



Press Release

J.D. Power and Associates Reports: Smartphone Users are More Satisfied with their Wireless Retail Sales Experience, Compared with Traditional Handset Users

T-Mobile Ranks Highest in Customer Satisfaction with the Wireless Retail Sales Experience

WESTLAKE VILLAGE, Calif.: 17 September 2009 — As the number of smartphone users grows, wireless carrier stores are providing these customers with a more satisfying retail experience than users of more traditional handset models, according to the J.D. Power and Associates 2009 Wireless Retail Sales Satisfaction StudySM—Volume 2 released today.

Now in its sixth year, the semi-annual study analyzes evaluations from customers who recently had an in-store [wireless retail sales](#) experience. Overall customer satisfaction with major wireless carrier-branded stores is based on four factors. In order of importance, they are: sales staff (49%); price and promotion (27%); store facility (14%); and display (10%).

The study finds that satisfaction with the retail experience among smartphone owners averages 15 index points higher (on a 1,000-point scale) than that of traditional wireless handset owners, even though smartphones typically require additional service plan options and have more complex features. On average, satisfaction with the retail experience among owners of smartphones averages 722, while among owners of traditional models have a satisfaction score of 707.

Smartphone owners are more satisfied than traditional handset owners in all factors, particularly with regard to price and promotion—despite paying more for their devices and spending \$23 more per month on average for their service.

“In such a competitive landscape and with pressure to increase the share of customers using smartphones, wireless carriers have continued to provide their customers with appealing promotional offerings such as rebates on equipment and discounted unlimited service,” said Kirk Parsons, senior director of wireless services at J.D. Power and Associates. “As customers continue to take advantage of these incentives, it is critical for wireless retailers to be knowledgeable about smartphone models and service plans options available and to display a high level of courtesy during the sales process to ensure satisfaction levels continue to improve.”

T-Mobile ranks highest in customer satisfaction among major wireless carrier-owned retail stores with a score of 729, performing well in all four factors that drive satisfaction. Alltel (721) and Verizon Wireless (714) follow T-Mobile in the rankings.

The study finds that overall satisfaction with the retail sales process decreases dramatically when certain key activities are not performed by sales staff. For instance, satisfaction is 139 index points lower when a salesperson fails to offer to explain how to operate a phone, which is particularly important among smartphone users and customers who purchase feature-rich handsets. Additionally, smartphone owners who visit retail stores report spending more than four additional minutes in the store during their most recent visit, compared with owners of traditional handsets.

“Sales representatives are not just allowing customers to wait idle in the store—instead, they’re showing smartphone users how to best utilize advanced feature sets and optimize the wireless experience on their particular phone,” said Parsons. “It is critical that salespeople fulfill the basic needs of customers during every visit, but it is increasingly important for representatives to add value to the retail experience. If the representative can optimize the customer’s service plan in any way or inform them of new options or available features, the customer will leave with greater loyalty to the retailer and be more likely to return.”

The study also finds the following key retail wireless sales transaction patterns:

- Nearly one-half (45%) of wireless customers visit their retailer to upgrade or replace a phone from their current carrier. However, satisfaction is significantly higher than average when retail store visits are to add or subtract a family member (723) or to renew or change a service plan (720).
- Twenty-one percent of retail visits are the result of a previous positive experience with that particular retailer.
- Retail satisfaction is 20 percent lower among customers who report they were pressured during the sales process. The average overall satisfaction score when customers report experiencing no sales pressure is 738, compared with an average of just 616 when customers say they were pressured.

Volume 2 of the 2009 Wireless Retail Sales Satisfaction Study is based on experiences reported by 8,637 wireless customers who completed a retail sales transaction within the past six months. The study was fielded between January and June 2009. Visit JDPower.com to view customer satisfaction ratings for wireless [call quality](#), [customer care](#), and [mobile phone handsets](#), as well as for more information or to view [wireless retail sales ratings](#).

About J.D. Power and Associates

Headquartered in Westlake Village, Calif., J.D. Power and Associates is a global marketing information services company operating in key business sectors including market research, forecasting, performance improvement, Web intelligence and customer satisfaction. The company’s quality and satisfaction measurements are based on responses from millions of consumers annually. For more information on [car reviews and ratings](#); [car insurance](#); [health insurance](#); [cell phone ratings](#); and more, please visit JDPower.com. J.D. Power and Associates is a business unit of The McGraw-Hill Companies.

