



Press Release

J.D. Power and Associates Reports: Wireless Customers Are Contacting Their Service Providers Through Retail and Online Channels With Increasing Frequency

T-Mobile Ranks Highest in Wireless Customer Care Performance

WESTLAKE VILLAGE, Calif: 29 July 2010 — Overall, wireless customers who contact their service provider for customer care are increasingly using contact channels other than the telephone, according to the J.D. Power and Associates 2010 U.S. Wireless Customer Care Performance StudySM—Volume 2 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, compared with six months ago, there have been substantial increases in the proportion of wireless customers who use the retail store location and online/Web channels to seek customer care. During the first half of 2010, 29 percent of customers visited a retail store location regarding their most recent customer care inquiry or issue. In comparison, 26 percent of customers did the same between July and December 2009. The change is even greater among those customers who indicate they contacted their provider online either through e-mail or the website, as 11 percent overall report doing so in 2010, up from 9 percent in the last half of 2009.

“While a majority of customers—60 percent, on average—still use the telephone to contact their wireless carrier for customer care issues, it’s clear that wireless subscribers are increasingly relying on other channels to resolve their customer service needs,” said Kirk Parsons, senior director of wireless services at J.D. Power and Associates. “There are a number of reasons for this, such as an increase in retail store locations; the expansion and efficiency of online methods, especially the speed of communicating with a live representative via online chat messaging; and general overall improvement in satisfaction performance, especially within the retail store channel.”

For example, the study finds that overall customer care performance scores among customers who visit a retail store location have significantly improved from six months ago. Overall satisfaction among these customers averages 775 on a 1,000-point scale—an increase of 23 index points. Customers are notably more satisfied when they resolve their issue by visiting a retail store than they are when they utilize other methods of contact.

“The walk-in experience is unique due to the physical nature of the experience and the immediacy of having an issue resolved in person,” said Parsons. “It is critical, however, that the retail store representatives first focus their efforts on resolving the customer’s core needs if that’s the main reason for the visit, as first-contact resolution is critical to a superior customer care experience.”

T-Mobile ranks highest in [wireless customer care performance](#) with an overall score of 777. T-Mobile performs particularly well in phone contacts that originate in the ARS channel and are then transferred to a live service

representative, and through phone calls made directly to a CSR. AT&T follows in the overall rankings with a score of 757 and performs well among customers who visit retail store locations and among customers who contact their carrier online.

The study also finds several key wireless customer care patterns:

- Overall, 39 percent of wireless customers contact their carrier due to service and equipment-related issues, while 34 percent contact for billing, 25 percent for incorrect charges, 23 percent for price or cost, 22 percent for call quality, 9 percent for messaging issues, 9 percent for network coverage, and 6 percent for credit issues.
- Wireless customers who have had a positive care experience are more loyal and are therefore less likely to switch carriers in the future, on average. Among customers who indicate they “definitely will not switch” carriers in the next 12 months, the customer care index averages 827, compared with just 602 among those who say they “definitely will switch”—a difference of 225 points.
- A vast majority of customers get through to their carrier on their first try (90%), but some customers (10%) are misdirected or are put on hold for too long and must make more than one contact. The average wireless customer spends 5.27 minutes on hold when trying to reach their carrier via phone.

The 2010 Wireless Customer Care Performance Study—Volume 2 is based on responses from 9,690 wireless customers who contacted their carrier’s customer care department within the past six months. The study was fielded from January through June 2010.

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, 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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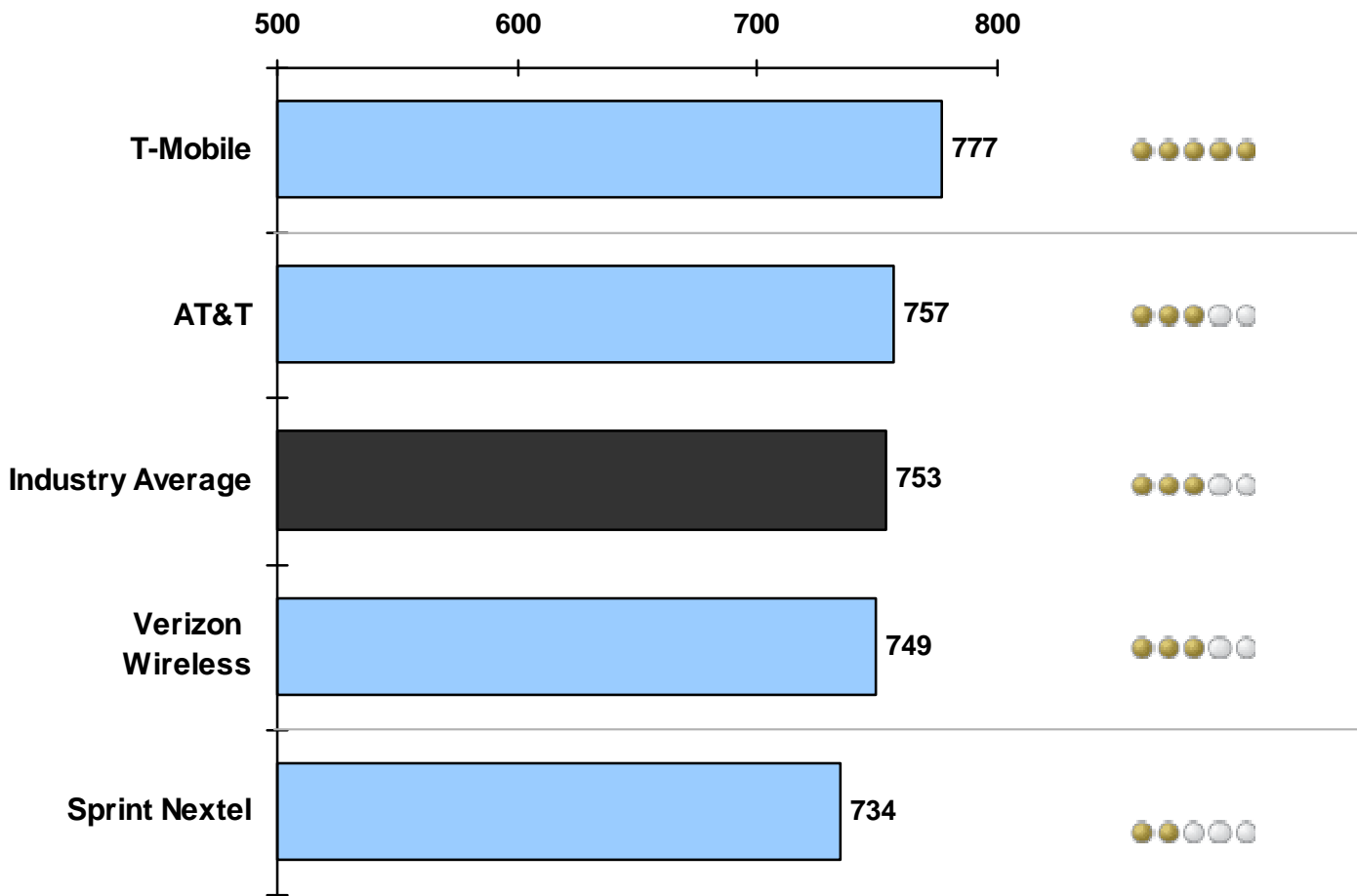
NOTE: One chart follows.

J.D. Power and Associates 2010 U.S. Wireless Customer Care Performance StudySM— Volume 2

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 U.S. Wireless Customer Care Performance StudySM—Volume 2

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