

2008 COMMUNITY VOICE MAIL CLIENT SURVEY:

ASSESSING CVM VALUE, TECHNOLOGY USAGE, AND THE INFORMATION NEEDS OF CVM CLIENTS



FINAL REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2008 CVM Client Survey: Assessing CVM Value, Technology Usage, and the Information Needs of CVM Clients

As part of continuing efforts to evaluate the *access, impact* and *quality* of the Community Voice Mail (CVM) service, the CVM National Office (CVMN) utilized the advanced features of the Cisco Unity product to conduct a large-scale telephone survey of CVM clients. The survey, which lasted 38 days over the months of January and February of 2008 and sampled clients in 33 cities at CVM sites nationwide, sought to elicit specific information about CVM's client population in order to better direct resources and maximize the value of CVM's services. Clients were asked whether they currently have an email address and/or cell phone, and what type of phone they use to check their CVM voice mail box. Clients were also asked what their lives would be like if they did not have their CVM voice mail box, and what kinds of information or referrals via broadcast message they would find most important to their current situation. Finally, clients were invited to leave additional comments if they chose.

The option to participate in the telephone survey was included in the opening voicemail menu beginning on January 13, 2008. This gave approximately 11,590 clients access to the CVM survey. CVMN also used broadcast messaging to directly invite 5,844 clients across ten targeted cities to participate in the survey. By the survey's end date of February 20, 2008, CVMN had received **1700 responses** to the data entry type questions (press 1 for Yes, press 2 for No) for a response rate of 15% and **1,000 responses** to the narrative/verbal questions (**615 transcribed**), for a response rate of 9%.

Findings:

- **59%** of CVM clients have an **email address** that they use on a regular basis (n=1700)
- **21%** of CVM clients own their **own cell phone** to make and receive calls (n=1638)
- **71%** of CVM clients **use free phones** most often to check their voicemail (i.e., phones located at social service agencies or libraries) (n=1168)
- **19%** of CVM clients **use payphones** most often to check voicemail (n=1168)
- **10%** of CVM clients **use their cell phone** most often to check voicemail (n=1168)

When asked what their lives would be like if they did not have their CVM voicemail, clients responded in similar ways (n=597):

- **104** CVM clients, or **17%**, indicated that their lives would be *“difficult”* without their CVM voicemail. **60 (10%)** of CVM client respondents indicated that their lives would be *“hard.”* Other adjectives frequently repeated in client responses were *“miserable” (5%), “hectic” (2%), “terrible,” “hell,” “isolating,” “chaotic,”* and *“bad.”*
- *“I wouldn’t be able to...get messages from employers, family, friends...know my appointments...accomplish daily tasks...find a job.”*
- *“I would have no way of communicating with no one, or receiving information from anyone, and my life would be a living hell.”*
- *“I don’t have a phone or any other way to get messages.”*

Clients overwhelmingly indicated that they find information related to *jobs* and *housing* “most important” in their current situations (n=574):

- **439** CVM clients (**76.5%**) indicated that information related to **jobs and/or housing** would be the most important (57% jobs/employment related; 19.5% housing/homeless related).
- **Healthcare, community events/activities, education, children’s services, meals, transportation, social service programs** and **low-cost phone/cell service** were some of the other “most important topics” indicated by clients.
- Additionally, **45** CVM clients (**7.8%**) spontaneously expressed appreciation for information previously provided by CVM: *“Information that they are giving me is always important to me,” “All the information I get...golly, it’s invaluable as far as finding jobs.”*

Two hundred and forty-six CVM clients took the time to leave feedback at the end of the survey. **Most of those clients (203)** specifically **thanked CVM for their service** or otherwise expressed their appreciation:

- *“I would just like to say that without this program, I probably wouldn’t be able to survive. You have to have some sort of service to help you make the transition from indigent population to full service human being. You can’t survive. Particularly if you’re homeless, or you’re in transition, without such a service.”*
- *“Having this service is helping me obtain messages from employers because I am looking for a job at the moment, so I do appreciate the help and I do appreciate the service very much. Thank you.”*
- *“This program is very helpful and it’s a blessing, and I advise others that if they don’t have this service they need to get it because it’s a lifesaver.”*
- *“I would just like you to know that without this voicemail I would not have gotten the place I have, would not have lined up work, would not have gotten the medications that I need or the rental assistance, nor would I be clean and sober today, I’d still be homeless, putting drugs into me, so God bless you guys, thank you.”*

Results:

The 2008 CVM Client Survey successfully accomplished its purpose in ascertaining the *access, impact and quality* of the CVM service. Responses show that **59%** of CVM clients have **email addresses** that they use on a regular basis, and that **21%** of CVM clients own their **own cell phones**. Responses also show that CVM clients access their voicemail boxes primarily through the use of **free phones (71%)**, followed by payphones (19%) and cell phones (10%). Two hundred and three clients took the time to say “thank you” or express gratitude for the CVM service, and an additional 45 clients took expressed appreciation for the information left in broadcast messages. When combined with the high number of compelling client testimonials and stories, this data shows that **CVM clients place an extremely high value on the CVM voice mail box service.**

Possible Next Steps:

In order to further determine client satisfaction with CVM's service delivery, CVM may wish to conduct further surveys to increase sampling of respondents in cities from CVM sites that were not represented in the 2008 Client Survey. Another method of surveying (i.e., a direct mail survey or in-person questionnaires at CVM sites) might better capture responses from both the CVM sites that are not on the centralized system and the many clients who chose not to participate in the telephone survey.

