



Press Release

J.D. Power and Associates Reports: Rising Network Quality Issues Prompt a Higher Number of Calls among Wireless Business Customers To Report Problems

Verizon Wireless Ranks Highest in Both Business Customer Satisfaction in Two Segments

WESTLAKE VILLAGE, Calif.: 26 April 2012 —Wireless network quality issues are causing more business customers to call their carrier to report problems and ask questions, according to the J.D. Power and Associates 2012 U.S. Business Wireless Satisfaction StudySM released today.

Now in its eighth year, the study measures the overall satisfaction of [very small segment business customers](#) (companies with between one and 19 employees, with a corporate service plan) and [small/medium segment business customers](#) (companies with between 20 and 499 employees) with their wireless voice and data services across six key factors. In order of importance, they are: performance and reliability (29%); sales representatives/account executives (18%); cost of service (18%); offerings and promotions (14%); billing (12%); and customer service (8%).

In the past six-month period, 83 percent of all business wireless customers have contacted their current carrier with a problem or a question, an increase from 76 percent in 2011. The primary cause for the increase in problems or questions is due to a rise in the number of employee complaints regarding network quality issues, particularly connection issues such as dropped/disconnected calls and Internet/email failures.

Among customers contacting their carrier with a problem, 27 percent of small/medium segment business customers have reported problems with dropped/disconnected calls, compared with only 19 percent in 2011—a 30 percent increase, year over year. In addition, 18 percent of small/medium segment business customers have reported issues with Internet/email failure, which is nearly double the rate in 2011 (10%). One of the key differences in the increase in network quality issues is that business customers have higher numbers of employees using data-related services plans, especially high-speed broadband offerings. Overall, the rate of all business segments using data plans has increased to 82 percent in 2012 from 67percent in 2011. In fact, 27 percent of business customers indicate they have subscribed to mobile broadband data plans this year.

“It’s clear that the need for business customers’ employees to stay connected for day-to-day business activities has risen considerably over the years,” said Kirk Parsons, senior director of wireless services at J.D. Power and Associates. “The ability for those employees to stay connected and productive while traveling, commuting or otherwise out of the office provides a competitive advantage over those businesses whose employees are not able to stay connected or otherwise be as productive.”

Meeting or exceeding the service expectations of business customers is critical. Among business customers who experience network connection issues, the percentage of those who will most likely switch providers in the next 12 months is nearly three times higher than the study average (34% vs. 12%, respectively).

“Due to varying degrees of consistency in overall network performance, it’s critical that wireless carriers continue to invest in addressing both the voice quality and data connection-related issues that business customers continue to experience,” said Parsons.

4G Is Making Inroads, but Performance and Reliability Hamper Impact

The 4G technology that allows faster download and upload connectivity speeds is making its way into businesses, with more than one-half (52%) of business customers having at least one device that operates on a 4G network. However, satisfaction with performance and reliability is lower among business customers with 4G connectivity (708 vs. 722 on a 1,000-point scale).

“As more business customers leverage a high-speed 4G network, more are reporting issues with its performance. These reported performance issues highlight that 4G networks are still new and being introduced in markets throughout the country. In some cases, the network is not even available in the business’ area,” said Parsons. “Carriers have a challenge in stabilizing and expanding the network to help improve the overall experience for their growing 4G customer base.”

Business Wireless Customer Satisfaction Results

In both the very small and small/medium business segments, Verizon Wireless ranks highest in customer satisfaction and performs particularly well in performance/reliability and offerings/promotions. Sprint and T-Mobile closely follow Verizon Wireless in both the very small business and small/medium business segments.

The study also finds the following key business wireless usage patterns:

- In 2012, 33 percent of business customers have purchased handsets for their employees, but allow them to choose from a selected group of models, compared with 19 percent in 2010.
- Just 8 percent of business customers have experienced mobile security issues within the past six months. The study finds little additional negative impact on mobile security when businesses policies allow employees to use their personal device.

The 2012 U.S. Business Wireless Satisfaction Study is based on responses from wireless service decision-makers at more than 2,758 U.S. businesses. The study was fielded between October 2011 and February 2012.

For more information on customer satisfaction with wireless service, wireless retail sales, cell phone handsets, customer care, prepaid wireless service and business wireless service, 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 providing performance improvement, social media and customer satisfaction insights and solutions. 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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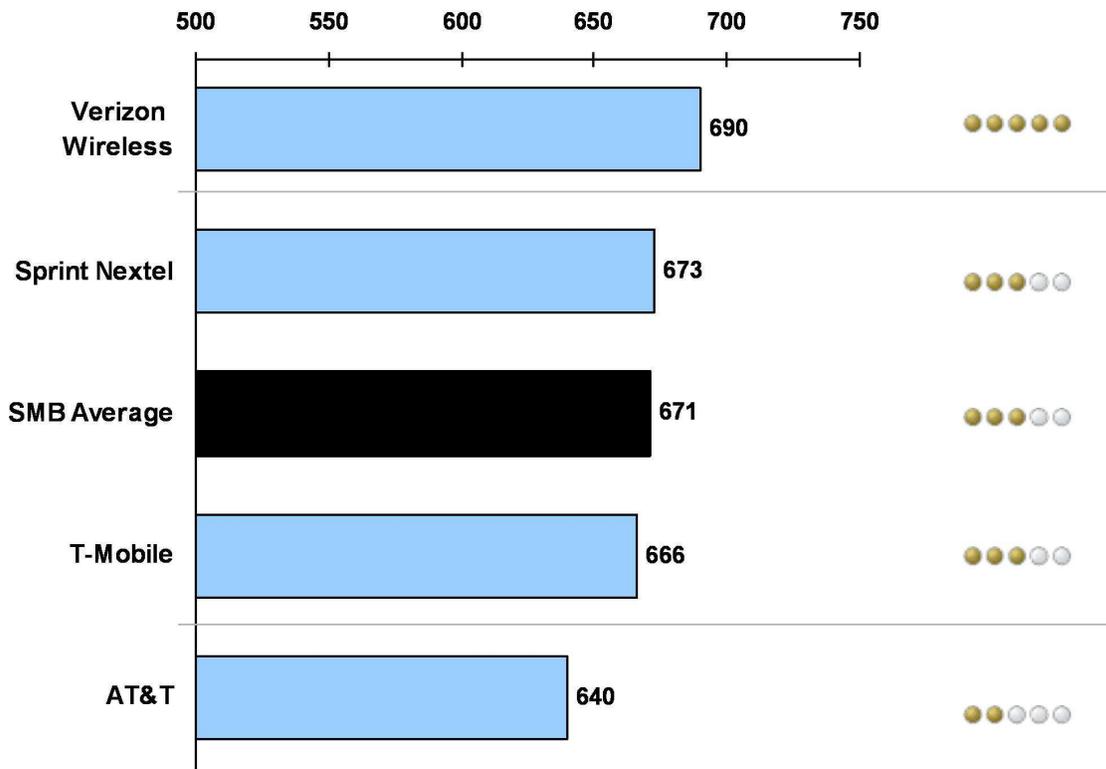
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NOTE: Two charts follow.

