

# PANORAMA

JULY  
2021

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## UNWANTED CALLS IN BRAZIL



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## PANORAMA Mobile Time/Opinion Box

### UNWANTED CALLS IN BRAZIL



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#### ABOUT THIS SURVEY

##### Mobile Time/Opinion Box Panorama – Unwanted Calls in Brazil

is a survey commissioned by First Orion and conducted by a partnership between news site Mobile Time and research solutions company Opinion Box.

The questionnaire was prepared by Mobile Time, approved by First Orion, and applied online between June 8 and 15, 2021 by Opinion Box to 2,125 Brazilians aged 16 and over who access the Internet and have a cell phone. The proportions of gender, age, income group, and geographic distribution of this group were respected.

The margin of error is 2.1 percentage points. The degree of confidence is 95%.



The analyses contained in this report are authored by editor of Mobile Time **Fernando Paiva**, a journalist with 20 years of experience covering the telecommunications sector. Paiva specializes in the mobile content market and is the organizer of outstanding events in this sector, such as **Tela Viva Móvel**, **Super Bots Experience**, **MobiFinance**, **Mobi-ID**, and **Innovative Operators Forum**.

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**Mobile Time/Opinion Box Panorama – Unwanted calls in Brazil – June 2021.**

## Introduction

Receiving unwanted calls is a problem that affects all cell phone users, regardless of age, social class, or region of the country. It disrupts our daily lives, causes irritation, and often brings about financial loss.

In this survey, we tried to measure the size of this problem. We chose to divide unwanted calls into four more recurrent types: telesales; improper collection; scam attempts; and robocalls. For each one, we verified the incidence, frequency, and degree of nuisance.

We also analyzed the measures taken by Brazilians to overcome this problem and how they see the responsibility of mobile carriers in this area.



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## Overview

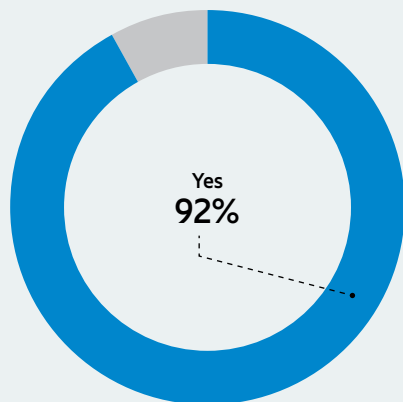
CHART 1

### INCIDENCE BY TYPE OF UNWANTED CALL

Base: 2,125 Brazilians who access the Internet and have a cell phone

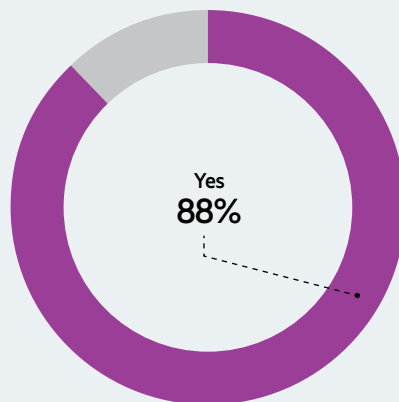
#### TELESALES

**Question:** Have you ever received a telesales call on your cell phone?



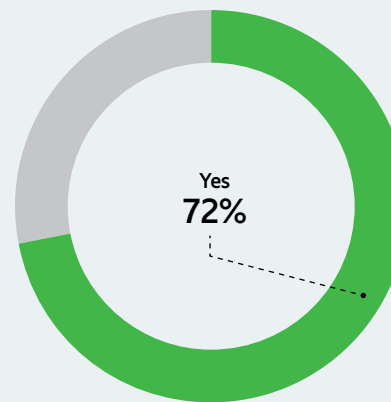
#### IMPROPER COLLECTION

**Question:** Have you received on your phone a collection call for a person you do not know?



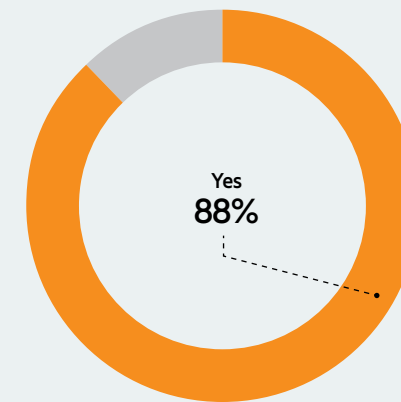
#### SCAM

**Question:** Have you received a scam call on your cell phone?



#### ROBOCALL

**Question:** Have you received robocalls on your cell phone? (Consider as a robocall one in which the greeting is made by a recorded voice)



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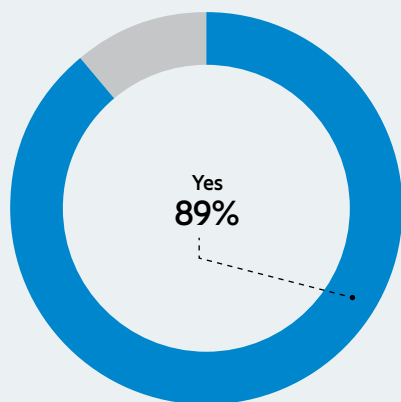
CHART 2

PROPORTION OF USERS WHO ARE BOTHERED

TELESALES

**Question:** Does it bother you when you receive an unwanted telesales call?

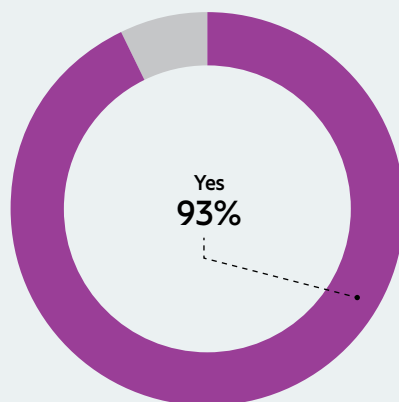
**Base:** 1,948 Brazilians who access the Internet, own a cell phone, and have received telesales calls



