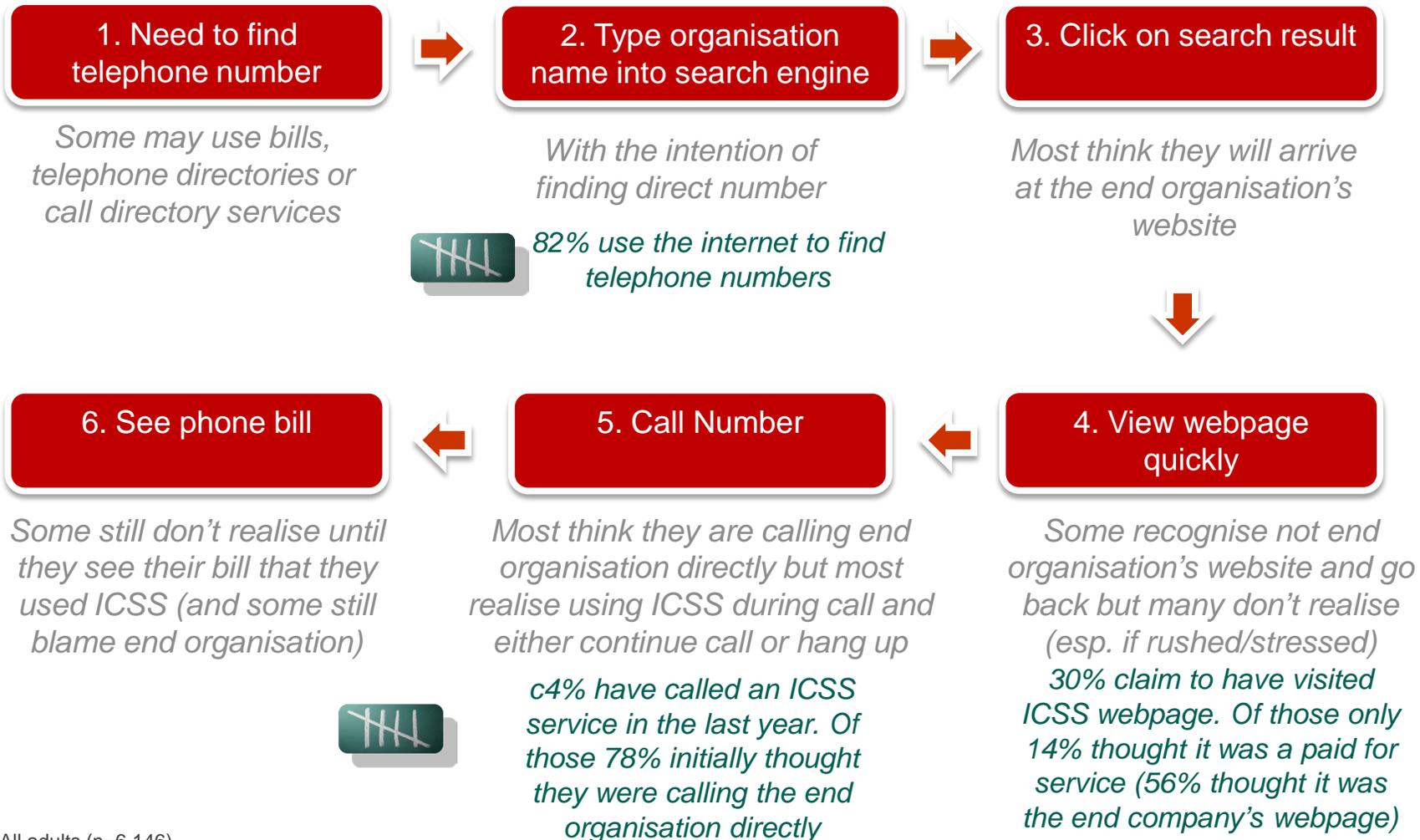
A number of factors combine to create confusion around ICSS services



“At the moment these services seem to be deliberately misleading, if it was more obvious what they were then I can choose whether to use them or not”

* Type 2 feedback was based on qualitative interviews only

Many experience the same unintended ICSS “journey”



Base = All adults (n=6,146)

Online omnibus survey with a nationally representative sample of GB adults aged 18+

Qualitative feedback based on 12 paired (24 people) in-depth interviews with a selection of people who use the internet to look up phone numbers

The research supports a number of the hypotheses outlined in the consultation document



The use of Search Engine Marketing (SEM) to give the PRS greater prominence to an actual website and/or helpline – proposed conditions here include a specific requirement to state in displayed SEM results “this is a premium rate service”.