Due to the high percentage of respondents who report having an email address that they check frequently, CVM may wish to consider email as another avenue for client service delivery and information-sharing.

Also, CVM may wish to explore the most frequently mentioned themes that emerged from client feedback by conducting preliminary research on possible partners for providing CVM clients with free phones or pagers so that they can more easily access their voicemail messages.

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HISTORY OF COMMUNITY VOICE MAIL¹

Community Voice Mail was founded in 1991 in Seattle based on a simple idea: Unemployed and homeless people searching for work will find employment much faster if they are given access to a telephone number and voicemail system. This concept was tested in 1992 when a Seattle-based voicemail company called Active Voice agreed to provide a voicemail system to 145 individuals over a period of six months. Seventy percent of those who received voicemail numbers found employment within two months.

Seeking to replicate these overwhelming results in other communities, Community Voice Mail applied for and received the 1993 Harvard/Ford Foundation Innovations in Government Award and a cash grant of \$100,000. Today, the program serves more than 40,000 people in 400 towns/cities nationwide per year.

Established in 1993 and headquartered in Seattle, the CVM National Office oversees 46 CVM sites nationwide. The CVM National Office provides a broad range of services:

- Identify and launch new CVM sites
- Administer the centralized voice mail server network and database
- Investigate new technology beneficial to the CVM mission
- Initiate and cultivate relationships with corporate & social change partners
- Provide technical support and training
- Support and set standards for the existing federation of sites
- Advocate for public policy that aligns with the CVM mission
- Host external and internal web sites (shared document library and best practices)
- Organize and host annual National Conference of CVM sites

Clients typically qualify for a Community Voice Mail number if they demonstrate financial need, lack of a reliable phone service, and pursuit of a goal for work, housing, healthcare or personal safety. The Community Voice Mail service is simple to set up and easy to use; clients need only access to a touch-tone phone to check their messages. Clients with email addresses can elect to have new message notifications sent to their inboxes. Callers use clients' telephone numbers like any other: There is no way to distinguish a CVM client by the telephone number.

Community Voice Mail seeks to double the number of people with access to CVM voice mail by the end of 2011 by launching new sites, identifying regional/national organizations to distribute numbers, and working with new technology partners to expand its services to those who need them most.

¹ From Community Voice Mail website: <http://www.cvm.org>.

PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

As part of continuing efforts to evaluate the *access*, *impact* and *quality* of the Community Voice Mail (CVM) service, the CVM National Office (CVMN) utilized the advanced features of the Cisco Unity product to conduct a large-scale telephone survey of CVM clients. The survey, which lasted 38 days over the months of January and February of 2008 and sampled clients in 33 cities at CVM sites nationwide, sought to elicit specific information about CVM's client population in order to better direct resources and maximize the value of CVM's services.

In order to minimize sample bias, care was taken to ensure geographic and urban/rural diversity: The survey included all CVM regions and both urban and rural CVM sites. Limitations of this survey include the following: CVM sites that are not on the centralized system could not be included, the discrete yes/no questions could not be cross-tabbed with themselves or with the narrative questions, and, since city reporting was voluntary, geographic analysis is limited.

The option to participate in the telephone survey was included in the opening voicemail menu beginning on January 13, 2008. This gave approximately 11,590 clients access to the CVM survey. CVMN also used broadcast messaging to directly invite 5,844 of those clients across ten targeted cities² to participate in the survey. By the survey's end date of February 20, 2008, CVMN had received **1700 responses** to the data entry type questions (press 1 for Yes, press 2 for No) for a response rate of 15% and **1,000 responses** to the narrative/verbal questions (**615 transcribed**), for a response rate of 9%.

CVMN conducted the 2008 CVM Client Survey in order to determine whether clients have email addresses and cell phones, how clients access their voicemail boxes, and what value clients place on the CVM service. CVMN also sought to augment its year-end demographic and outcome data, and gather updated testimonials and client stories.³ Questions 1 – 3 were designed to assess client *access* to CVM service, while questions 4-7 were designed to evaluate the *impact* and *quality* of CVM voicemail. Clients were asked whether they currently have an email address and/or cell phone and what type of phone they use to check their CVM voice mail box. Clients were also asked what their lives would be like if they did not have their CVM voice mail box, and what kinds of information or referrals via broadcast message they would find most important to their current situation. Finally, clients were invited to leave additional comments if they chose.