IMPROPER COLLECTION

**Question:** Does it bother you when you receive a collection call for someone you do not know?

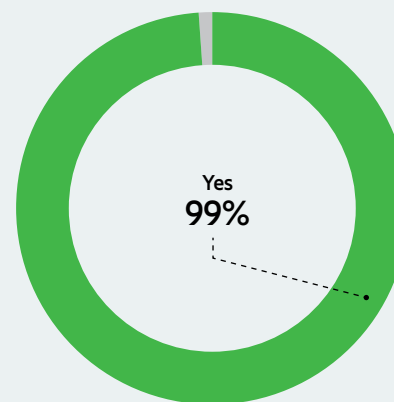
**Base:** 1,868 Brazilians who access the Internet, have a cell phone, and have received a collection call seeking people they do not know



SCAM

**Question:** Does it bother you when you receive scam calls on your cell phone?

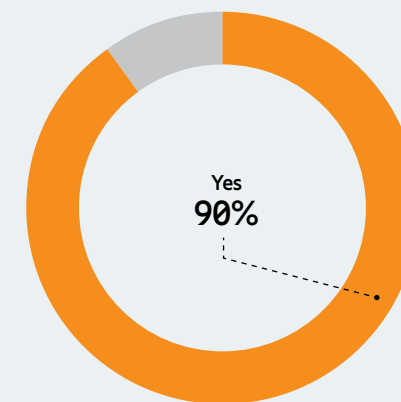
**Base:** 1,534 Brazilians who access the Internet, own a cell phone, and have received scam calls



ROBOCALL

**Question:** Does it bother you when you receive a robocall on your cell phone?

**Base:** 1,863 Brazilians who access the Internet, own a cell phone, and have already received robocalls



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CHART 3

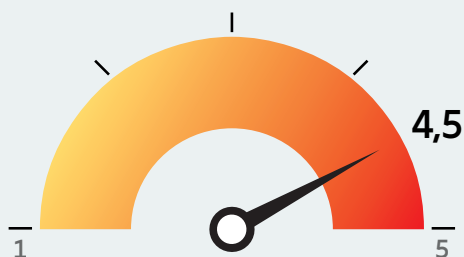
DEGREE OF NUISANCE

Rate on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being "slightly bothered" and 5 being "extremely bothered".

**TELESALES**

**Question:** How bothered are you when you receive unwanted telesales calls?

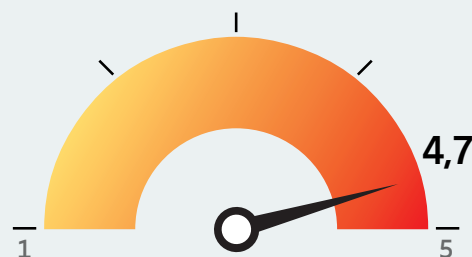
**Base:** 1,724 Brazilians who access the Internet, own a cell phone, have received telesales calls, and are bothered by them



**IMPROPER COLLECTION**

**Question:** How bothered are you when you receive collection calls for someone you do not know?

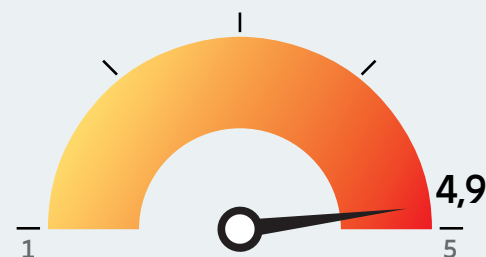
**Base:** 1,738 Brazilians who access the Internet, own a cell phone, have received collection calls for someone they do not know, and are bothered by them



**SCAM**

**Question:** How bothered are you when you receive scam calls on your cell phone?

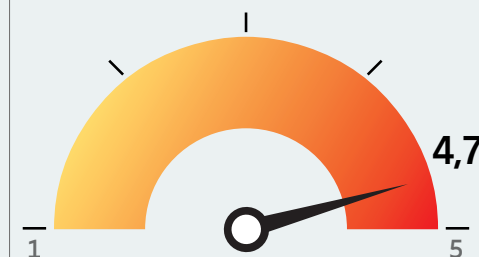
**Base:** 1,513 Brazilians who access the Internet, own a cell phone, have received scam calls, and are bothered by them



**ROBOCALL**

**Question:** How bothered are you when you receive robocalls?

**Base:** 1,672 Brazilians who access the Internet, own a cell phone, have received robocalls, and are bothered by them



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## Telesales, the Most Common Type of Unwanted Call

Telesales is the type of unwanted call most received by Brazilians. Ninety-two percent of cell-phone users have already received telesales calls on their phones (Graph 1). This percentage is slightly higher among people from classes A and B (95%) than among those from classes C, D, and E (90%). By age group, the incidence is slightly higher in the group aged 30 to 49 years (93%) than among young people aged 16 to 29 years (89%).

Among people who have received telesales calls on their cell phone, 39% say that the calls happen every day or almost every day (Chart 4). This is the highest frequency when comparing the four types of unwanted calls. In the group that is bothered daily, 51% say they receive an average of four or more telesales calls per day.

Eighty-nine percent of the Brazilians who have received telesales calls say they are bothered by them. The proportion of those who are bothered is higher in classes A and B (91%) than in classes C,

D and E (87%). There is no significant difference by age group or gender.

On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means "slightly bothered" and 5 means "extremely bothered", the average score of nuisance of Brazilians with telesales calls is 4.5 (Chart 3).