Confusion starts on the search page



The use of web pages, and in some cases other promotions such as classified ads, to mislead consumers into believing that a PRS is in fact the number they are looking for, or that it is providing information which is not publicly available elsewhere.

Web pages could be clearer



The lack of an alert before a PRS directly connects consumers to a helpline that informs the consumer they are using a PRS.

Did occur on occasion



A lack of prominent pricing information on web pages or in other promotions.

Pricing is in small font



Potential for consumers to be held in a queue when connected via a PRS, thus increasing the total cost of the call.



Potential for consumers to be delayed where an operator requests details which are irrelevant to the information or advice being provided.

Found evidence in *Type 2 services



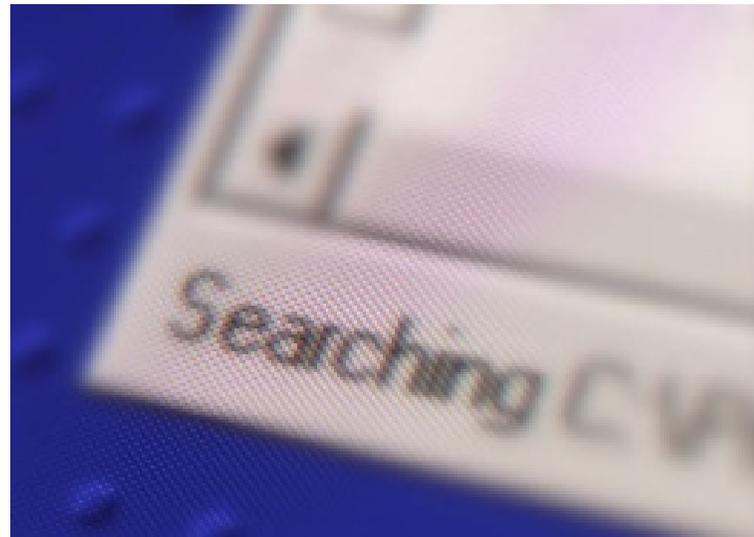
Potential for consumers to be asked to provide personal and/or confidential data.

Found evidence in *Type 2 services

Consumer suggestions for improving the transparency of Type I services

Search Page

- Make it clear in the URL that this is a premium rate service
- Make it clear in the URL that this is a directories service (rather than appearing to be the company/service)
- Ensure the genuine website always takes priority in the main (non paid for) listings



Consumer suggestions for improving the transparency of Type I services



Web Page

- Clearly brand the site with the services name and as a directories service
- Ensure key information is in sufficiently large and written in clear English – ‘this is a premium rate number’, ‘this is not the official website’, ‘the cost of the call is x’, ‘you will need pencil and paper to write down the no.’
- Ensure it is clear that if you would like the **number for free it can be found on the companies official website**

Consumer suggestions for improving the transparency of Type I services



On Call

- Ensure there is time to write down the number
- Make it clear what they are calling (i.e. not the company direct) but a directories service (call connection not understood as a term)
- If it offers connection give the consumer a clear choice – would you like the phone number or to be connected to at the cost of X per minute (as per 118)

Appendix:

1. Discussion Guide for 12 paired (24 people) in-depth interviews

ICSS Services Research
PhonepayPlus

12 x 1 hour paired depth interviews

Primary Objectives:

Research is required to obtain the consumer viewpoint of ICSS services.