² Boston, Chicago, CSRA (Aiken, SC), D.C., Detroit, Houston, Los Angeles, Memphis, Raleigh and Seattle.

³ Internal document: 2008 CVM Client Survey

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

CVMN received **1700 responses** to the 2008 Client Survey's data entry questions (press 1 for Yes, press 2 for No) and **1,000 responses** to the survey's narrative/verbal questions (of which **615 were transcribed**). The data entry questions (Questions 1 – 3) sought information on whether clients have an email address that they use on a regular basis and whether they have their own cell phones. The questions also elicited responses on whether clients check their voicemail messages most often using their own cell phones, free public phones or payphones. These questions were asked in order to evaluate CVM's *access* to clients.

Q. #1: Do you have an email address that you use on a regular basis?

- **59%** of CVM clients have an **email address** that they use on a regular basis (n=1700).

Q. #2: Do you have your own cell phone to make calls and receive calls?

- **21%** of CVM clients own their **own cell phone** to make and receive calls (n=1638).

Q. #3: What kind of phone do you most often use to check your voice mail?

- **71%** of CVM clients **use free phones** most often to check their voicemail (i.e., phones located at social service agencies or libraries) (n=1168).
- **19%** of CVM clients **use payphones** most often to check voicemail (n=1168).
- **10%** of CVM clients **use their cell phone** most often to check voicemail (n=1168).

The survey's narrative/verbal questions (Questions 4 - 7) were designed to elicit feedback on the *impact* and *quality* of CVM services. Clients were asked what their lives would be like if they did not have their CVM voice mail box, and what kinds of information or referrals via broadcast message they would find most important to their current situation. Clients were also asked to give the city from which they were calling. Finally, clients were invited to leave additional comments if they chose.

Q. #4: If you did not have this voicemail box, what would your life be like?

When asked what their lives would be like if they did not have their CVM voicemail, **39%** of respondents indicated that their lives would be impacted negatively without the service:

- **One hundred and four** CVM clients, or **17%**, indicated that their lives would be *"difficult"* without their CVM voicemail. **Sixty (10%)** of CVM client respondents indicated that their lives would be *"hard."* Other adjectives frequently repeated in

client responses were “miserable” (5%), “hectic” (2%), “terrible,” “hell,” “isolating,” “chaotic,” “lost,” and “bad” (n=597).

Many clients expressed how their lives would be worse without their CVM voicemail boxes in their responses:

- *“I would be completely cut off from everybody and everything. It would be next to impossible for me to find a job or get information about jobs, and family members who are wondering where I’m at or if it’s okay can leave me messages on the voicemail as well so it’s very important. It’s like my lifeline.”*
- *“I would have no way of communicating with no one, or receiving information from anyone, and my life would be a living hell.”*
- *“I would have a lot more trouble -- like the nature of my work is that a lot of time I get laid-off or I have to switch jobs and I don’t have a cell phone, so there’s no place for an employer to call me that doesn’t give away where I live and the circumstances of my life, so I really appreciate the service.”*
- *“It would be terrible, I would not be able to get my messages, no one would know that I even exist and it would be nearly impossible to get employment because everybody contacts you through the phone, not email.”*
- *“I’d be very much more alone because I’d be out of touch with many, many people that I rely on for my support network. Pay phones are prohibitive, and other phones are not always available. So things would be a good deal grimmer.”*
- *“My life would be in a total wreck, because sometimes I get into a financial bind, and I’m not able to pay my cell phone bill.”*
- *“If I didn’t have this voicemail system at my disposal, life would be pretty hard. Homelessness, particularly in a metropolitan area like Boston, can be really daunting. So the service does help. Exponentially. Words can’t describe the service that is provided.”*

Q. #5: Please tell us what kinds of information would be most important to you.

Clients overwhelmingly indicated that they find information related to *jobs* and *housing* “most important” in their current situations (n=574):

- **Four hundred and thirty-nine** CVM clients (**76.5%**) indicated that information related to **jobs and/or housing** would be the most important (57% jobs/employment related; 19.5% housing/homeless related).

