

## In All Fairness

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We've all experienced the frustration of calling a business and getting an automated answering system instead of a human being. If you live in America these days, you've probably encountered the bilingual option on these systems: "To continue in English, press 1. To continue in Spanish, press 2." In a nation comprised of immigrants, offering language options raises a lot of questions. Which languages should we offer? How many people have to speak a language before it's included? What about international callers? In our expanding global market, shouldn't we offer more language options? Here are ten things you might hear if a company tries to become all-inclusive:

- Thank you for calling Acme Incorporated, where we make the finest answering machines in the world. Please choose from the following list. If you are calling from a rotary phone, go out and buy a new phone. We're in the new millennia, for crying out loud!
- To continue in Abanyon, press one. *At this point, some guy in Burma realizes the list is going to be in alphabetical order, and he's thinking, "Why didn't I learn Burmese instead of Zyphe?"*
- To continue in Binary Code, press two.
- If you wish to speak Latin, hang up. Latin is a dead language.
- If you are dead, press 3789 to speak during a séance.
- TO CONTINUE IN SIGN LANGUAGE, WAVE YOUR HAND!
- If you are in town for the Star Trek Convention, please choose from the following options: To continue in Andorian, press 5876. To continue in Klingon, press 5877. To continue in Vulcan, press 5878...
- To continue telepathically, think of the number 7954.
- If you are a twin, press 9324, and we'll get your other twin on the line to speak your secret language.
- To continue in Zyphe, press 9999. *The guy in Burma punches in the numbers and says, "Hello... Hello... Aw, damn! My battery died..."*