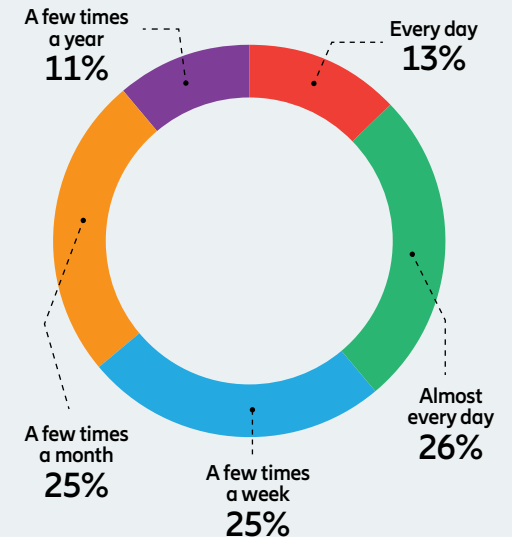


CHART 4

### FREQUENCY OF TELESales CALLS

**Question:** How often do you receive unwanted telesales calls on your cell phone?

**Base:** 1,948 Brazilians who access the Internet, own a cell phone, and have received telesales calls



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## UNWANTED CALLS IN BRAZIL

CHART 5

### TELESALES CALLS ARE...

**Question:** About the telesales calls you receive on your cell phone, would you say that they are:

**Base:** 1,948 Brazilians who access the Internet, own a cell phone, and have received telesales calls

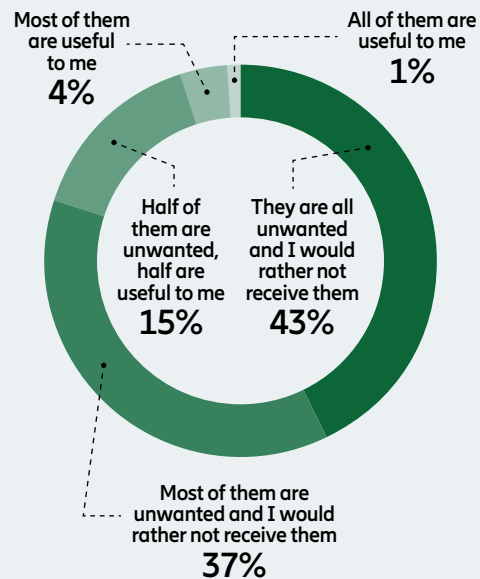
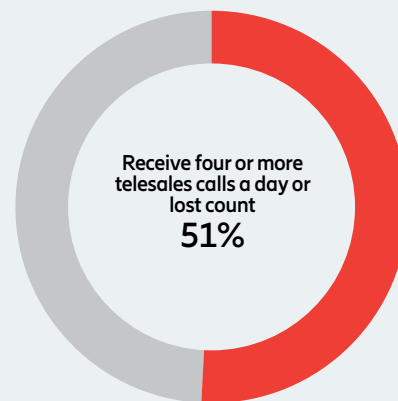


CHART 6

### THE MAGNITUDE OF THE NUISANCE

**Question:** How many unwanted telesales calls do you receive per day, on average

**Base:** 765 Brazilians who access the Internet, own a cell phone, and receive telesales calls every day or almost every day



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## Improper Collection: a Bigger Headache in Classes C, D, and E

Collection calls for people we do not know are a serious problem in Brazil. Someone defrauds a loan using false data and the debt collection agent calls the person who owns the telephone number provided by the fraudster. The debtor's false data circulates between collection companies and people can keep receiving these unwanted calls for years.

Eighty-eight percent of Brazilians have already received this type of call on their cell phone (Chart 1). The problem afflicts consumers in classes C, D and E (90%) more than those in classes A and B (85%). There is no significant difference by age group or gender.

The frequency of collection calls is lower than that of telesales. Only 20% of those who suffer these calls say they receive them every day or almost every day (Chart 7). For 35%, the frequency is a few times a year and for 27%, it is a few times a month. Among people from classes C, D, and E, 23% complain that they receive these calls every day or almost every day, compared to 15% among those from classes A and B.

The collection call seeking a stranger bothers 93% of people who have received this type of call (Chart 2). Their degree of nuisance is 4.7, on a scale of 1 to 5 (Chart 3). So, this type of unwanted call bothers more than telesales calls, even though they are less frequent.

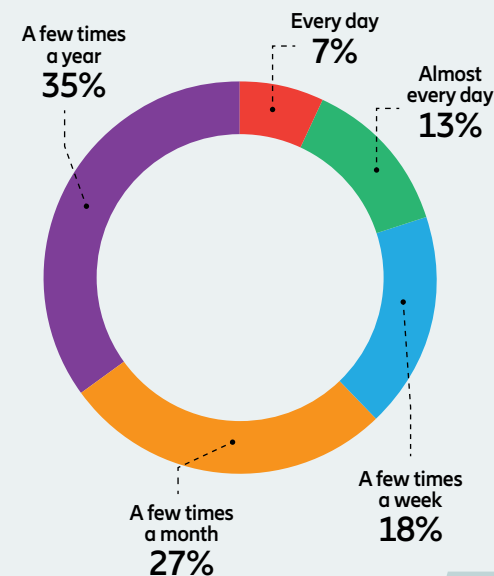


CHART 7

### FREQUENCY OF COLLECTION CALLS FOR STRANGERS

**Question:** How often do you receive on your phone a collection call for a person you do not know?

**Base:** 1,868 Brazilians who access the Internet, have a cell phone, and have received a collection call seeking people they do not know



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## Scam Calls Are the Most Painful Unwanted Calls

Unfortunately, Brazil has a long tradition of scam calls. These are swindling attempts in which criminals resort to creativity to get money or personal data from the victim and commit other crimes. The made-up stories are many, but some are well known, such as the fake kidnapping scam, in which the criminal calls in the middle of the night and poses as the child of the victim in the hands of kidnapers.

Seventy-two percent of Brazilians say they have received scam calls on their cell phones (Graph 1). The incidence is higher among men (76%) than among women (69%). And increases with age. In the 16 to 29 age group, 66% have answered this type of call. The percentage increases to 73% for people aged 30 to 49 years; and reaches 77% for people aged 50 years or more. The Northern region is the one with the highest incidence (83%) and the Southern, the one with the lowest (65%). There is no significant difference as per social class.

