



Press Release

J.D. Power and Associates Reports: Wireless Customers with Additional Plan Options Are Notably More Satisfied with Customer Care Performance

Verizon Wireless Ranks Highest in Wireless Customer Care Performance for a Second Consecutive Time

WESTLAKE VILLAGE, Calif: 4 February 2010 — Customer care performance scores are considerably higher among wireless customers with additional plan features, according to the J.D. Power and Associates 2010 Wireless Customer Care Performance StudySM—Volume 1 released today.

Now in its eighth year, the semiannual study provides a detailed report card on how well wireless carriers service their customers in three contact methods: telephone calls with a customer service representative (CSR) and/or automated response system (ARS); visits to a retail wireless store; and on the Web. Within each contact method, the study measures satisfaction and processing issues such as problem-resolution efficiency and hold-time duration.

The study finds that customer care performance scores are significantly higher among customers with additional plan features, such as extended handset warranties (770 on a 1,000-point scale, on average) and unlimited calling to a predefined group of people (767, on average), than among customers with base calling plans (699). Similarly, customer care performance scores average 749 among customers with unlimited text and picture messaging options included in their plans. Among customers with unlimited data usage, customer care performance scores average 764.

“Additional plan options not only increase overall satisfaction by offering customers access to newer features, but they may also reduce the number and severity of problems customers experience that require contacting the carrier,” said Kirk Parsons, senior director of wireless services at J.D. Power and Associates. “For example, unlimited usage plans may reduce the number of contacts pertaining to overages and incorrect billing, which helps to sustain and improve levels of first-contact problem resolution and wait times. Reducing some of these types of problems allows service representatives to focus on resolving more complicated issues and optimizing their customers’ wireless experiences.”

The study also finds that overall customer care performance scores average 739 in 2010, an increase of 13 points during the past year. In particular, customer care performance during phone calls to customer service representatives and visits to retail facilities has improved steadily due to increased first-contact problem resolution and shorter wait times. More than three-fourths (77%) of calls to customer service representatives are resolved on the first contact in 2010, compared with just 66 percent in the 2009 Wireless Customer Care Performance Study—Wave 1, issued in February 2009. Phone hold times average 5.16 minutes in 2010, compared with 6.58 minutes in February 2009.

Verizon Wireless ranks highest in [wireless customer care performance](#) for a second consecutive time with a score of 753. Verizon Wireless performs particularly well when contacts are resolved through phone calls to CSRs and visits to wireless retail stores. In both phone calls and in-person visits, Verizon Wireless service representatives

perform well with regard to identifying customer problems quickly and resolving them efficiently. T-Mobile follows closely in the rankings with a score of 752 and performs particularly well among calls that originate in the ARS channel and are then transferred to a live service representative.

The study also finds several key wireless customer care patterns:

- The rate of customers that report having contacted their carrier's care units has decreased by 3 percent during the past six months, with AT&T and Verizon customers stating particularly low contact rates.
- During the past six months, the number of customer contacts pertaining to credit issues such as overdue balances and credit extensions has increased by 50 percent.
- Despite owning phones with more complicated feature sets, wireless customers with smartphones do not rate customer care performance much lower than those with traditional mobile phones (735 vs. 741, respectively). However, smartphone owners, compared to traditional phone owners, are significantly more likely to have contacted their carrier with an issue during the past six months (49% vs. 40%, respectively) and it is less likely the issue was resolved on the first contact via telephone (74% vs. 77%, respectively). Regarding retail store contacts, smartphone owners also require more than three additional minutes to resolve their issues than do owners of traditional phones.
- Sixteen percent of customer phone contacts result from proactive calls or text messages originated by the wireless carrier. This has proven to be an effective way of limiting some potential issues from escalating, as customers who contact their carrier after receiving these communications are more satisfied (751, on average) than customers who do not receive proactive contact from their carrier (738).

The 2010 Wireless Customer Care Performance Study—Volume 1 is based on responses from more than 9,500 wireless customers who contacted their carrier's customer care department within the past six months. The study was fielded from July through December 2009.

For more information, to read an article, or [view wireless customer care ratings](#), please visit [JDPower.com](#).

