J.D. Power and Associates Reports:
Satisfaction with the Wireless Purchase Experience Differs Considerably Among Sales Channels

Sprint and T-Mobile Rank Highest in Wireless Purchase Experience Satisfaction among Full-Service Carriers, In a Tie, While Boost Mobile Ranks Highest among Non-Contract Carriers

WESTLAKE VILLAGE, Calif: 11 August 2011 — Overall satisfaction with the wireless purchase experience differs across contact channels stemming from consumer channel expectations and the transaction type, according to the J.D. Power and Associates 2011 U.S. Full-Service Wireless Purchase Experience Study[SM]—Volume 2 and the 2011 U.S. Wireless Non-Contract Purchase Experience Study[SM]—Volume 2, both released today.

Now in their eighth year, the semiannual studies have been expanded in 2011 to collect evaluations from customers who recently had a wireless purchase experience using any of three contact methods: telephone calls with sales representatives; visits to a retail wireless store; and on the Web. Overall customer satisfaction with both full-service and non-contract branded carriers is based on six factors (in order of importance): store sales representative; website sales; phone sales representative; store facility; offerings and promotion; and cost of service.

The study finds that overall customer satisfaction varies widely by the type of channel used for their wireless sales transaction. Satisfaction is lowest among customers who most recently conducted a Web sales transaction (738 on a 1,000-point scale, on average), compared with retail (walk-in) and telephone channels (753 and 752, respectively). Customers who purchased through the Web channel, where finding information quickly is more challenging, tend to rate their experience lower based on the general lack of personal assistance, compared with either in-person or over the phone.

In addition, the study finds that satisfaction with cost of service and offerings and promotions is lower when purchases are made over the phone than when made online or in stores. For example, satisfaction with cost of service among purchases occurring over the phone averages 626, compared with 653 and 652 when purchases occur online and in stores, respectively. Similarly, satisfaction with offerings and promotions for purchases made over the phone averages 12 points lower than for online purchases and 17 points lower than for in-store purchases. Customers making purchases online and in stores have the opportunity to view all product offerings and see the pricing associated with each one, which is not always possible over the phone.

"Within the past year, there have been a number of new product and service plan innovations where, in most cases, relatively detailed information needs to be provided to customers in a logical and cost-effective manner," said Kirk Parsons, senior director of wireless services at J.D. Power and Associates. "Being able to provide a seamless experience across multiple sales channels is key for service carriers, particularly as devices and plans become more complex. Providing up-to-date product and service information is becoming increasingly critical to exceeding customer expectations."

Overall satisfaction also differs by the method of purchase, as expectations are set by the type of purchase being made. For example, satisfaction is 775 among full-service customers who change their service plan via the phone, compared with just 716 among those opting to do so online. However, overall satisfaction scores do not vary by channel when purchasing a new device.

According to Parsons, full-service carriers that provide an exceptional purchase experience (receiving ratings of 10 on a 10-point scale) may earn $4 more per customer each month, compared with full-service carriers that do not provide a satisfactory experience.

Sprint and T-Mobile rank highest, in a tie, in customer satisfaction among major full-service wireless carriers with a score of 755 each. Sprint performs well among the website sales, offerings and promotions and cost of service factors. T-Mobile performs particularly well in the cost of service factor.

Boost Mobile ranks highest in overall purchase experience satisfaction among non-contract service carriers with an overall score of 766. Boost Mobile performs particularly well in phone sales representative, offerings and promotions and cost of service. MetroPCS (760) and Virgin Mobile (753) follow Boost Mobile in the non-contract service carrier rankings.

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

- Sixty-two percent of full-service customers indicate that their most recent purchase experience occurred in a retail store location, while 19 percent say that their most recent sales transaction occurred via the telephone or online channel. This differs considerably from non-contract branded customers—26 percent say their most recent purchase transaction occurred online, and only 13 percent indicate that it was over the telephone.
- The average total time customers spent in the full-service retail store to complete the sales transaction is approximately 53 minutes—a decrease of more than three minutes, compared with six months ago. In comparison, customers making purchases from non-contract carriers indicate spending just 44 minutes in the retail store.
- Satisfaction with the overall purchase experience among other retailers, such as Apple, Best Buy, Costco, RadioShack and Wal-Mart, averages 740 index points—18 points lower than among stores owned by full-service wireless carriers.

The 2011 Wireless Full-Service Purchase Experience Study—Volume 2 is based on responses from 9,190 wireless customers. The 2011 Wireless Non-Contract Purchase Experience Study—Volume 2 is based on responses from 1,767 wireless customers. Both studies are among current subscribers who report having a sales transaction with their current carrier within the past six months. The study was fielded from January through June 2011.

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.