As imagined, of all four types of unwanted calls verified in this survey,

scam calls are the ones that bother the most: 99% of Brazilians say they are bothered by this type of call (Chart 2) and rate their nuisance at 4.9, on a scale of 1 to 5 (Chart 3).

Nevertheless, scam calls are the least common type among those verified in this survey. Sixty-eight percent of the people who have received scam calls say they receive this type of call a few times a year and 19% a few times a month (Chart 8). The frequency is a little higher among people from classes C, D and E.

The most frequent type of scam is a false threat to a family member, such as a fake kidnapping (Chart 9), followed by theft of financial data, such as a credit card number or a bank password.

Among Brazilians who have received calls of this type, 14% admit they fell for the scam (Chart 12). Youth naivety comes at a price, as the

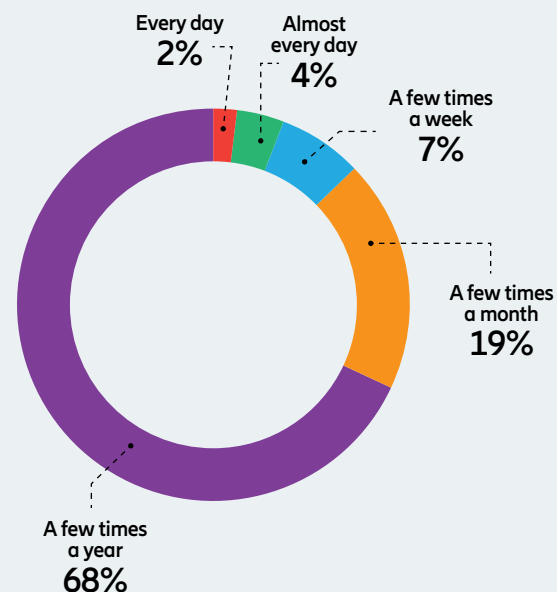


CHART 8

### FREQUENCY OF SCAM CALLS

**Question:** How often do you receive scam calls on your cell phone?

**Base:** 1,534 Brazilians who access the Internet, own a cell phone, and have received scam calls



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percentage is higher among those aged 16 to 29 years (18%), compared to the group aged 30 to 49 years (14%) and those aged 50 and over (8%). The vast majority of victims (77%) claim to have lost less than BRL 1,000 with the scam (Chart 13).

It is worth mentioning that criminals tend to have the victim's personal information when they make the call. This increases their chance of success. Forty-five percent of those who received this type of call claim that the scammers had information about them. By the way, the recent mega-leak of data in Brazil serves as raw material for swindlers.

CHART 9

THE MOST COMMON SCAM CALLS

Question: What types of scam calls have you received on your cell phone?

Base: 1,534 Brazilians who access the Internet, own a cell phone, and have received scam calls

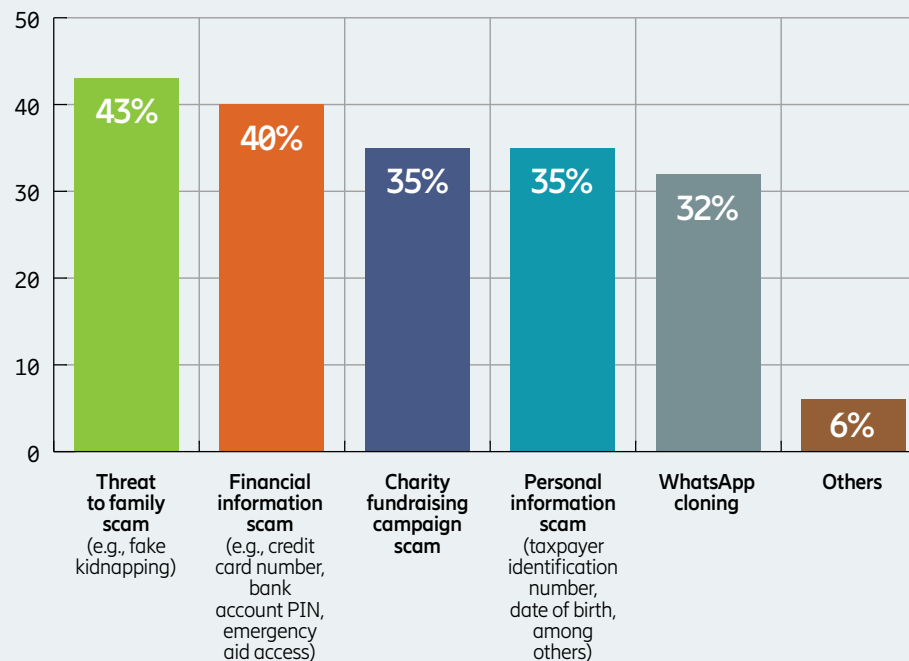
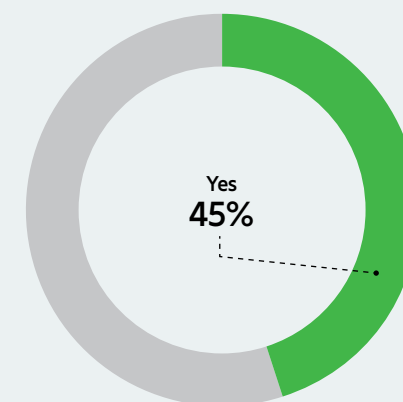


CHART 10

DID THE SCAMMER HAVE YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION?

Question: Did the scammer have your personal information?