More specifically:

- To assess the potential for consumer harm – both in terms of direct harm (cost of using, feeling misled, delays, giving out personal data) and also indirectly undermining public confidence in the organisation they are wishing to dial
- To understand the perceived benefits of ICSS services
- To understand how ICSS are perceived in the context of Directory Enquiry services – to what extent are they seen as different/similar and how, if at all, does the potential for 'harm' differ
- To understand perceptions and understanding at different stages of the customer journey
- To explore safeguards that may have helped and obtain reactions to current proposals

5 mins

1. Introduction

Moderator introductions:

- PhonepayPlus, which is involved in the regulation of certain telephone services in the UK, is doing some research looking into how people access phone numbers
- Today we are going to asking you to look up some phone numbers and call up the organisations to obtain your perceptions of how clear and easy this is to do
- No right or wrong answers, not a test, recording, confidential

General background/warm up:

- Name & and current situation, work/home/family
- If you were not here tonight what would you be doing
- How would you describe your ability to use the internet, what do they use the internet for and why
- Where do you use the internet (e.g. at home, library, phone, tablet)

10 mins

2. Obtaining Phone Numbers (FOR SECOND SET OF DEPTHS – ASK THIS SECTION AFTER SECTION 3)

- How do you prefer to deal with organisations (phone, online, written)? Why?
- Which types of organisations do you typically deal with over the telephone? Why?
 - Commercial organisations
 - Government organisations