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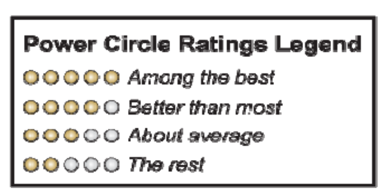
J.D. Power and Associates
2011 U.S. Wireless Full-Service Purchase Experience Study^{SM} – Volume 2

Overall Purchase Experience Index Rankings

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



Source: J.D. Power and Associates 2011 U.S. Wireless Full-Service Purchase Experience Study^{SM} – Volume 2

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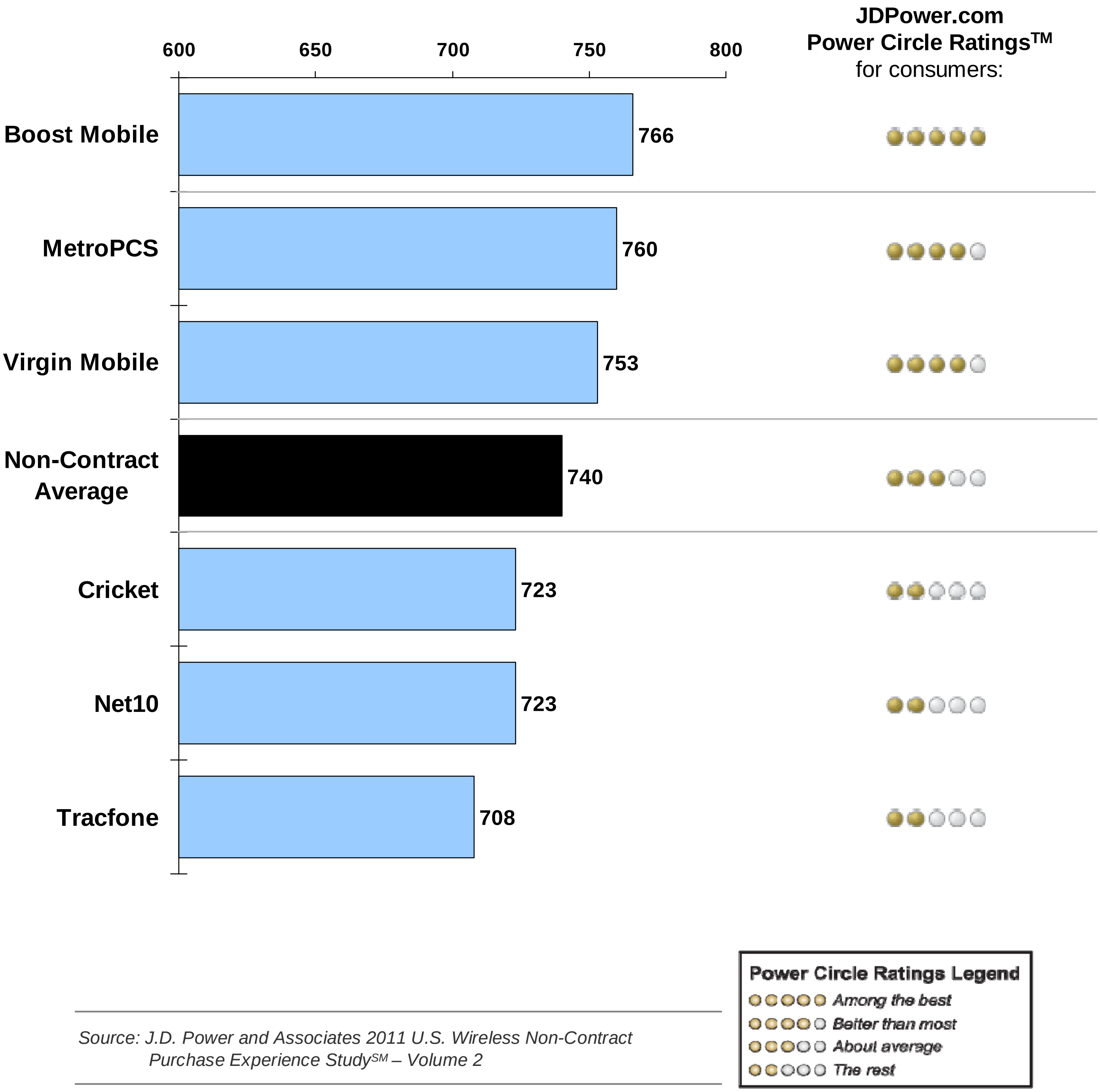
2011 U.S. Wireless Non-Contract Purchase Experience Study℠ – Volume 2

Overall Purchase Experience Index Rankings

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



Source: J.D. Power and Associates 2011 U.S. Wireless Non-Contract Purchase Experience Study℠ – Volume 2