

# A New Way to Route Cell Phone Callers

by Charles Austin

Georouting calls — sending incoming calls directly to the right location rather than through a call center — has been around for many years and has greatly improved the workflow and customer experience for many organizations. For landlines, georouting is straightforward to implement, but for cellular callers, location information is somewhat problematic due to the lack of a national directory, number portability, and the fact that cellular means the caller can be almost anywhere.

In the past, this problem was usually solved by prompting the caller through an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system for more information, such as a zip code, to make a determination on where to georoute a customer's call. Smartphones enabled mobile apps to take advantage of the GPS feature on mobile phones to achieve the same purpose, but mobile apps may not be the right solution for all businesses, due to cost, difficulty getting customers to download and use the mobile app, or a customer demographic that doesn't use smartphones.

---

“Mobile location georouting allows cell phone callers to be routed to the nearest store or business location based upon their actual current location.”

---



New technology is now available in the United States to fix this problem. It's called mobile location georouting, and it allows all cell phone callers to be routed to the nearest store or business location based upon their actual current location. And because it does not depend on GPS technology or a mobile app, it will work on any cell phone — not just smartphones.

## How it Works

When customers initiate calls to your branded toll free number from any mobile phone, they will be provided with a method for opting-in to have their location identified. This can be easily done through an automatic prompt, such as “Press 1 or stay on the line to be directed to the nearest store based upon your current location.” If appropriate, additional options can still be provided to allow

a caller to enter a zip code or other information, if the service area will be somewhere other than the caller's location. The opt-in requirement is similar to the way SMS opt-ins are done, to protect the consumer and the carriers from abuse by unscrupulous people or companies.

Once permission to locate the cell phone is provided, the actual location of the caller is determined in the background by triangulation off the cell phone towers in real time to make a call routing decision. The accuracy of this method is not as good as GPS, but it is still typically within a few hundred yards. It can vary somewhat depending on the exact location of the cell phone, the carriers, and the physical location of the cellular towers, but the accuracy is typically more than sufficient to make the best georouting decision possible.

Finally, the call is routed directly to the most appropriate store location, based on whatever parameters you select, such as franchise territories, zip codes, counties, DMAs, mileage limits, drive times, or other factors.

---

“Knowing who called, when they called, and where they called from will greatly help in targeting your marketing efforts.”

---

Georouting mobile callers to the nearest brick-and-mortar location is great, but what happens when both callers and service providers are mobile? This same technology can also identify the nearest location of a dynamic service provider and route callers accordingly. The best example of this might be providing roadside service when both the caller's and the actual service provider's current locations are not fixed by their phone numbers.

Once calls have been routed appropriately, all the data related to the customer's call can be geocoded and displayed visually using mapping tools. Knowing who called, when they called, and where they called from will greatly help in targeting your marketing efforts. Aggregating call data, territory boundaries, sales, and other relevant data into a single coherent visual representation is a powerful tool for determining what works and what doesn't in your marketing activities.

### How Will it Help You?

In determining whether mobile location georouting is right for your business, ask yourself two basic questions:

- What percent of your customers are using cell phones vs. smartphones vs. landlines?
- Does your brand have a mobile app utilizing GPS, or will it have one soon?

If the majority of your customers are calling from a landline, then the traditional methods of georouting will continue to work just fine for you. On the other hand, if more and more of your customers are trying to reach you by cell phones or smart phones, read on.

If your brand already has a mobile app that's well used by your customers, chances are most of your customers have smartphones that are GPS capable and can use them effectively. If that's the case, communicating with your customers through your mobile app, such as including a service that allows customers to find your nearest location, is likely your best bet.

If, on the other hand, a significant portion of your customers use feature cell phones rather than smartphones, you probably need a good georouting solution to get these callers where they need to go, but you've probably not seen justification for investing in a mobile app. In that case, mobile location georouting would be

the best choice for your business and a great investment to improve your customer experience.

Of course, some brands with a wide variety of customers might choose to employ both technologies, leveraging their mobile app with GPS technology to reach smartphone customers while also relying on mobile location georouting to properly route all cell phone callers.

Regardless of which mix is best for your organization, using information about a customer's current location is a great way to improve both marketing efforts and customer experience. Give us a call and we'll help you determine which mobile, georouting, and telephony services are best for you.



Charles Austin is president of AdGeo, Inc., which provides mobile marketing, call routing and tracking, IVR, and call recording services to organizations with multiple sites or locations. He specializes in mobile and wireless technology and can be reached at

[cwaustin@adgeo.com](mailto:cwaustin@adgeo.com) or 314-336-3202.



AdGeo provides advanced call routing and tracking, IVR, call recording, visual reporting tools, and mobile marketing services to organizations with multiple sites or locations. Our technology expertise, combined with unmatched flexibility and superior service, allow us to solve complex call routing challenges and build long-term partnerships with our clients to help them build their businesses.