

Beware of finger slips – new Money Penny and VoiceNation survey shows potential pitfalls for the texting generation

ATLANTA, GA, UNITED STATES, October 1, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- With texting, instant messaging, voice-to-text and emailing becoming increasingly popular forms of communication, a new survey from [Money Penny](#) and [VoiceNation](#), the global leaders in outsourced communication, reveals how errors can result in misunderstandings and potentially embarrassing consequences.



Phone Users

The survey of 2,000 adults across the US found that younger generations are most likely to experience misunderstandings, or to make errors on text messages or emails: 44% of Gen Z (under 25 years) and 23% of Millennials (29-44 years), compared to only 7% of Baby Boomers (59-78 years) and 4% of the Silent Generation (over 79 years)

The survey also showed people commonly send texts and emails to the wrong person: 59% of those surveyed, and this is more pronounced among younger generations: 66% of Gen Z and 69% of Millennials, compared with 34% of the Silent Gen.

Examples of embarrassing text errors among survey participants:

- After a job interview I inadvertently sent a negative review of the interviewer, to the interviewer
- Going through a lawsuit, I accidentally sent a private personal message that was meant to be for my husband, to my lawyer
- I sent a message about a hummingbird feeder to my boss instead of my sister
- I sent a message meant for my boss to my entire team, talking about the team performance
- I sent an intimate text to my sister instead of my husband
- Sent a message meant for my girlfriend, to my grandmother

The Money Penny and VoiceNation survey also showed that 68% of those surveyed have had to use other forms of communication to clarify a message sent via text messaging or email, and again, younger generations are more likely to have had to do this: 75% of Gen Z, 76% of Millennials and 71% of Gen X compared with 57% of Baby Boomers and 45% of the Silent Generation.

When asked for specific reasons that contribute to misunderstandings in text or email communication, the key answers were:

- Lack of tone or emotion in written comms 43%
- Misinterpretation of intent 42%
- Lack of context or background info 32%
- Ambiguous language or jargon 24%
- Overuse of abbreviations 23%

The rise of 'telephobia'

However, despite common mistakes and misinterpretation, young people admit that the main reason they prefer to text rather than chat is because they feel too anxious to talk on the phone. This reason was given by over a third of Gen Z (36%) and 38% of Millennials compared with 26% of Gen X, 14% of Baby Boomers and 3% of the Silent Gen. This trend was also observed among students, where 44% gave "anxiety about talking" as a reason for preferring to text.

Other reasons given for preferring texting over talking were:

- Convenience 41%
- More thinking time 35%
- Easier to use 32%
- Less intrusive 29%
- Faster response 25%

Vexing voice-to-texting

The survey also revealed errors experienced with voice-to-text tools such as Siri, with more than a quarter overall (26%) experiencing this.

Similarly younger people seem more likely to experience errors: 38% of Gen Z and 34% of Millennials, compared with 15% of Baby Boomers and 3% of the Silent Gen.

Regional accents seem to be a particular problem for voice-to-text, according to those surveyed.

Examples of voice-to-text misunderstandings:

- A health care call about medication was very wrong
- I messaged my husband saying "I love you to the Moon and back" and the voice message texted "I love you to the doom and back"
- My parents tried to tell me they'd be home from church by 6pm, but instead it said "We'll be on the bench having sex." I was mortified!
- Voice-to-text misinterpreted "He downloaded it for us" as "He donated to terrorists"

It's good to talk

While texting is preferred to talking, more than half of survey participants (56%) felt the emotional connection is stronger on phone calls. This is mirrored by findings of a survey* conducted by Mary Jane Copps, known as [The Phone Lady](#), among 723 CEOs and senior executives in North America, England, France and Australia, which showed that phone conversations were classified as extremely important by 47% of respondents.

Copps commented: "My research suggests that the pendulum might swing back towards more traditional communication methods. Phone calls offer a level of immediacy that is often unmatched by digital channels. For urgent matters, clarifications, or when building relationships, the ability to pick up the phone and communicate remains invaluable. Phone communication continues to play a critical role in customer service and operational efficiency. The ability to communicate effectively over the phone significantly enhances customer experience, resolves issues promptly, and maintains high levels of customer satisfaction."

Richard Culberson CEO North America from Money Penny and VoiceNation commented: "There's no doubt we all love the speed and convenience of digital communication methods, indeed we incorporate digital tech into our own communication services for our clients, alongside our brilliant PAs. However, our survey shows the increased margin of error from texting rather than talking, and highlights the fact that we lose an important emotional understanding that comes with speaking to someone, and we can't detect the same subtle nuances that come from a conversation. For anything urgent, sensitive or complex, we'd urge people to simply pick up the phone."

ENDS

Notes to editors:

The Money Penny research was conducted by Censuswide, among a sample of 2000 general consumers in the US (nat rep) (18+). The data was collected between 08.06.2024 - 08.12.2024.

*Mary Jane Copps' survey results are available here: <https://thephonelady.com/phone-communication-trends/>

About Money Penny and VoiceNation

Money Penny and VoiceNation are America's leading virtual receptionist & phone answering providers offering 24/7 communication solutions. Collectively, Money Penny and VoiceNation employ over 1,000 people handling millions of calls, chats and bespoke tech solutions for thousands of businesses of all shapes and sizes from sole traders right up to multinational corporations.

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