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J.D. Power and Associates Media Relations Contacts:

John Tews; Troy, Mich.; (248) 312-4119; media.relations@jdpa.com

Syvetril Perryman; Westlake Village, Calif.; (805) 418-8103; media.relations@jdpa.com

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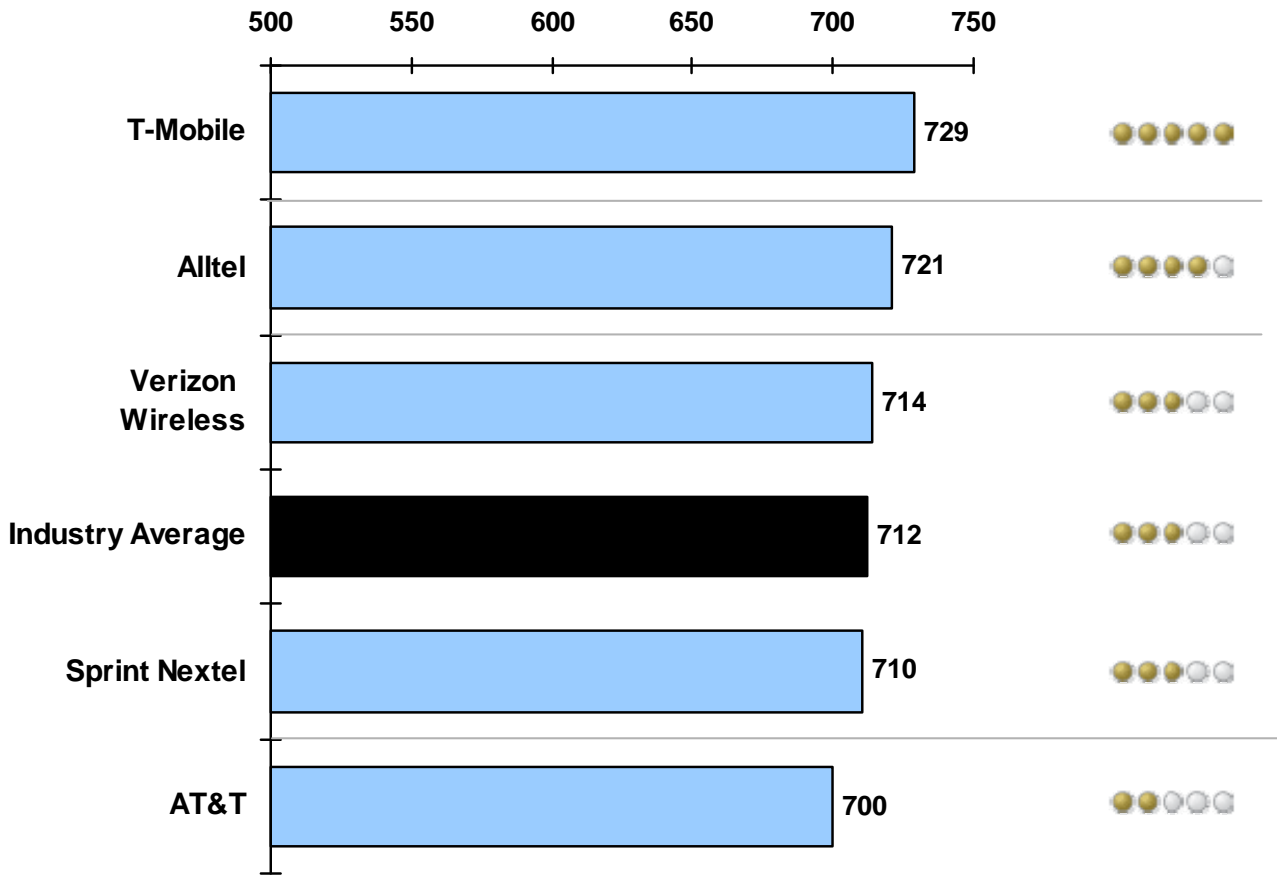
J.D. Power and Associates

2009 Wireless Retail Sales Satisfaction StudySM –Volume 2

Overall Retail Sales Index Rankings

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)

JDPower.com
Power Circle RatingsTM
for consumers:



Power Circle Ratings Legend

- Among the best
- Better than most
- About average
- The rest

Source: J.D. Power and Associates 2009 Wireless Retail Sales Satisfaction StudySM–Volume 2

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