- What sort of occasions would you choose to call up rather than using another method?
 - Helpdesk/technical support
 - When you have questions to answer
 - When under time pressure
 - When at home/work/out and about
- Ask to provide some recent examples of the last 3-4 organisations they called up
 - Who were they, why did they call rather than another method
 - How did you obtain their telephone number?
 - Why did you choose this method?
 - How easy was it to obtain their number/contact them? What made it easy/difficult to get in touch?
- How do you typically look up phone numbers?
 - Use 118 directory services
 - If online – which search engine do they use? Why?
 - Awareness of adverts/sponsored links when they do a search (touch on here but follow up in more detail when they carry out the searches)
 - Providers own site online
 - Other online directory services – what are these? How are they the same/different from 118 services?
 - Use a printed directory/ask friends relatives (& why)
 - Any other methods ?
 - On computer vs. via mobile phone vs. by calling up
- What would determine which method you use?
 - How does your means of look up of personal numbers vary according to whether you are at work (using work phone/internet connection) or at home/out and about using your own devices
 - For those that use mobiles, how does it vary by the mobile data package they are on? (All inclusive vs. PAYG?)
 - How does it vary according to whether the number is for personal use and or work use
- How do these different methods of obtaining phone numbers compare (any benefits and drawbacks of each)?
 - Ease of use?
 - Cost of use?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Speed of obtaining the number? ○ How their behaviour changes depending on the method? • Which is their preferred method to look up phone numbers? Why? • Do you have any concerns about any of these methods? Are there any methods they would/do prefer not to use? Why? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Have you ever experienced any issues when looking up phone numbers? What are these? • IF SEEM TO HAVE USED AN ICSS SERVICE – LISTEN OUT FOR HOW DESCRIBE THEM & PERCEPTIONS OF WHAT THEY ARE
30 mins Accompanied Surfs	<p>3. Exploring reactions to ICSS Services</p> <p>MODERATOR NOTE: Task to work as follows:</p> <p>TASK A- TWO TYPE ONE SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain to respondent you would like them to look up certain services – use search terms/search engine listed and pick a ‘transparent’ and a ‘potentially misleading’ example initially (rotating order of showing first). For those recruited for Smartphone depths ask them to look it up on their Smartphone. • Rotate examples used to ensure each covered equally • Ask respondents to carry out the look up as they would do normally and allow them <u>2 minutes</u> to find the service. If the ICSS service is not listed direct them to this after you have asked them about the approach they taken naturally. • Ask the respondent to <u>think out loud as they carry out the task, and talk about what they understand about what they are seeing, what they think they have to do, and why</u>. Allow the respondent to try and comprehend what they see do not prompt beyond ultimately pointing them in the direction of the ICSS service. • Each respondent in paired interview should alternate taking the lead. For example, respondent 1 leads the first task, respondent 2 leads the second task • Ask respondents to call up the service. <p>FOR EACH ICSS OBTAIN FEEDBACK ON THE LISTING AS IT APPEARS ON THE SEARCH ENGINE, THE WEB PAGE ITSELF AND THE PHONE CALL. NEVER USE THE TERMS TRANSPARENT AND/OR POTENTIALLY MISLEADING TO RESPONDENTS – SIMPLY USED TO ENSURE A SPREAD OF EXPERIENCES ARE PRESENTED.</p> <p>Once you have been through both the ‘more transparent’ and the ‘potentially misleading’ experience unprompted ask</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would you describe that experience?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What was good about it? ○ What was not as good? • Who were you calling just now? Was it the organisation direct or another organisation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Who were they? ○ How would you describe them/what they do? ○ Why do you think they are there/what is their purpose? ○ What are the benefits of a service like this? ○ What concerns would you have about using this service? • How does this service compare to a 118 directory enquiries service? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What is better/worse about it? ○ Are they offering the same thing? Why/Why not? • How do you see the costs as comparing between calling direct? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ & Between Directory Enquires? <p>Next go back and walk though each of the stages in a more prompted fashion. Ask specific probes as appropriate</p> <p>At this point review the search results with respondent/s and see what they understand – ads, sponsored links etc. Also whether they understand that these are placed in coloured shaded boxes or certain parts of the page (e.g. listed on the right)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you see on the page/list, what is it showing you/asking you to do • How clear is it from this page: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What they are offering? ○ Who you are calling up?/That it is not the organisation itself you are calling? ○ That you can also call the organisation direct? & How to obtain this number? ○ The cost of the call? • If it was not clear who they were calling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reveal... ○ How did they feel when identify of who they were calling was revealed? • How would you describe this service to someone else? • How does it compare to a 118 Directory Enquiries service? • What do you think about the way they present the information?
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How could it be improved? • What do you think/feel about the service as a result of what you see – (<i>listen for any hidden facts/data/lack of clarity</i>) • When, if at all, would you choose this method of accessing numbers? Why/Why not? • If you were doing this at home would you continue and call the '09' number or would you look for another means of making the call? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Why/Why not? What would drive you to make this decision (<i>listen out for ease/speed as a motivational factor</i>) <p>TASK 2. ONE TYPE TWO SERVICE: Once been through two services in detail repeat for one of the Type Two examples exploring prompts above ensuring understand how it is seen as different/similar to the Type One example.</p> <p>TASK FOR TYPE TWO: Respondent can give false details which are not their own (have some prepared in case they need help – potentially name, phone number, address, name, account details). For 'thehelplineservice.co.uk' respondents to come up with a question for the service they would like answered e.g. "I have an item (xxxx) I would like to sell on eBay but do not know how to do this, can you tell me how to do this."</p> <p>PLUS ADD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you think of the advice/help being offered? • Who was giving this advice? • How does it compare with calling direct? <p>TASK THREE: REMAINING EXAMPLES AS TIME ALLOWS. Set task for remaining examples but to be covered in less detail, focus on what they are doing better/worse than previous examples used.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What could other services learn from them? • What are they doing less well? & Why?
	<p>Overview of services & controls</p> <p>ONCE BEEN THROUGH ALL EXAMPLES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now you have been through a number of examples, how would you describe these services? • What are they offering? Why do you think people use these sorts of services? • Have you seen these services in the past?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Have you used them in the past? ○ IF YES: Why did you choose this means of looking up a number/Why not? ○ How did you find the experience? ○ Who did you think you were calling?/How clear were you on what you were being offered? ○ Were you aware how much it was costing you? • Who are they competing with?/Are they most similar to? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To what extent do you see them as the same/different as Directory Enquiries services? ○ Do they share any benefits or faults? • Why do these types of service exist? What benefits do they offer the public? <p>TASK FOUR – ICSS IN THE CONTEXT OF DQ. Ask them to look up the same service they initially looked up using standard Directory Enquiries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are these similar/different? • How does the experience compare? Why? • Benefits and drawbacks of one type of service over another? Do they offer the same or different benefits to the public? • If you were in charge of regulating these services and putting safeguards in place to protect the public what would you propose doing? WHAT ELSE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Why are you suggesting these measures? ○ Are there any other safeguards you would put in place to protect the public from misuse? ○ If you had to put measures in place for Directory Enquiries services would they be the same or different? Why/Why not?
5 mins	<p>4. Summary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall what do you think of the different things • Sum up what your main likes and dislikes are? • How does it compare with 118 Directory Enquiries services you have used • What one thing would you do to improve these services? <p>Thank and close</p>