- **Healthcare, community events/activities, education, children’s services, meals, transportation, social service programs and low-cost phone/cell service** were some of the other “most important topics” indicated by clients.
- **Forty-five** CVM clients (**7.8%**) spontaneously expressed appreciation for information they already received from CVM: *“Information that they are giving me is always important to me,” “All the information I get...golly, it’s invaluable as far as finding jobs.”*

Many respondents provided more detail as to which types of information they would find most important in their answers:

- *“Job leads and stuff to help with finances, credit referrals, credit checks, credit repair, tax services, spiritual guidance.”*
- *“Love the information.”*
- *“Well the information they give is important to me. I like the little affirmations and I give my friends the job leads.”*
- *“All the information I get is perfectly -- I mean, golly, it’s invaluable as far as finding jobs.”*
- *“Well, information that they are rendering...job information, social services, outreach programs and even spiritual motivational words and thoughts have been very adequate in terms of being a good service in daily living, so it’s already above board.”*
- *“Job seeking employment which it did help me get employed through this organization that helped with this here, this voicemail... it worked perfect in my life once again.”*

Q. #6: Please tell us what city you are in.⁴

Due to over sampling at the Houston CVM site, the large portion of responses came from that area (140, or 28%). Seattle at 57 (11%) and Chicago at 52 (10%), drew the next highest number of responses. Raleigh drew 27 responses (5%), followed by Los Angeles (also 5%). Of the areas that had access to the survey, Bellingham and Richmond received the fewest number of responses (one response each).

Again, it is important to note that geographic analysis is inherently limited due to the voluntary nature of reporting clients’ cities: Ninety-seven respondents did not answer this question or left unintelligible responses.

⁴ Please see Appendices C and D.

Q. # 7: If you have anything else you would like to tell us please record your answer after the beep.

Two hundred and sixty-two CVM clients took the time to leave feedback at the end of the survey. **Forty-seven percent**, or **203** clients specifically thanked CVM for the service or otherwise expressed their appreciation:

- *“I would just like to say that without this program, I probably wouldn't be able to survive. You have to have some sort of service to help you make the transition from indigent population to full service human being. You can't survive. Particularly if you're homeless, or you're in transition, without such a service.”*
- *“I would just like you to know that without this voicemail I would not have gotten the place I have, would not have lined up work, would not have gotten the medications that I need or the rental assistance, nor would I be clean and sober today, I'd still be homeless, putting drugs into me, so God bless you guys, thank you.”*
- *“Thank you very much for providing these services. It's a lifesaver for those of us who do not have our own means of making phone calls. Thank you.”*
- *“I'm very grateful for this service. Like I say, without it I'd be lost. I wouldn't know what number to give out for would-be employers; I wouldn't have a phone number that I can put down on my application, so I'm grateful for it. Thank you.”*
- *“Having this voicemail really helps me out with giving me a stable and a reliable phone number that I can use. I can use friends' phone numbers and things like that, but the reliability of the voicemail -- I really need it a lot. Because a lot of the time my friends don't give me the messages, or their phones get disconnected. So it is really a good thing for me. I do appreciate it.”*
- *“This service is really a very good thing. I'm building myself back up after having lost my home of 22 years of no fault of mine and being able to have this service when otherwise I wouldn't be able to have it – it builds me up. I don't know how to explain it, I know it sounds corny, but it builds me up a little bit. Needless to say I got a job out of it, that's the most important thing. I have a number I can give to people now until I can afford to get another cell phone – it kind of builds up my self-esteem a little bit, I guess you could say and I appreciate it, thank you very much.”*
- *“This service is greatly needed. I appreciate it and I appreciate all the stuff it allows me to get accomplished as a result of having this service. I'm able to get calls in regards to employment, and my life is so much smoother. I'm on interviews all the time now, and I thank you. And I hope to keep it going.”*

The 2008 CVM Client Survey successfully accomplished its purpose in ascertaining the *access, impact* and *quality* of the CVM service. Responses show that **59%** of CVM clients have **email addresses** that they use on a regular basis, and that **21%** of CVM clients own their **own cell phones**. Responses also show that CVM clients access their voicemail boxes primarily through the use of **free phones (71%)**, followed by payphones (19%) and cell phones (10%). Two hundred and three clients took the time to say “thank you” or express gratitude for the CVM service, and an additional 45 clients took expressed appreciation for the information left in broadcast messages. When combined with the high number of compelling client testimonials and stories, this data shows that **CVM clients place an extremely high value on the CVM voice mail box service.**

THEMES

Client responses from the 2008 CVM Client Survey showed some reoccurring themes. The most frequent themes were:

- CVM's role in preventing or mitigating social isolation
- Importance of privacy
- Need for easy/free access to voicemail

1) CVM's role in preventing or mitigating social isolation

Fifty-seven clients – 9.3% – specifically mentioned their friends and family when discussing the importance of CVM to their daily lives. Three clients used the descriptor “isolated” when describing how their lives would be different without CVM; an additional two clients said that they would be “lonely.” These responses demonstrate that clients strongly value the ability to keep in contact with their loved ones.

2) Importance of privacy

Twelve clients specifically mentioned that they value the privacy inherent in having a personal number where they can receive their messages. Because clients have their own mailbox numbers, they do not have to rely on friends to allow them to use their numbers and/or pass on messages to clients when they are received. In the case of clients who are homeless, another benefit of the CVM service is that it does not signal clients' homeless status to potential employers.

