

Respond to Web Inquiries Fast

The form worked. Now the clock is running.

TIME	COST	DIFFICULTY	AUDIT SIGNAL
30 minutes to set up	Free	Easy	web_inquiry_response_time

WHAT WE MEASURED

We submitted an inquiry through your website and measured how long a human took to respond.

WHY IT MATTERS

Someone who fills in your form has already decided they want help. They are, at that moment, the warmest lead you will get all week.

They are also, at that moment, filling in two other forms.

The research on this is old but directionally solid: responding **within one hour** made firms roughly **7× more likely to qualify a lead** than responding in the second hour, and **more than 60× more likely** than waiting a day. In the same study, **23% of companies never responded at all**.

FIX IT YOURSELF

1 Make sure the notification reaches your phone

Most missed inquiries aren't ignored — they're never seen.

1. Submit your own form as a test.
2. Confirm the email arrives. **Check your spam folder.**
3. Put the sending address in your contacts so it never filters again.
4. Turn on a **phone notification** for that inbox, or set a filter that flags it.

Better: have the form send you a **text**, not just an email. Most form tools and website builders support this directly, or through a free automation.

2 Send an instant auto-reply that says something real

Not "thank you for your submission." Something that holds the customer:

Thanks [Name] — we got your message. Someone will call you back by [time]. If it's urgent, call us directly at (555) 123-4567. — Dave, Acme Plumbing

This buys you time and stops them shopping. But note: **an auto-reply is not a response**. The clock keeps running until a human replies.

3 Set a response standard and write it down

Pick a number you can hit on a bad day:

"Every web inquiry gets a human response within ____ hours during business hours, and by ____ the next morning if it arrives overnight."

One hour is the meaningful threshold if you can manage it. Four hours is respectable. Anything past 24 is close to not responding at all.

4 Call, don't email

A phone call to someone who just filled in a form converts far better than an email reply — they're still at their desk, still thinking about it, and a voice beats text for a service decision.

If they don't pick up, leave a voicemail **and** send a text. Then log the callback promise (see *Keep Every Callback Promise*).

5 Give the inbox an owner

If more than one person could respond, nobody does. Name one person per day or per week, and put it on a rota where everyone can see it.

For solo operators: pick two fixed times a day to check — say 11am and 4pm — so it isn't dependent on you happening to look at your phone.

6 Log it

| Date/time received | Name | First human response | Elapsed |

Two weeks of this shows you your real number. It's almost always slower than owners expect, because you remember the fast ones.

CHECK YOUR WORK

- ☐ You've tested your form and confirmed the notification arrives, not in spam.
- ☐ You get a phone notification or text for new inquiries.
- ☐ An instant auto-reply goes out naming a specific callback time.
- ☐ You have a written response standard.
- ☐ The inbox has a named owner.
- ☐ You're logging actual response times.

COMMON MISTAKES

- **Notifications going to an inbox you check weekly.**
- **Counting the auto-reply as your response.** It isn't.
- **Emailing back when you could call.**
- **A shared inbox with no owner.** Everyone assumes someone else has it.

This fix is free. You can earn and keep any Agenarys Seal tier — including Platinum — without paying Agenarys anything beyond the audit itself. If you would rather have help doing it, we sell that. We never sell passage.

SOURCES & FURTHER READING

Oldroyd, McElheran & Elkington — 'The Short Life of Online Sales Leads,' Harvard Business Review, March 2011 (data 2007–2011; direction robust, multipliers dated)