Appendix:

2. Main Questionnaire for online omnibus survey

PHONEPAY PLUS ICSS RESEARCH
QUESTIONNAIRE – FINAL VERSION

ASK ALL

- Q1. Which of the following methods, if any, have you used in the last year to find a telephone number for a large organisation or business e.g. a utility provider, bank, government department, large retailer etc?
RANDOMISE ORDER - MULTICODE

Searched on the internet.....	1
Called a 118 service.....	2
Looked in a printed directory.....	3
Looked in a newspaper.....	4
Looked on a bill or letter from that organisation.....	5
Other (please specify.....)	6
None.....	7
Not sure / can't remember.....	8

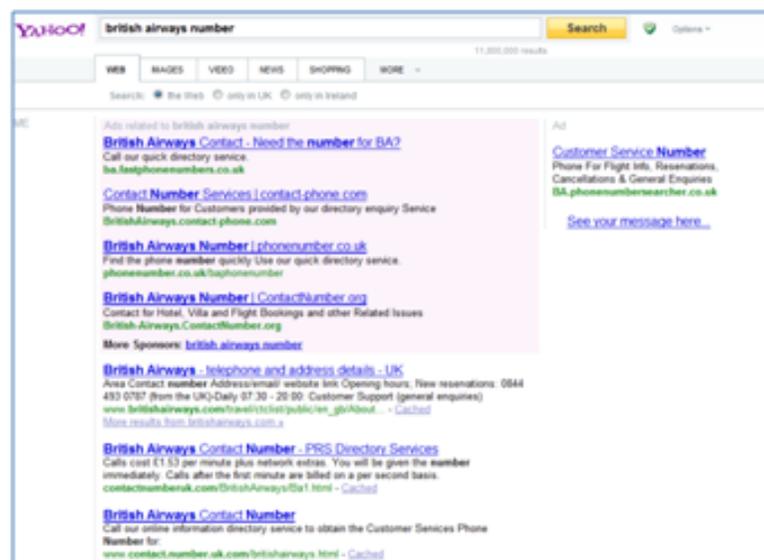
ASK Q2 OF THOSE WHO HAVE USED 118 (CODE 2 AT Q1)

- Q2. When you called the 118 service, did you know what the service was offering?

Yes, I knew it was a directory enquiries service I would have to pay for.....	1
No, I thought it was something else (please specify.....)	2
Not sure / can't remember.....	3

ASK ALL

When you search for an organisation's telephone number on the Internet, you will usually get multiple results. Following is an example of typical search results you might see when searching for a commercial or public sector organisation. Please look at this example and you will then need to answer some further questions.



The screenshot shows a Yahoo! search results page for the query "british airways number". The search bar at the top shows the query and a search button. Below the search bar, there are tabs for "WEB", "IMAGES", "VIDEOS", "NEWS", "SHOPPING", and "MORE". The search results are displayed in a list format, with each result including a title, a brief description, and a URL. The results include:

- British Airways Contact - Need the number for BA?** Call our quick directory service. ba.fastphonenumber.co.uk
- Contact Number Services | contact-phone.com** Phone Number for Customers provided by our directory enquiry Service. BritishAirways.contact-phone.com
- British Airways Number | phonenumber.co.uk** Find the phone number quickly Use our quick directory service. phonenumber.co.uk/ba/airwaysnumber
- British Airways Number | ContactNumber.org** Contact for Hotel, Villa and Flight Bookings and other Related Issues. British-Airways.ContactNumber.org
- More Sponsors: british airways number**
- British Airways - telephone and address details - UK** Area Contact number Address/email website link Opening hours, New reservations: 0844 483 0787 (from the UK) Daily 07:30 - 20:00 Customer Support (general enquiries) www.britishairways.com/travel/checked/public/en_gb/about - Cached
- More results from britishairways.com**
- British Airways Contact Number - PRS Directory Services** Calls cost £1.53 per minute plus network extras. You will be given the number immediately. Calls after the first minute are billed on a per second basis. contactnumberuk.com/BritishAirways/01.html - Cached
- British Airways Contact Number** Call our online information directory service to obtain the Customer Services Phone Number for: www.contactnumber.uk.com/britishairways.html - Cached

Thinking about when you search for a telephone number on the Internet and then view the search results.