3) Need for easy/free access to voicemail

Twenty-eight clients, or 4.6%, mentioned cell phones in their survey responses. Forty-one clients left system feedback; of those 41, eight clients requested a toll-free number or discussed the financial difficulties of having to use a payphone, and an additional three clients mentioned that they would like something to alert them when they have received a message so that they know when to access their voicemail. One client wondered if CVM could pair with a telephone provider “so that people who could somehow get a little assistance in buying a physical cell phone could use phone cards for that cell phone and then be able to retrieve messages from voicemail using the same cell phone. It would be a great help. Thank you.”

Another repeated theme is the additional difficulties facing clients with a criminal record. Five clients mentioned the difficulties of finding employment and housing with a record. These clients wanted information on “where an ex-convict [can] get hired” or housing resources.

POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS

In order to further determine client satisfaction with CVM's service delivery, CVM may wish to conduct further surveys to increase sampling of respondents in cities from CVM sites that were not represented in the 2008 Client Survey. Another method of surveying (i.e., a direct mail survey or in-person questionnaires with assistance from local service providers) might better capture responses from both the CVM sites that are not on the centralized system and the clients who chose not to participate in the voicemail survey.

Due to the high percentage of respondents who report having an email address that they check frequently, CVM may wish to consider email as another avenue for client service delivery and information-sharing.

Also, CVM may wish to explore the most frequently mentioned themes that emerged from client feedback by conducting preliminary research on possible partners for providing CVM clients with free phones or pagers so that they can more easily access their voicemail messages.

APPENDICES

Appendix A. 2008 CVM Client Survey Script and Questions

“Hi, this is Stacy from the Community Voice Mail National Office and I am calling to ask you to participate in a quick survey to help us learn more about how you use Community Voice Mail. This survey should take less than 5 minutes, and will help us improve the system and seek support for the program. We may use your recorded answer as to educate others about this program which means other people may hear your recorded voice but nobody will know who you are since we are not asking for your name. Your answers are anonymous and have no impact on your eligibility for this voicemail service. We appreciate your help with this project. “

“Please press the * key to return to the main menu where you will be asked to press 5 to participate in the survey:

Q1: *Email Address:* Thank you for choosing to participate. Let’s get started. (pause)
First question: Do you have an email address that you use on a regular basis?

Please press 1 for Yes or press 2 for No

Q2: *Cell phone:* Second Question: Do you have your own cell phone to make calls and receive calls?

Please press 1 for Yes or press 2 for No

Q3: *Access: Third question:* What kind of phone do you most often use to check your voice mail? There are three possible answers to this question. Please listen to the following three choices and then press the number for the one that you use most often:

1. *Press 1* if you use a Payphone to check your voicemail box most of the time
2. *Press 2* if you use a free phone somewhere in your city most of the time. An example of a free phone might be a phone at a social service agency, a shelter, the library, the place where you are living, a school, a hospital or any place else where there is a free phone for you to use to check your messages.
3. *Press 3* if you use your cell phone most of the time

For the next few questions, we want to hear your voice. After each question is asked, you’ll hear a beep. After the beep, answer the question, and then press the pound key. The next question will then be asked. Repeat this procedure until the end.

Q4: Value –

*Question 4: If you did not have this voicemail box, what would your life be like? **After the beep, record your answer and then press the pound key.***

Q5: Information:

*Question 5: The organization that gave you this voicemail box might sometimes leave you a message with information or referrals that could be useful to your current situation. After the beep, **please tell us what kinds of information would be most important to you. And then press the pound key.***

Q6: City – Please tell us what city you are in: After the beep, **record your answer and then press the pound key.**

Q7: Thank you/Feedback – Thank you for participating in this survey. *If you have anything else you would like to tell us please record your answer after the beep and then press the pound key.*

At the end of this survey you will be taken back to the beginning to enter your phone number and password and listen to the rest of your messages. “

Appendix B. Alphabetical List of CVM Sites by State

Arizona: Phoenix

California: Inland Empire, Los Angeles, Santa Clara Co. (San Jose), San Diego

Colorado: Denver

D.C.: Washington, D.C.

Florida: Orlando, Pinellas County, South Florida

Georgia: Atlanta

Illinois: Chicago

Massachusetts: Boston

Michigan: Detroit

Minnesota: Minneapolis/St. Paul

New Mexico: Albuquerque

New York: Albany, New York City

North Carolina: Raleigh

Ohio: Cleveland, Summit County (Akron)