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, training 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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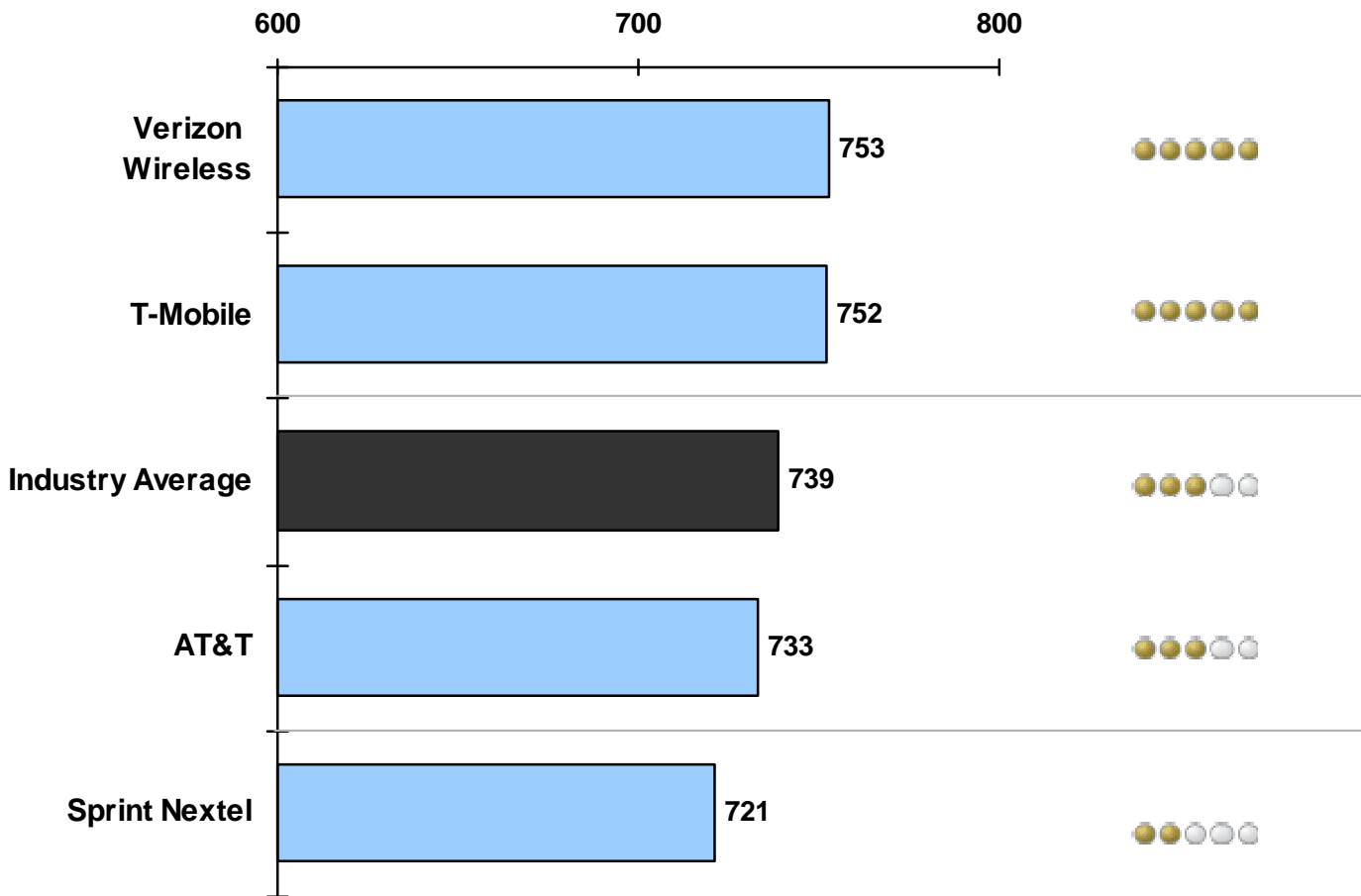
NOTE: One chart follows.

J.D. Power and Associates 2010 Wireless Customer Care Performance StudySM—Volume 1

Overall Customer Care 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 2010 Wireless Customer Care Performance StudySM—Volume 1

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