Q3a. Are you aware that the shaded section at the top contains paid-for ads rather than the website you may be looking for?

Yes 1
No 2

Q3b. Please look at the statements below and click on the relevant box to say whether you always, sometimes or never do these things:-

	Always	Sometimes	Never
I click on one of the first few results, even if they are in the shaded/paid-for ads section			
I avoid the shaded/ads section and only click on results in the rest of the list			
I tend to avoid the shaded/ads section but might click on the links in the shaded/ads section if they look relevant to my search			
I tend to avoid the shaded/ads section but might click on the links if I can't find what I am looking for anywhere else on the search results			

Apart from 118 directory enquiries, you might come across other types of service when searching for a telephone number on the Internet. For example, you might search for a specific telephone number but instead of clicking on that company's webpage, you might click on one of these service's web pages. Following are some examples of some of these companies' websites. Please spend some time looking at these examples and you will then need to answer some further questions.

SHOW VISUALS BELOW - SHOW EACH WEBPAGE ONE BY ONE



Inland Revenue Helpline
0907 024 1138
Please note that the information that we provide can be found without charge by searching yourself within the public domain.
Calls cost £1.50 per minute plus network access. You will be given the number immediately. Calls after the first minute are billed on a per second basis. Calls from mobiles and other networks may cost more.
You should make sure that you have a pen and paper ready as the exact number that you need will be provided immediately as a recorded message. If you wish to be connected directly, our service will provide you with the option of connecting you directly to the company or organisation whose number you have searched for.
N.B. 118 Directory Enquiries is not associated with any government or official body whose number we provide or which we provide a connection service to, nor do we have any similar services or products.
We provide a fast and convenient method for finding and connecting to commonly searched for Customer Service, Customer Helpline and Official Contact Numbers. If you choose to use our connection service and are not in a working system, please hang up and try again later using the number that we provided you with.
We believe that our service is useful, convenient and transparent. If you are in any way unsatisfied with the service that we provide, please contact us and we will deal with your query with a customer focus.
We are here all day long enquiry service and we charge for the service we provide which consists of instantly returning the exact number searched for together with an integrated connection service. Our connection charge currently costs less than 10% of 118 service.
Users of our service must be at least 18 years old and have the permission of the 118 owner.
Service provided by 118 Directory Enquiries Ltd, 240-257 St John Street, London, EC2M 4PP
© 2002 contactnumber.com Tel: 0203 660200. All rights reserved.



British Gas Customer Services
Call the directory number below
0904 545 0259
We connect you to customer services for less than half the price of BT 118. If you do not want to use our connection service, the number can be also be found for free by searching the British Gas website [here](#).
Customer Phone Number Information
Customer Phone Number (CPN) provides a quick and easy to use connection service to you for half the price of calling 118. Dialling the number above means you are using one of our CPN numbers that will appear as an 118, and is in the number of the company to whom you are connecting. You will connect to the company you are dialling. You will connect to a person at the company. It may mean that you will be the number provided to you. We do not intend to provide a free alternative service. Details are provided on this page as an aid to your connection. Contact Phone Number is not available on all services and the company to be contacted is not always the same as the 118 number.
Users of our service must be at least 18 years old and have the permission of the 118 owner.

UK Passport Customer Services Phone Number

Get the UK Passport phone number now. Number also sent by text message to mobile phones.

To get connected to
UK Passport Customer Services

0913 128 3376 This is a paid service, number also found without charge here

Call cost £1.50 per call plus network access. This is a directory service, once dialled you will hear a short recorded message containing the number for UK Passport Customer Services. This number is also sent by text to mobile phones to enable you to study your first number again. You can also find the number without charge here. Services open 24 hours. UK Phone is not affiliated with UK Passport.

phone numbers

Let the number below be the phone number for
Thomas Water

☎ Tel: 0905 915 6531 The information provided is also available free of charge from other sources on the Internet such as 800 etc.

Call the DVLA phone number below to obtain the
DVLA Phone Number

09838 381 055 The information that we provide can be found without charge by searching for yourself at the DVLA

Call 09838 381 055 for more information about the service or for more information on other services. This is a directory service, once dialled you will hear a short recorded message containing the number for DVLA Customer Services. This number is also sent by text to mobile phones to enable you to study your first number again. You can also find the number without charge here. Services open 24 hours. UK Phone is not affiliated with UK Passport.