Base: 1,534 Brazilians who access the Internet, own a cell phone, and have received scam calls



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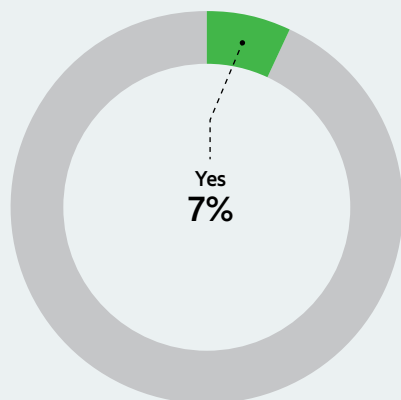
**UNWANTED CALLS  
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**CHART 11**

**HAVE YOU PROVIDED ANY  
PERSONAL INFORMATION TO  
THE SCAMMER?**

**Question:** Have you provided personal information to the scammer?

**Base:** 1,534 Brazilians who access the Internet, own a cell phone, and have received scam calls

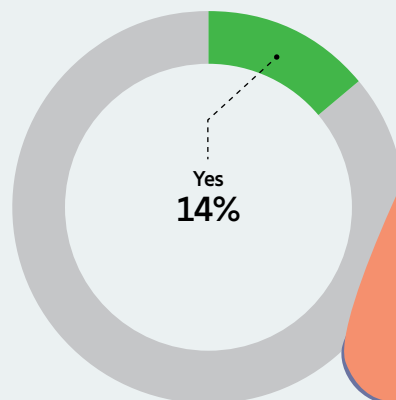


**CHART 12**

**PROPORTION OF VICTIMS WHO  
FELL FOR A SCAM CALL**

**Question:** Have you ever been a victim of cell-phone scams?

**Base:** 1,534 Brazilians who access the Internet, own a cell phone, and have received scam calls

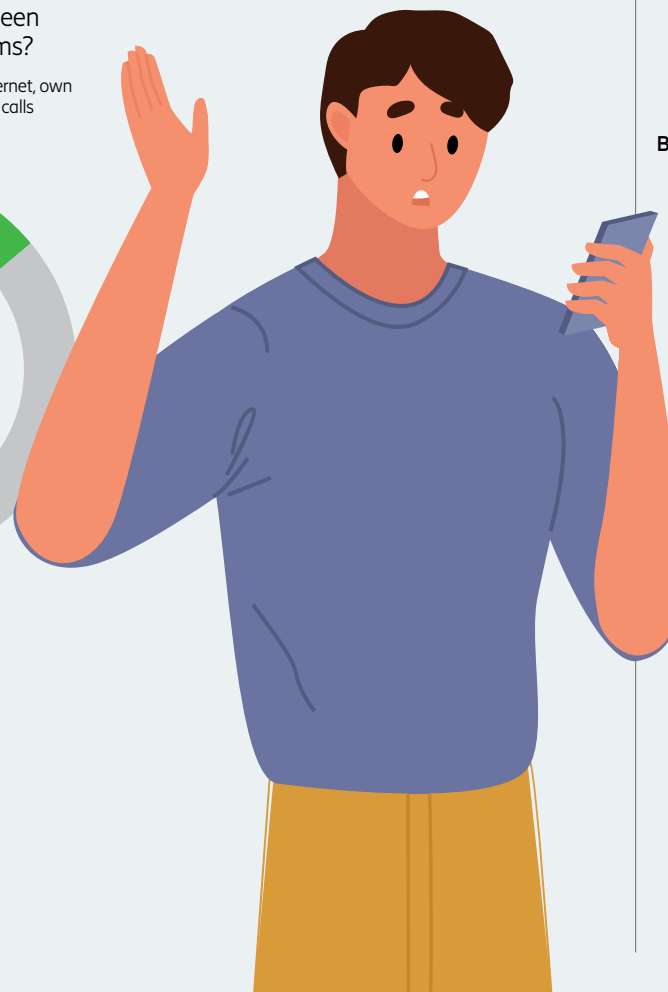
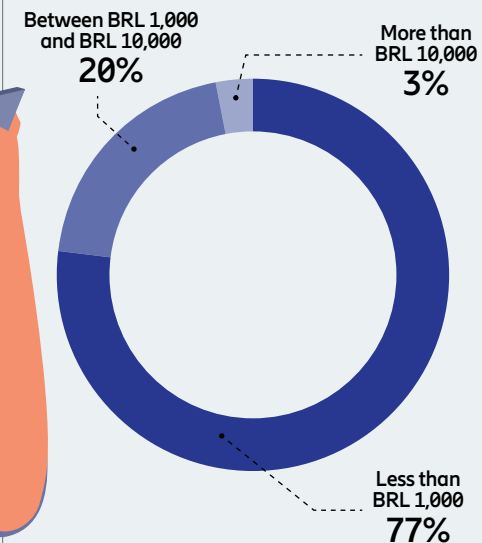


**CHART 13**

**MAGNITUDE OF THE DAMAGE**

**Question:** How much money do you think you have lost because of cell-phone scams?

**Base:** 211 Brazilians who have fallen for cell phone scams



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## Robocalls are Also a Nuisance

The use of robots to make telephone calls is increasingly common in Brazil. In general, they serve to unburden human attendants, who join the call from a certain point on. But there are also cases in which the call is operated entirely by a robot, using artificial intelligence to understand what the person is saying and to respond accordingly.

It is important to mention that not all robocalls are spam. And this technology is also used in the interest of citizens and society, such as when robocalls make important announcements or conduct research.

In this report, we considered as a robocall one in which a recorded voice does the greeting. Considering this definition, 88% of Brazilians have received robocalls (Chart 1). This is more common among people from classes A and B (93%) than among



those from classes C, D, and E (84%). The incidence is lower among those aged 16 to 29 years (80%) than in groups aged 30 to 49 years (90%) or 50 years or older (89%).

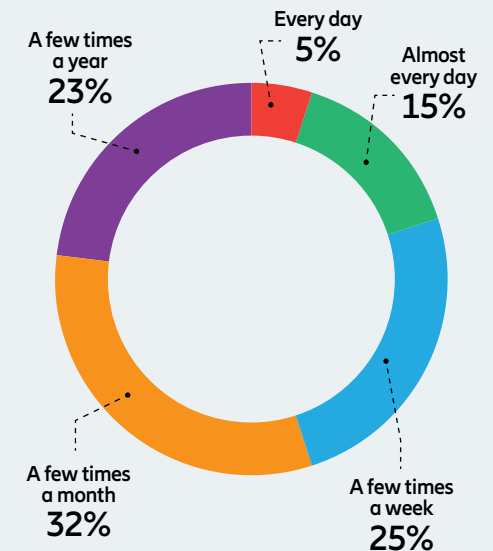
Ninety percent of people who have received this type of call say they are bothered by it (Chart 2), with an average nuisance score of 4.4 (Chart 3).