J.D. Power and Associates 2012 Business Wireless Satisfaction StudySM

Overall Business Wireless Index Rankings Small/Midsize Business Segment (Based on a 1,000-point scale)

JDPower.com
Power Circle RatingsTM
for consumers:



Power Circle Ratings Legend

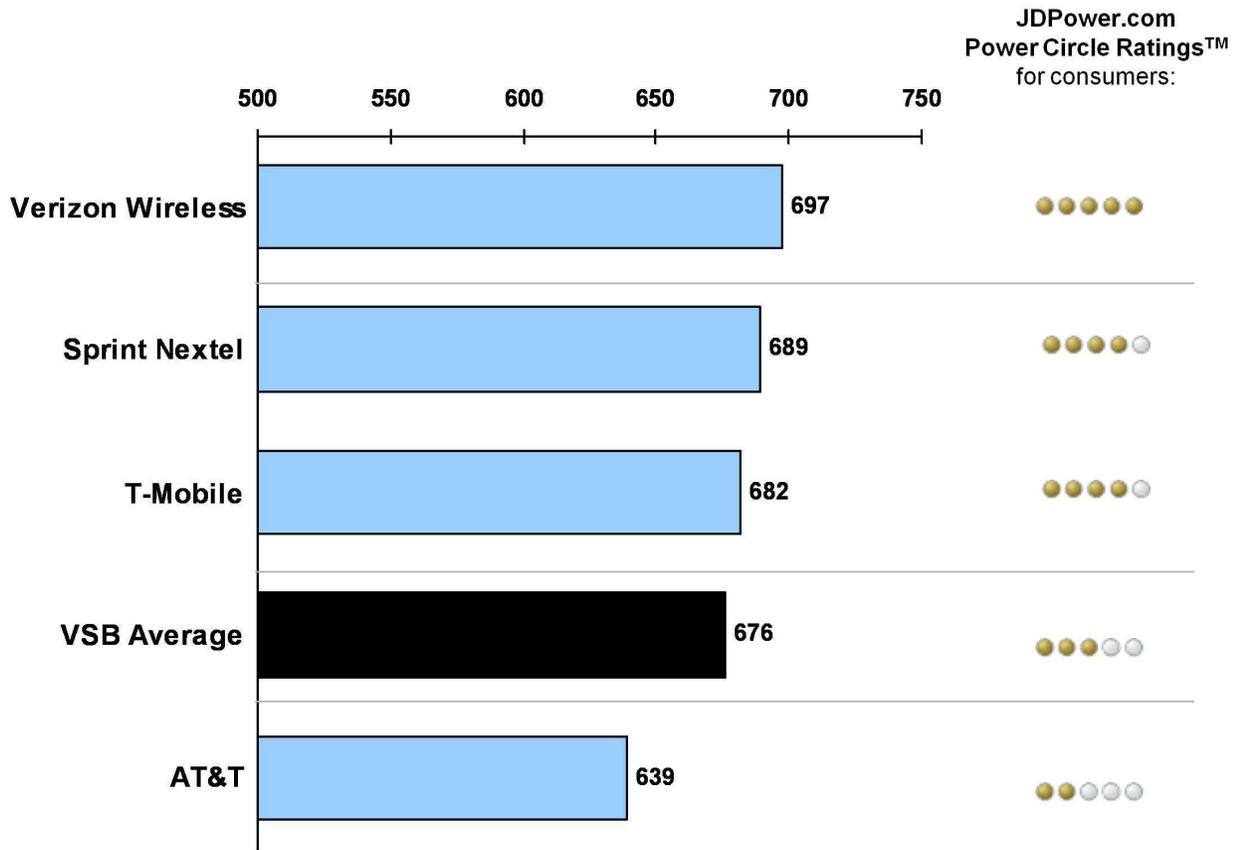
- Among the best
- Better than most
- About average
- The rest

Source: J.D. Power and Associates 2012 Business Wireless Satisfaction StudySM

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J.D. Power and Associates 2012 Business Wireless Satisfaction StudySM

Overall Business Wireless Index Rankings Very Small Business Segment (Based on a 1,000-point scale)



Power Circle Ratings Legend

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

Source: J.D. Power and Associates 2012 Business Wireless Satisfaction StudySM

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