

## Answering Service Case Study: Timely Service Speeds Repairs

By [Peter DeHaan](#)

Marlo Pratt clicked back the deadbolt and unlocked the warehouse door. He liked coming in early. The 70 year-old building was always quiet then. He enjoyed walking through the calm, dark expanses before the rush of the day.

Today, however, the building was not quiet, and it was cold. Very cold. To Marlo's left, the stairs led down to the inky blackness of the windowless basement. From it came the sound of rushing water.

Marlo hit the lights and ran down the steps. At the bottom his boot landed in a couple inches of water. He worked his way past stacks of merchandise sitting on skids, wading through the water. From the open door to the boiler room, a spray of water shot across the room. Marlo rushed to shut off the main valve and then ran back up the stairs with his wet boots leaving a soggy trail behind him.

Grabbing the phone, he dialed a familiar number. "I need Bob over here, and I need him now," he barked.

"Mr. Franklin will not be in the office until 9 a.m., sir. Is this an emergency?"

"You're dang right it's an emergency! I've got two inches of water covering the basement floor – and no heat," he shouted. "I need help now!"

Unflustered by Marlo's outburst, the woman calmed him down. She asked for details of the situation. She explained she would contact Mr. Franklin right away and how soon help could arrive. She repeated back her understanding of the emergency and asked him if there was anything else she needed to know.

Calmed, in part by her own poise and in part by the promise of help on the way, Marlo replied, "No, you've got everything. I'm sorry I yelled. I just can't believe this mess." The woman assured Marlo that Mr. Franklin would be personally informed of his emergency and that the problem would be quickly handled.

Twenty-five minutes later, Bob Franklin, owner of Franklin's Boiler Repair, arrived in his truck. Marlo met him at the door. Bob confirmed the information Marlo had provided earlier. As they walked down the stairs Marlo confessed, "I was pretty hard on your secretary. I'm really sorry about that. I just couldn't believe this happened."

"My secretary?" asked Bob. "Oh, we use an answering service to handle our emergency calls. Problems always seem to happen at night. So we need to be available 24/7. Our answering service does that for us."

Thinking back on the timing of his call, Marlo knew that waiting an extra two hours for the office to open would have been disastrous. "I'm sure glad she was there to take my call. Thanks!"

*[Peter DeHaan](#) is a freelance writer from Southwest Michigan. Contact us to learn how a telephone answering service can answer your calls 24/7 to better serve your customers.*