**CHART 14**

### FREQUENCY OF ROBOCALLS

**Question:** How often do you receive robocalls?

**Base:** 1,863 Brazilians who access the Internet, own a cell phone, and have received robocalls



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## Measures Taken by Brazilians

The fear of receiving unwanted calls leads almost half of Brazilians (48%) to never answer or almost never answer calls from unknown numbers on their cell phones (Chart 15). Distrust is greater among people aged 50 and over (51%). This measure ends up being a barrier to active telemarketing but also to communications of interest to the consumer, such as a bank alert about an attempted credit card fraud.

In order to prevent unwanted calls, 21% of Brazilians use some application to block them (Chart 16). And 30% claim that their devices are natively endowed with this feature. But the most common measure, cited by 45%, is not answering calls from unknown numbers.

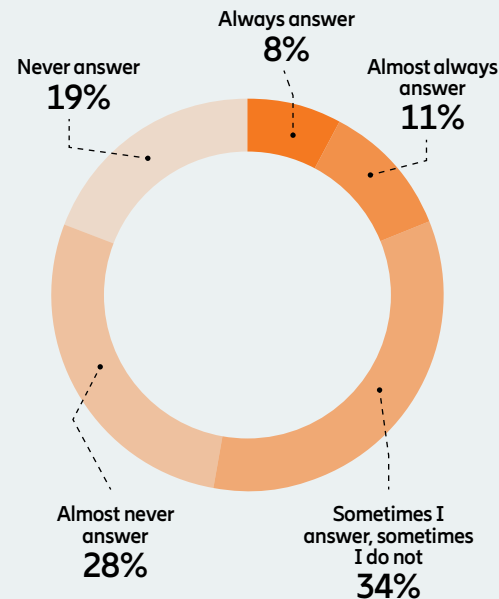
About half of those interviewed (49%) stated that they knew about the "Do not disturb" service, in which a telephone number can be listed so as not to receive telemarketing calls.

**CHART 15**

### WHAT DO BRAZILIANS DO WHEN THEY RECEIVE CALLS FROM AN UNKNOWN NUMBER?

**Question:** What do you do when you receive a call from an unknown number?

**Base:** 2,125 Brazilians who access the Internet and have a cell phone

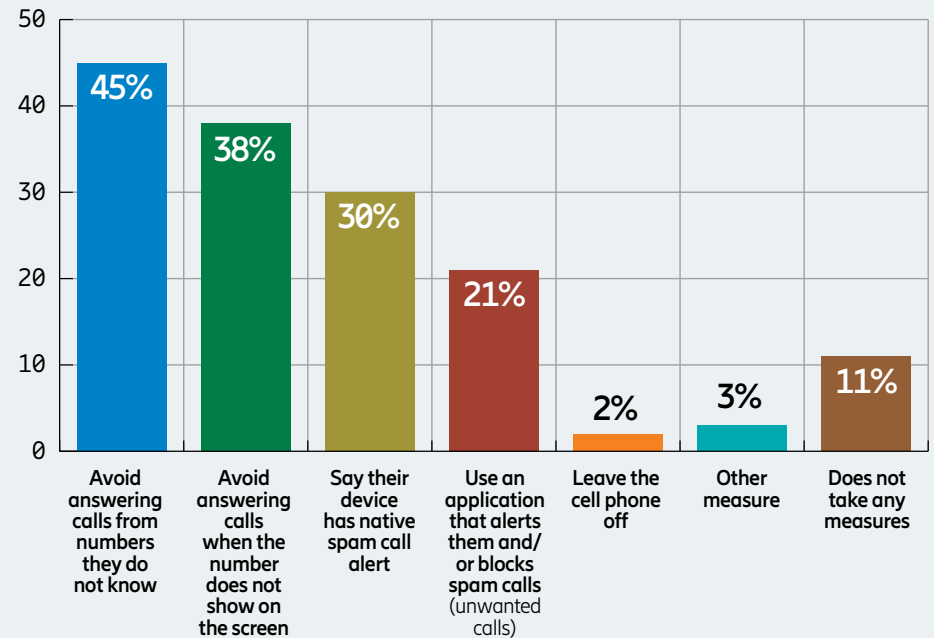


**CHART 16**

### THE MAIN MEASURES TAKEN BY BRAZILIANS AGAINST UNWANTED CALLS

**Question:** What measures do you take to avoid unwanted calls on your cell phone?

**Base:** 2,125 Brazilians who access the Internet and have a cell phone



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However, only 21% listed their lines (Chart 17). Among the latter, 75% state that the result was positive, decreasing a little, decreasing a lot or even definitively ending the problem of unwanted calls (Chart 18).

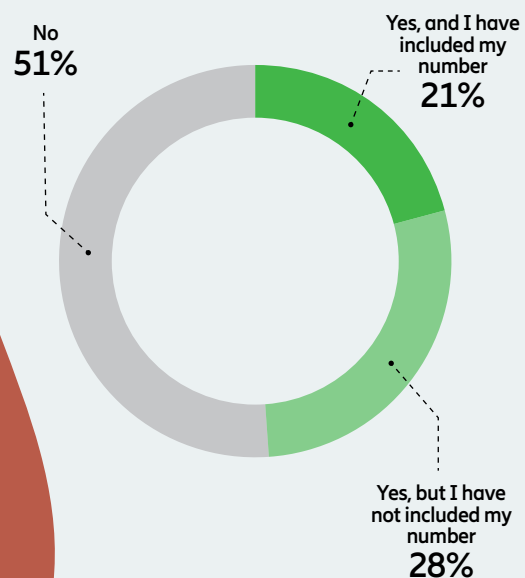


**CHART 17**

**ARE BRAZILIANS FAMILIAR WITH THE "DO NOT DISTURB" SERVICE?**

**Question:** Are you aware that you can include your telephone number in a "do not disturb" public list, i.e., a list of numbers that do not wish to receive unwanted calls?

