

Do you know someone who just can't help but answer robocalls? I think we all do. A new report says Americans wasted over 200 million hours last year on robocalls. If you think you're just messing with them by answering the phone, you're wrong. It's not slowing them down at all. I'm looking at how robocalls work and what to do instead of saying "hello".

TRT 126
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SUPER
0-8 Jamey Tucker/whatthetech.tv

ON-CAMERA TEASE:

The phone rings from a number you don't recognize. Should you answer it? I'm Jamey Tucker, many people just can't help but 'mess' with robocallers. Coming up, why it doesn't help, and why it keeps robocallers in business.

ANCHOR INTRO

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU GOT A CALL FROM A SCAMMER? IF YOU'RE LIKE MOST PEOPLE, IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN TODAY.

DESPITE EFFORTS BY THE FCC AND FTC, THE NUMBER OF ROBO CALLS HASN'T DECLINED MUCH. IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO LOVES TO ANSWER THEIR CALLS, OUR CONSUMER TECHNOLOGY REPORTER JAMEY TUCKER EXPLAINS WHY THAT MIGHT BE THE PROBLEM.

PACKAGE SCRIPT

We all know someone who just cannot help but answer a robocall and tries to 'mess with them'.

(speaking a foreign language)

Your friend speaks in a foreign language, says they're in jail, or just tries to keep the robocaller on the line for as long as possible.

It doesn't keep them from calling your number. If anything, it just leads to more robocalls.

Robocallers aren't people dialing random numbers. Computers dial random numbers all day. If you answer a robocall, one of their employees picks up and tries to scam you. That's why, when you receive a robocall, there's no one on the phone at first. If you say hello, and wait a couple of seconds, a real person will pick up.

If you answer the phone and stay on the line until the scammer says something, it notes that your phone is in service. Even if you ask, no one will take you off the list or add you to a 'do not call' list. You'll end up getting more calls from more scammers.

The best thing you can do is not answer the call at all. The second best thing you can do is to wait a second before saying hello and when no one immediately says something, hang up. "messing" with the person calling will not make a difference. They don't care. Think of it this way, since the call doesn't go through until you answer, you're sort of calling them when you say 'hello'

That's What the Tech? I'm Jamey Tucker

ANCHOR TAG

LAST YEAR AMERICANS WASTED OVER 227 MILLION HOURS ANSWERING SPAM CALLS AND EVEN WITH TOUGHER LAWS AND PENALTIES THE NUMBER OF SPAM AND ROBOCALLS DECREASED JUST SLIGHTLY OVER THE PAST YEAR.

WEB STORY

A new report says Americans wasted 227 million hours last year answering spam calls. Many of those robocalls can't be ignored by people who run their own business. I suspect though, many of those wasted hours are by people who love to "mess" with the callers.

We all know someone who just cannot help but answer a robocall and tries to 'mess with them'. Maybe you have a friend or family member who always answers a call and speaks in a foreign language. I have family members who answer the call and says they're in jail, or just tries to keep the robocaller on the line for as long as possible.

It doesn't keep the the scammers from calling their number. If anything, it just leads to more robocalls.

In case you're not aware, robocallers aren't actually people dialing random numbers. No one is on the phone calling. Rather, computers dial random numbers all day at the rate of about 50 million every 24 hours. If you answer a robocall from one of those computers, an employee at the call center picks up and tries to scam you. That's why, when you receive a robocall, there's no one on the phone at first. If you say hello, and wait a couple of seconds, a real person will pick up.

If you answer the phone and stay on the line until the scammer says something, it notes that your phone is in service. Even if you ask, no one will take you off the list or add you to a 'do not call' list. You'll end up getting more calls from more scammers.

The best thing you can do is not answer the call at all. The second best thing you can do is to wait a second before saying hello and when no one immediately says something, hang up.

Tell your friends and family members that "messaging" with the person calling will not make a difference and could make the problem worse. Those robocall companies don't care. You're wasting your own time, not theirs.

Think of it this way, since the call doesn't go through until you answer, you're sort of calling them when you say 'hello'.