Oklahoma: Tulsa

Oregon: Portland, Salem

Pennsylvania: Philadelphia

South Carolina: Aiken/Central Savannah River Area

Tennessee: Chattanooga, Memphis

Texas: Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, San Antonio

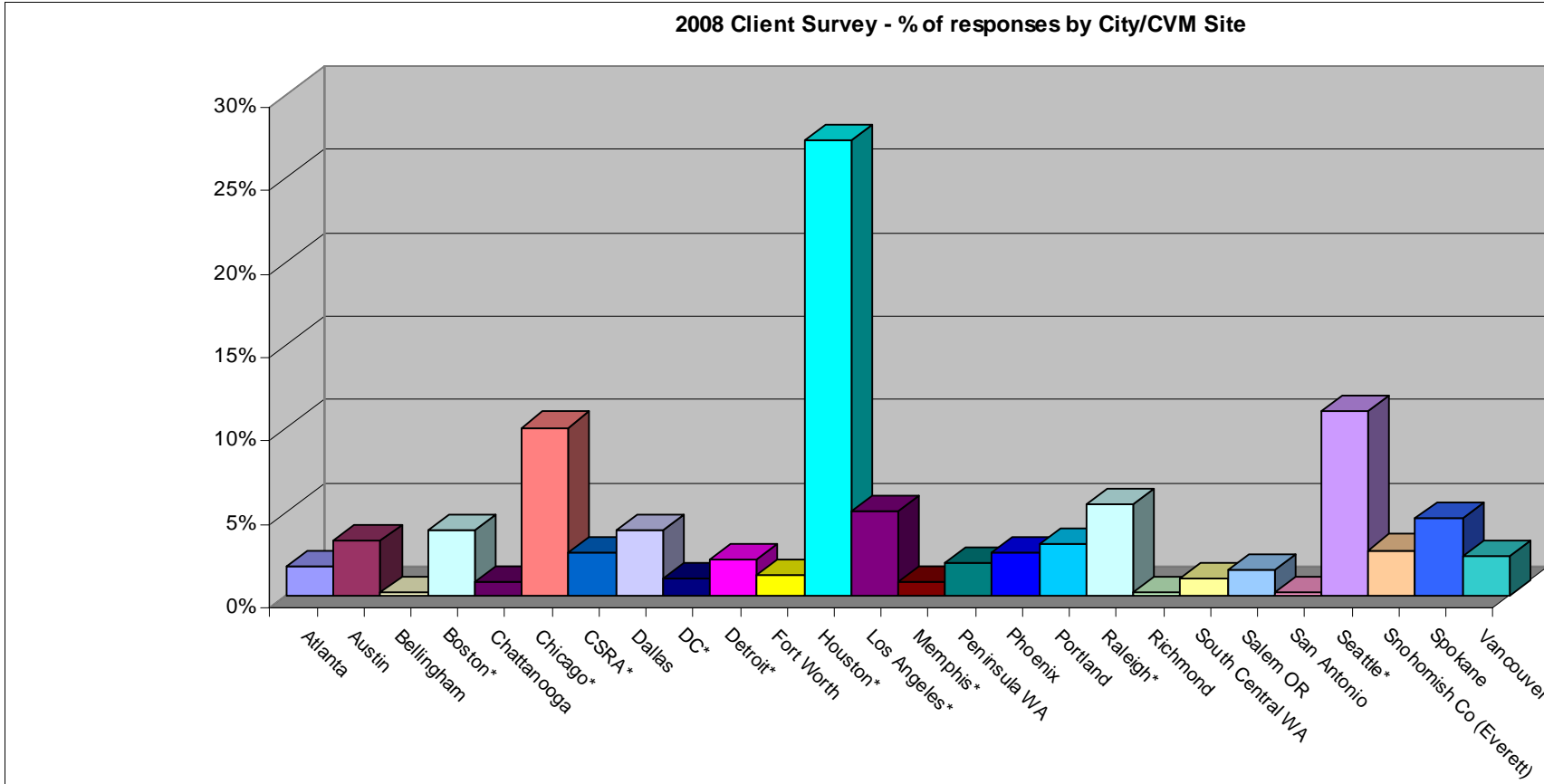
Virginia: Richmond

Washington: Bellingham, Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Co. (Longview), Island County, North Central WA, Olympia, Seattle/King County, Skagit Co (Mt. Vernon), Snohomish Co (Everett), South Central Washington, Spokane, Tacoma, Vancouver

Appendix C. Frequency and Percentage of Client Responses by City/CVM Site

Respondent City/CVM Program	Frequency	%
Atlanta	9	2%
Austin	17	3%
Bellingham	1	0%
Boston*	20	4%
Chattanooga	4	1%
Chicago*	52	10%
CSRA*	13	3%
Dallas	20	4%
DC*	5	1%
Detroit*	11	2%
Fort Worth	6	1%
Houston*	141	27%
Los Angeles*	26	5%
Memphis*	4	1%
Peninsula WA	10	2%
Phoenix	13	3%
Portland	16	3%
Raleigh*	28	5%
Richmond	1	0%
South Central WA	5	1%
Salem OR	8	2%
San Antonio	1	0%
Seattle*	57	11%
Snohomish Co (Everett)	14	3%
Spokane	24	5%
Vancouver	12	2%
Subtotal w/ City	518	100%
No City (didn't answer or illegible)	97	16%
Total	615	100%
*CVM Sites whose clients received broadcast invitation to participate in survey.		