Call the DVLA phone number below to obtain the DVLA Phone Number. This is a directory service, once dialled you will hear a short recorded message containing the number for DVLA Customer Services. This number is also sent by text to mobile phones to enable you to study your first number again. You can also find the number without charge here. Services open 24 hours. UK Phone is not affiliated with UK Passport.

Q4 Before today, were you aware that companies offering this type of service would appear in Internet search results?

- Yes.....1
No.....2
Not sure / can't remember.....3

Q5 In your Internet search results, have you clicked on one of the links to these websites or ones like them before? These sites could be offering services for a range of different commercial or public sector organisations not just the examples you have just seen.

- Yes.....1
No.....2
Not sure / can't remember.....3

ASK Q6 IF YES AT Q5 (CODE 1 AT Q5)

Q6 When you last clicked on one of the links to these websites, which page did you think you were being directed to?

- The website of the organisation whose number I wanted.....1
A service where I would have to pay to get the number.....2
A service where I could get the number for free.....3
Wasn't entirely sure when I clicked.....4
Can't remember.....5

ASK Q7 IF YES AT Q5 (CODE 1 AT Q5)

Q7 And do you think you've actually phoned the number promoted on these websites or ones like them in the last year? SINGLE CODE

- Yes, think you've used this type of service within the last 3 months.....1
Yes, think you've used this type of service in the last year but not in the last 3 months.....2
No, used but over a year ago.....3
No, clicked onto webpage but decided not to call the number.....4
Not sure / can't remember.....5

ASK Q8-Q10 FOR THOSE USING ONE OF THESE SERVICES IN THE LAST YEAR (CODES 1 AND 2 AT Q7)

Q8 When you called the service, did you know what the service was offering?

- Yes, I knew it was a phone number directory service
I would have to pay for.....1
No, I thought it was something else.....2
Not sure / can't remember.....3

Q9 Please think about the last time you used one of these services and describe your experience in detail below. In your answer please include the following information:

- Which organisation did you need to call?
- If you knew it was a call connection or directory service, why did you decide to use the service?
- If you thought you were calling the organisation directly, at what point did you realise your call was being routed by someone else?
- Approximate length and/or cost of call?
- Whether you got the information you needed?
- Any other comments about your experience (positive or negative)?

Q10. Before you called the number advertised, did you think you were calling one of these services or did you think you were calling the organisation you wanted directly?

- I thought I was calling one of these services.....1
- I thought I was calling the organisation directly.....2
- Not sure / can't remember.....3

ASK ALL

Q11. Please look at the statements below and click the relevant box to say how strongly you agree or disagree about each statement, according to how you feel about these services? **RANDOMISE ORDER OF STATEMENTS - SINGLE CODE PER STATEMENT**



	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
These services are useful	1	2	3	4	5	6
These services offer good value for money	1	2	3	4	5	6
It is not clear what these services are offering	1	2	3	4	5	6
These services will save me time	1	2	3	4	5	6

ASK Q12 IF USED DIRECTORY SERVICE IN LAST 3 MONTHS (CODE 1 AT Q7)

Q12. In principle, would you be willing to take part in a short telephone interview to discuss your experience in more detail. If chosen, you would receive a payment of £30 as a thank you for your time. The research would be carried out by Jigsaw Research on behalf of PhonpayPlus (PhonpayPlus is the organisation that regulates phone-paid services in the UK). **SINGLE CODE**

Yes.....1
Please provide your telephone number:

No.....2

Appendix:

3. Discussion Guide for 14 in-depth interviews with people who have used an ICSS service in the last three months

ICSS Services Research – PhonepayPlus Phase 3

12 x Follow up 30 minute depth interviews

Primary Objectives: Research is required to get more depth into the experiences of those who claim to have used an ICSS service. (Respondents are recruited as volunteers from those people who have a recent (3-4 months) memory of using an ICSS service on the quantitative survey. A mix of those who have both positive and negative comments will be recruited).

