Companies may choose to outsource parts, but not all, of their call-center operations. In some cases, they classify customers as high or low-value, serving the former with their “in house” operations and routing the latter to an outsourcer. Typically, they impose service-level constraints on the time each type of customer waits on hold.

This paper considers four schemes for routing low-value calls between the client company and the outsourcer. These schemes vary in the complexity of their routing algorithms, as well as the sophistication of the telephone and information technology infrastructure they require of the two operations. For three of these schemes, we provide a direct characterization of system performance. For the fourth, most complex, scheme we provide performance bounds for the important special case in which the service requirements of high and low-value callers are the same. These results allow us to systematically compare the performance of the various routing schemes. Our results suggest that, for clients with large outsourcing requirements, the simpler schemes that require little client-outsourcer coordination can perform very well.