

SmartConsumer

You've Got (Voice) Mail

Once the latest in efficiency, voice mail can now seem like a clumsy inconvenience.

So we were intrigued by companies that transcribe voice mail into e-mail, text or instant messages. We tested four services by playing the same three prerecorded messages into our cell phone.

How accurate were they?

CallWave, at \$15 to \$50 each month, correctly converted 84 percent of one voice mail but "could



not understand" the others.

SpinVox (\$5 to \$10) and **GotVoice** (\$10 to \$25) transcribed two messages but averaged about 70 percent accuracy—one was off with an appointment reminder (9 a.m. became 5 p.m.); the other gave us the wrong address. A spokesperson for SpinVox says its own study demonstrated 97 percent accuracy, while a spokesperson for GotVoice notes its technology "only improves" over time.

Our winner: **PhoneTag** (\$10 to \$30), which was 89 percent accurate on two messages.