Appendix D. Graph: Percentage of Client Responses per City/CVM Site



Appendix E. Additional Client Responses: Q. #4

Question 4: If you did not have this voicemail box, what would your life be like?

I would be completely cut off from everybody and everything. It would be next to impossible for me to find a job or get information about jobs, and family members who are wondering where I'm at or if it's okay can leave me messages on the voicemail as well so it's very important. It's like my lifeline.

I would have no way of communicating with no one, or receiving information from anyone, and my life would be a living hell.

I would have a lot more trouble -- like the nature of my work is that a lot of time I get laid-off or I have to switch jobs and I don't have a cell phone, so there's no place for an employer to call me that doesn't give away where I live and the circumstances of my life, so I really appreciate the service.

It would be terrible, I would not be able to get my messages, no one would know that I even exist and it would be nearly impossible to get employment because everybody contacts you through the phone, not email.

I'd be very much more alone because I'd be out of touch with many, many people that I rely on for my support network. Pay phones are prohibitive, and other phones are not always available. So things would be a good deal grimmer.

My life would be in a total wreck, because sometimes I get into a financial bind, and I'm not able to pay my cell phone bill.

If I didn't have this voicemail system at my disposal, life would be pretty hard. Homelessness, particularly in a metropolitan area like Boston, can be really daunting. So the service does help. Exponentially. Words can't describe the service that is provided.

It would really be messed up and disorganized. It went off one day, and I just didn't know what to do.

My life would be untenable, basically. I have used prepaid cell phones and am not often able to keep minutes on them. And also having lost some phones and numbers and this and that, the voicemail is very integral to some sense of permanence.

This voicemail is the only phone connection I have with anybody. So people could not get messages to me, doctors could not call me, I could not hunt for work, nobody would be able to be in contact with me. It is the only phone contact I have with anybody. I'd be trying to put pieces together with nothing to work with.

I'd be disconnected from family, friends, and employment opportunities.

I got a job through this system.

I would be out of touch with EVERYBODY if I didn't have this community voicemail box. It's been a blessing to me, and I really appreciate this program.

To put it simply, my life would be pretty screwed. I wouldn't have an opportunity to get callbacks for jobs and my caseworker probably wouldn't be able to get in touch with me, and therefore I'd probably be noncompliant in some fashion and I wouldn't be able to advance to the next level which is becoming fully independent of assistance.

I wouldn't have a way to get a job. I wouldn't have a phone number for anybody to get in touch with me. And I'd be unemployed for the rest of my life.

If I did not have this voice message service, I would be desperate at times to know the answer to a question, to get the information that was required for me to carry on my business, and be notified about employment.

It would be kind of hard because sometimes my personal phone gets turned off and I'm still able to check my voicemail by using other phones.

Life would be messed up because I can't use the office phone for my personal calls.

Well it would be impossible to get any information that I need for the services that I need.

Appendix F. Additional Client Responses: Q. #5

Question 5: *The organization that gave you this voicemail box might sometimes leave you a message with information or referrals that could be useful to your current situation. After the beep, **please tell us what kinds of information would be most important to you.***

Job leads and stuff to help with finances, credit referrals, credit checks, credit repair, tax services, spiritual guidance.

Love the information.

Well the information they give is important to me. I like the little affirmations and I give my friends the job leads.

All the information I get is perfectly -- I mean, golly, it's invaluable as far as finding jobs.

Well, information that they are rendering...job information, social services, outreach programs and even spiritual motivational words and thoughts have been very adequate in terms of being a good service in daily living, so it's already above board.

Job seeking employment which it did help me get employed through this organization that helped with this here, this voicemail... it worked perfect in my life once again.

Where can an ex-convict get hired.

Any general matters of civics, general public consumer sorts of information, like changes in bus traffic changes in election processing information that would not necessarily be widely communicated in a PSA.

How to find resources to keep myself clean... unfortunately many of the services that are provided are often...most people in the streets are drinking or doing drugs, it's very difficult to find a place where people aren't drinking or doing drugs and find a place that people are serious about helping themselves

Job leads, updated information going on around the city, any financial support or help, things about shelter...shelter, jobs and food.

Helping me find a job and letting me know where I can go and get free stuff because I'm unemployed.

Rental information, and possibly internet availability in the community.

Job prospects, family matters, medical questions, medical appointments, just the basic necessities.

I am homeless in a shelter so anything to do with housing would be great.

All the information they gave me is important to me.

Possible job leads and invitations to interviews would be the most useful to me.

How to be able to secure my own phone, especially transitioning my life. It's difficult to do with little to no money starting over in employment, horrible credit history, unstable work history...so how to be able to get a phone, how to be able secure permanent employment.

At this time tax services would be most helpful. Information on what the minimum amount of days you can work and still file taxes and stuff like that also, what are job fairs available, and probably places where you can get assistance for food and shelter and such things. Thank you.