2 mins	<p>1. Introduction</p> <p><u>Moderator introductions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I understand that you recently conducted some online research into telephone number look up and you agreed to participate in a follow up interview. For confidentiality reasons we are not allowed to see your individual answers to the previous survey so apologies in advance if we are going over ground you have already covered. The interviews should take no longer than 30 minutes. Unlike the previous interview we are not going to be giving you a list of possible answers we instead want to hear about your experiences in your own words No right or wrong answers, not a test, recording, confidential <p>General background/warm up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name & and current situation, work/home/family How would you describe your ability to use the internet, what do they use the internet for and why
5 mins	<p>2. Obtaining Phone Numbers (FOR SECOND SET OF DEPTHS – ASK THIS SECTION AFTER SECTION 3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you typically look up phone numbers when you need them? What would determine which method you use? IF ONLINE – Where are you typically when looking up online?/What circumstances? What device/means to you use? How do these different methods of obtaining phone numbers compare (any benefits and drawbacks of each)? Which is their preferred method to look up phone numbers? Why? Have you ever experienced any issues when looking up phone numbers? What are these? IF SEEM TO HAVE USED AN ICSS SERVICE – LISTEN OUT FOR HOW DESCRIBE THEM & PERCEPTIONS OF WHAT THEY ARE
15 mins Follow up on	<p>3. Exploring reactions to ICSS Services</p> <p>MODERATOR NOTE: In the recent online survey undertaken it was mentioned</p>

use of service	<p>that you might come across other types of service apart from 118 Directory Enquiries when searching for a telephone number on the Internet. These services contain a phone number to help you locate the company/organisation you require but are not the website or direct number of the company itself. I understand that in your responses to the survey you indicated that you then phoned the number given on one of these websites. IS THIS CORRECT?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me about the last time you experienced this in your own words PROMPT IF NECESSARY: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which organisation were you trying to call? How did you look the number up? (device used) What made you pick this website to click through to, rather than another one, from the initial search listings? Did you know this was a call connection or directory service: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) At the point of clicking through to the website? Why/why not? What gave you this impression? B) At the time of initially making the call? Why/why not? What gave you this impression? IF YES: Why did you decide to use this service? What made you choose this number rather than another one? IF NO: Who did you think you were calling when you first called up? What gave you that impression?/Why did you think that? IF THOUGHT IT WAS THE ORGANISATION DIRECT: What made you realise it was not the organisation? How would you describe the organisation you were calling/this service to someone else? What is it that they are doing? What are they offering? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you know the name of the company/service? Did you realise that your call was being routed through to the organisation you wanted to speak to by a third party? IF YES: At what point did you realise this? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Were you offered the option of writing down the number rather than being connected? How would you describe your experience overall? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What was good about it? What was not as good? What are the benefits of a service like this? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Save time? Save hassle?
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Offer good value for money? • What concerns, if any, did you have about using this service prior to making the call? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Would you have any concerns about using this type of service again? • Were you just looking for a number when calling this service or were you expecting additional information? What sort of information? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Were you able to get all the information you needed? • How does this service compare to a 118 directory enquiries service? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What is better/worse about it? • How does this service compare to calling direct? • How long was the call? How much did it cost? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How did you know the costs? (in advance/afterwards) • How do you see the costs as comparing between calling direct? • How do you see the costs as comparing to 118 Directory Enquires? How do you know what these are/what do you think they are? • What do you think about the way they present the information a) at the point of the initial search (the listing) and b) once you click onto the site? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How clear is it what they are offering? ○ How, if at all, could the clarity of the offer be improved?
8 mins	<p>Overview of services & controls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When, if at all, would you choose this method of accessing numbers in future? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Why would you/wouldn't you use a service like this in future? ○ Would you look to use the same service/company or does it not matter? Why?/Why not? • Who are they competing with?/Are they most similar to? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To what extent do you see them as the same/different as Directory Enquiries services? • Why do these types of service exist? What benefits do they offer the public? • If you were in charge of regulating these services and putting safeguards in place to protect the public what would you propose doing? WHAT ELSE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Why are you suggesting these measures? ○ If you had to put measures in place for 118 Directory Enquiries services would they be the same or different? Why/Why not? • What one thing would you do to improve these services?

	Thank and close
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