E-mail makes for customer non-service

通过电子邮件获取客户服务存在阻碍

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If you're looking for a quick response to a customer service question, don't count on e-mail, according to a new study.

根据一个新的研究报告显示，如果你正在寻求客户服务部门的回应，那么不应该指望通过电子邮件方式来达到目的。

Only a third of the companies surveyed by Jupiter Research bothered to immediately acknowledge they had gotten customers' e-mail in the first place, sending an automatic response.

Jupiter研究公司调查的公司中，只有三分之一的公司表示他们收到客户电子邮件后会发出自动回应邮件。

Most of the companies did eventually respond to consumers, but don't hold your breath; only 52 percent got back within 24 hours, while 32 percent took three days or longer.

大多数公司最终都会回复客户的邮件，但只有52%的客户在一天内得到回复，而32%的客户在三天或更长时间内才能得到回复。

Those response rates could come back to haunt Web sites. Earlier studies Jupiter has done found that 59 percent of high-spending consumers (those who spend more than $500 online over six months) expect a resolution within 24 hours of firing off an e-mail.

Jupiter公司更早的调查研究发现，59%的高消费客户（在6个月内在线消费超过500美元）希望在一天内得到回复。

"That lack of response could drive consumers back to more costly channels such as the telephone," said David Daniels, senior analyst at Jupiter Research. "Consumers are definitely concerned about this."

回复不及时使得客户会转向成本更高服务渠道，比如通过电话获得服务。

Customer service has been a persistent problem for Web sites. And while a host of software companies sell customer relationship management (CRM) products that are supposed to help, their effectiveness has been questioned. Some studies find that a large number of CRM projects fail to deliver on stated goals.

Still, companies have tried to broaden their outlets for customers, the Jupiter study found. The number of respondents using searchable self-service features has risen from 13 percent to 32 percent within the past seven months, the survey found. But although self-service can be faster and cheaper, companies should be cautious about using it, the study shows.

Jupiter的研究发现，在过去的7个月中，使用可搜索的具有自服务功能响应机制的网站已经从原来占13%的比例上升到了32%。尽管自动服务越来越快和便宜，但各公司应该谨慎地使用这种服务方式。

"Self-service really lends itself to commodity goods categories (like books or CDs). When it gets up into more complicated situations, such as computing products or wireless phones, consumers absolutely said they want a real-time solution," Daniels said. "Those frequently asked-question lists are not necessarily specific enough to meet their needs. It's not a silver bullet."