The information that is most important to me is business -- job seeking information, people that are trying to get in contact with me for an emergency in my family -- things like that.

Jobs, places I could go to for shelter, or ways I can get into housing would be really good. The resources that are out there for just basic, everyday living.

Employment information, mostly, and you never know when you all might come up with something that I can use.

Appendix G. Additional Client Responses: Q. #7

Q7: Thank you for participating in this survey. *If you have anything else you would like to tell us please record your answer after the beep*, and then press the pound key.

I would just like you to know that without this voicemail I would not have gotten the place I have, would not have lined up work, would not have gotten the medications that I need or the rental assistance, nor would I be clean and sober today, I'd still be homeless, putting drugs into me, so God bless you guys, thank you.

Thank you very much for providing these services. It's a lifesaver for those of us who do not have our own means of making phone calls. Thank you.

I'm very grateful for having a service like this because if it wasn't for this service a lot of women like me wouldn't be able to get things done as easily. Thank you and have a great day.

I would just like to say that without this program, I probably wouldn't be able to survive. You have to have some sort of service to help you make the transition from indigent population to full service human being. You can't survive. Particularly if you're homeless, or you're in transition, without such a service.

I'm very grateful for this service. Like I say, without it I'd be lost. I wouldn't know what number to give out for would-be employers, I wouldn't have a phone number that I can put down on my application, so I'm grateful for it. Thank you.

Having this voicemail really helps me out with giving me a stable and a reliable phone number that I can use. I can use friends' phone numbers and things like that, but the reliability of the voicemail -- I really need it a lot. Because a lot of the time my friends don't give me the messages, or their phones get disconnected. So it is really a good thing for me. I do appreciate it.

This service is really a very good thing. I'm building myself back up after having lost my home of 22 years of no fault of mine and being able to have this service when otherwise I wouldn't be able to have it – it builds me up. I don't know how to explain it, I know it sounds corny, but it builds me up a little bit. Needless to say I got a job out of it, that's the most important thing. I have a number I can give to people now until I can afford to get another cell phone – it kind of builds up my self-esteem a little bit, I guess you could say and I appreciate it, thank you very much.

This service is greatly needed. I appreciate it and I appreciate all the stuff it allows me to get accomplished as a result of having this service. I'm able to get calls in regards to employment, and my life is so much smoother. I'm on interviews all the time now, and I thank you. And I hope to keep it going.

Thank you for the voicemail it's very helpful in job search and being able to talk to my son and daughter, get messages from my family.

I appreciate this phone service because it helps me keep in touch with my family, my relatives and also it helps me find a job...I haven't found a job lately but I have received some calls and I appreciate it thank you very much.

Thank you for your great wonderful service. It is invaluable for me and others in the community. Thank you again.

This program is very helpful and it's a blessing and I advise others that if they don't have this service they need to get it because it's a lifesaver.

This voicemail has been a very good asset and I really appreciate it. Without this voicemail I don't know how I could go about my daily routine and try to improve my living conditions as well. Thank you.

Thank you very much for the service I really appreciate and so does my partner who also shares this number...we definitely wouldn't know what to do without it. Thank you.

I just wanted to say that CVM has been an integral part of my being able to survive, it's very difficult to survive, in the streets and to remain non-damaged by the things that go on and the way that people treat other people... I'm very thankful for this service and I wish there were more of this service available for people in other places because it is one of the most...I've studied many different types of services that are available to people ...and in my opinion it's one of the most non confrontational, it doesn't intimidate people and it's very user-friendly...

Yes, I really appreciate the CVM it really has helped me a lot. I have my job that I have now calling me on this number and I really appreciate because they probably wouldn't have had a number to reach me at without a hassle so I just want to thank you guys and it's really a blessing.

Thank you for this messaging service, it really saves me a lot of time and heartache I didn't receive my messages before because I didn't have a phone to receive my messages, I didn't know I was missing my appointments because I had no way of checking or receiving messages where I was living so this really helps me a whole lot and I thank you.

I do like the voicemail very very much, the price is very reasonable, and I enjoy it, I enjoy the service I get and the service is very nice and the people are very pleasant when I call, thank you have a nice day.

Yes, I would just like to say that I greatly appreciate the service that you offer -- it's allowing me to get my life back together. I'm currently living in a homeless shelter and I

have no income, so without your service it would be more of a struggle for me to get back on my feet, so I do appreciate it very much. Thanks.

I just want to say I really appreciate this service, and hopefully it'll get me a job soon. Thank you.

This voicemail service is a real godsend to so many people, especially people who are homeless and on the streets. I think it's a real blessing, and I thank everyone who makes it possible.

Thank you so much for this phone. It's going to help me tremendously. You guys have a blessed day. Thank you again.

I would like to thank you guys for coming up with this wonderful idea of having voicemails for those of us who can really use them.