**Base:** 2,125 Brazilians who access the Internet and have a cell phone

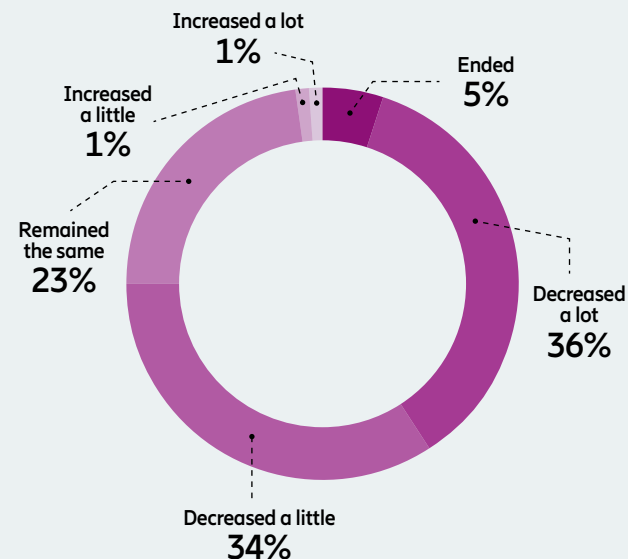


**CHART 18**

**AFTER INCLUDING THEIR NUMBER ON THE "DO NOT DISTURB" LIST, UNWANTED CALLS (IN THE USER'S PERCEPTION)...**

**Question:** After you added your number to the do not disturb list, unwanted calls have...

**Base:** 452 Brazilians who access the Internet, have a cell phone, and have included their number in the "Do not disturb" service



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## The Responsibility of Carriers

For 59% of Brazilians, mobile carriers are responsible for the problem of unwanted calls (Chart 19). On a scale of 1 to 5, respondents rate, on average, at 3.1 their satisfaction with their carrier's role in blocking unwanted calls (Chart 20). However, only 18% say they have complained to their carrier about the problem (Chart 21). In this group, 44% report that the complaint had an effect, decreasing a little, decreasing a lot or even ending unwanted calls (Graph 22).

The promise of a service that blocks all or almost all unwanted calls would be a reason to change carriers, say 59% of Brazilians (Chart 23). The interest is similar regardless of gender, age, or social class.

Thirty-eight percent of Brazilians are willing to pay for such a service provided by their mobile carrier

(Chart 24). In this group, 36% would pay up to BRL1.99 per month; 26%, between BRL 2 and BRL 4.99; and 18%, between BRL 5 and BRL 9.99. Only 20% would pay BRL 10 or more per month to block unwanted calls (Chart 25).

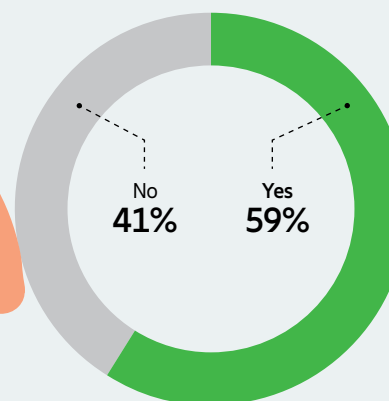


**CHART 19**

### FOR BRAZILIANS, ARE MOBILE CARRIERS RESPONSIBLE FOR UNWANTED CALLS?

**Question:** In your opinion, is your carrier responsible for the unwanted calls you receive from other companies on your cell phone?

**Base:** 2,125 Brazilians who access the Internet and have a cell phone

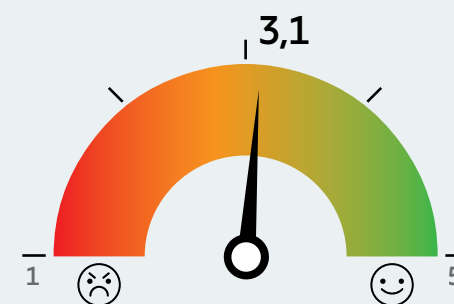


**CHART 20**

### LEVEL OF SATISFACTION OF BRAZILIANS WITH MOBILE CARRIERS BLOCKING UNWANTED CALLS

**Question:** How satisfied are you with your carrier's unwanted call block? Rate on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being "extremely dissatisfied" and 5 being "extremely satisfied"

**Base:** 2,125 Brazilians who access the Internet and have a cell phone



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## UNWANTED CALLS IN BRAZIL

CHART 21

### PROPORTION OF BRAZILIANS WHO HAVE COMPLAINED TO THEIR MOBILE CARRIER BECAUSE OF UNWANTED CALLS

**Question:** Have you filed a complaint with your carrier due to unwanted calls you receive from other companies on your cell phone?

