

A Qualitative Analysis into the Adversaries behind Robocalls

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Research question: Who are these people calling on the other end of robocalls, what data are they collecting, and what goals and motivations do these callers have?

Overview

- It is estimated that on average every single phone owner in the United States gets an average 1.3 robocalls in a day
- Robocall adversaries have gone to great lengths to meticulously attack consumers based on specifics like their age, income bracket, ethnicity, and even financial responsibility
- As many continue to innovate solutions to fight the emergence of robocalls, many areas of critical research on the callers themselves remain unexplored

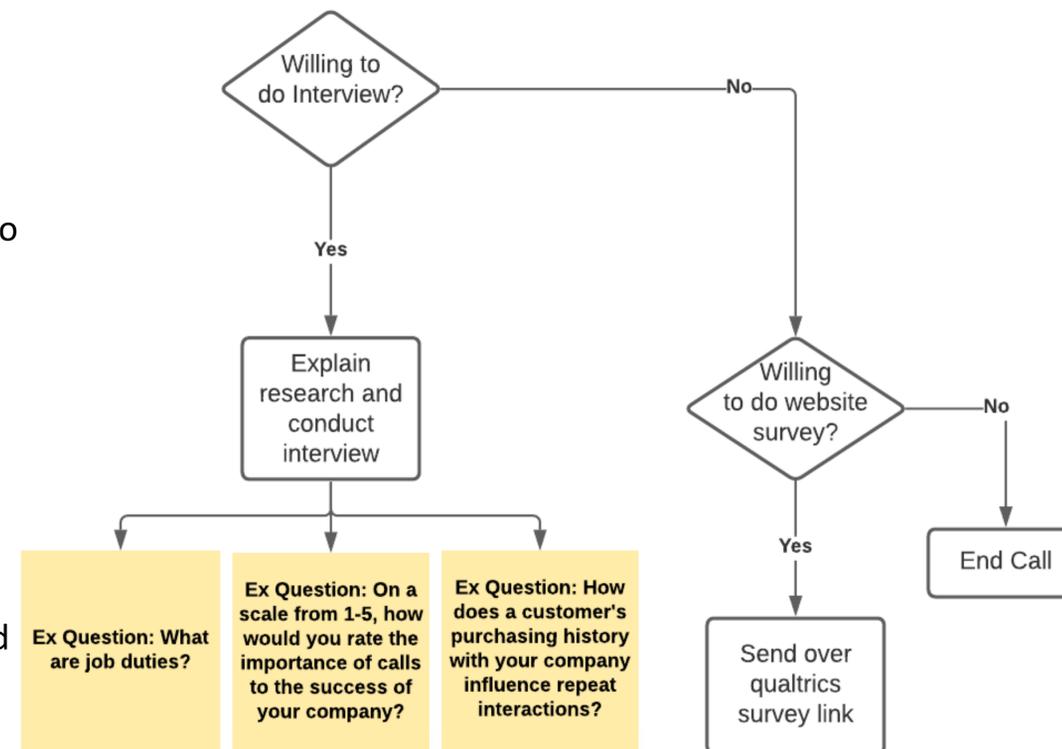
Research Methods

- My main data collection method involved answering spam phone calls and then trying to interview the callers on the other end
- Overall, I used three different survey data collection techniques
 - Live Phone Interviews
 - Online Web Surveys
 - Automated Phone Surveys
- I used different interview scripts to analyze
- In addition, I created a few non face-to-face surveys using Qualtrics for my web survey and CallFire for the automated phone survey

Obstacles Faced

- Interview success rate
 - High amount of phone call hang ups
 - Many spam calls were “one ring” or Wangiri calls, where you answer the call and hangs up right after
- Poor interview responses
- Creating data collection methods

Interview Flow Chart Example



Sample Survey Questions

- How would you describe your job?
- How do you choose which person to call?
- On a scale from 1-5, how would you rate the importance of calls to the success of your company?
- What happens after you are done with a phone call?

Progress Thus Far

- Implemented both qualitative and quantitative questions for data collection
- Created a diverse set of data collection methods
- Improved navigation of interviews to drive conversations to completeness

Next Steps

- Begin IRB approval process
- Create interview incentive options
- Use call tracking and automated IVR broadcast features on CallFire platform
- Obtain more phone numbers to accelerate data collection process

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