**Base:** 2,101 Brazilians who access the Internet, have a cell phone, and state that they have received at least one of the four types of unwanted calls

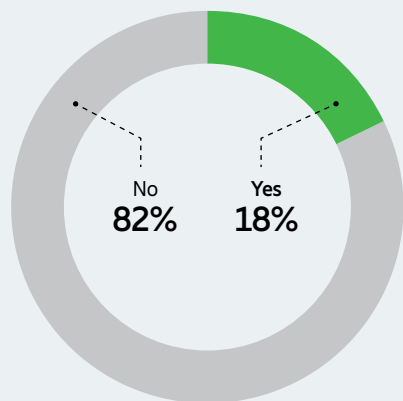


CHART 22

### AFTER COMPLAINING TO THEIR CARRIER, UNWANTED CALLS (IN THE USER'S PERCEPTION)...

**Question:** After you filed a complaint with your carrier, unwanted calls have...

**Base:** 386 Brazilians who access the Internet, have a cell phone, and have complained to their carrier about unwanted calls

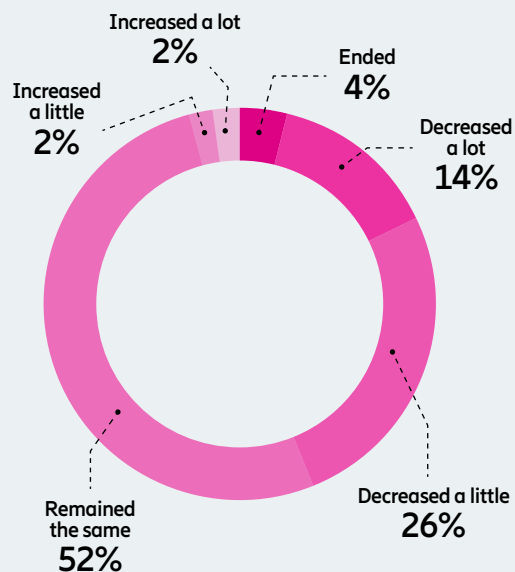
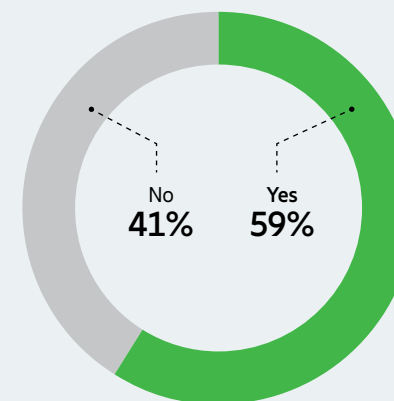


CHART 23

### WOULD AN EFFECTIVE UNWANTED-CALL BLOCKING SERVICE BE A REASON TO SWITCH CARRIERS?

**Question:** If another cell phone carrier offered you a plan for the same price and with the same conditions, the only difference being the promise that all or nearly all unwanted calls to your number would be blocked, would you change carriers?

**Base:** 2,125 Brazilians who access the Internet and have a cell phone



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## UNWANTED CALLS IN BRAZIL

CHART 24

### HOW MUCH WOULD BRAZILIANS PAY FOR AN EFFECTIVE UNWANTED-CALL BLOCKING SERVICE?

**Question:** Would you be willing to pay for a service that guaranteed that all or nearly all unwanted calls to your cell phone be blocked?

**Base:** 2,125 Brazilians who access the Internet and have a cell phone

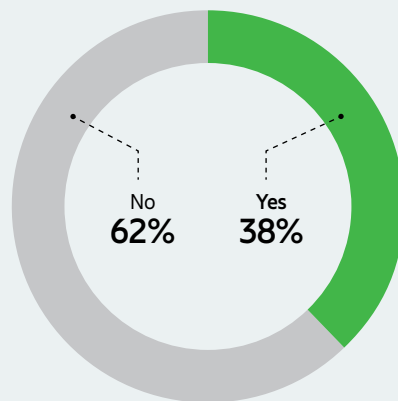
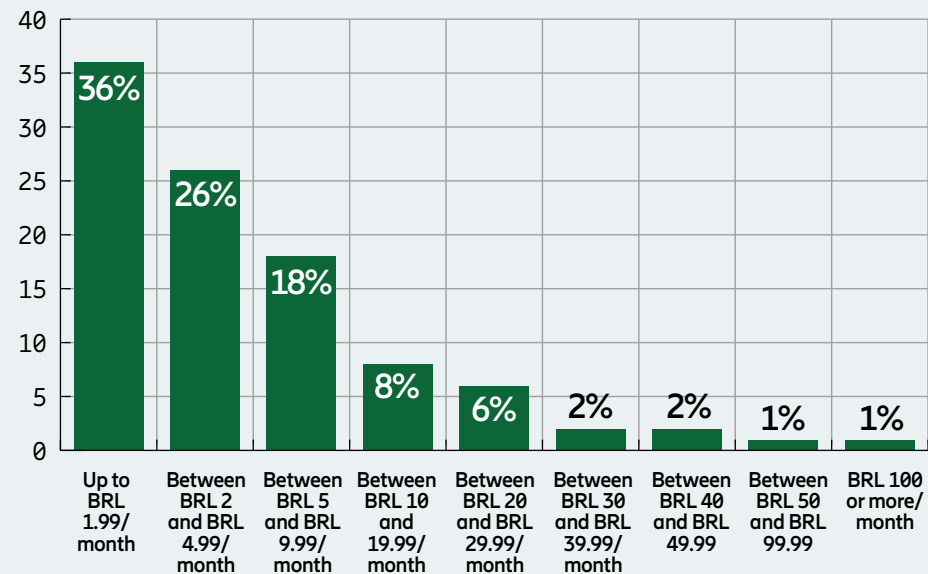


CHART 25

### HOW MUCH WOULD BRAZILIANS PAY FOR AN EFFECTIVE UNWANTED-CALL BLOCKING SERVICE?

**Question:** How much would you be willing to pay for this service?

**Base:** 799 Brazilians who access the Internet, have a cell phone, and would be willing to pay for an effective service to block unwanted calls



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CALLS  
IN BRAZIL



## Conclusions

Unwanted calls, whatever the type, deeply bother Brazilians. They would be willing to change carriers if a competitor offers a solution to this problem. More than a third of Brazilians, in fact, are willing to pay to resolve the problem

In addition, unwanted calls lead people to migrate to over-the-top communication apps, reducing traffic on voice telecommunication networks and forcing brands to seek alternative communication channels with their consumers.



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## WHO WE ARE



### ABOUT MOBILE TIME

Mobile Time is a Brazilian daily news website about the mobile industry focused on content and services for smartphones.

[www.mobiletime.com.br](http://www.mobiletime.com.br)



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