Brick-and-Mortar and Phone-Based Sales Reps Still Play Key Role in Wireless Purchase Experience, J.D. Power Finds

TROY, Mich.: 13 Aug. 2020 — Despite a global pandemic that has sparked increased use of digital as well as significant efforts made by wireless providers to shift device sales into online channels, consumers still want to talk to a real person when they are buying a new device. According to the J.D. Power 2020 U.S. Wireless Purchase Experience Full-Service Performance StudySM—Volume 2 and the J.D. Power 2020 U.S. Wireless Purchase Experience Non-Contract Performance StudySM—Volume 2, both released today, customer satisfaction with the wireless purchase experience increases this year, driven largely by satisfying experiences with in-store and phone-based sales reps.

“Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the highest-volume sales channel has been in-store, though 20% of customers who purchased via phone said they went to the provider’s website first before calling to close the deal,” said Ian Greenblatt, managing director at J.D. Power. “Wireless carriers are doing a good job of getting customers to their websites, but struggle to convert those experiences into sales. If carriers want to optimize their online channels, they need to better evaluate the purchase journey to successfully leverage the dynamics of person-to-person interaction and translate that to the digital sales platform.”

Following are key findings of both studies:

- **Overall customer satisfaction improves**: Overall customer satisfaction with the wireless purchase experience improves eight points (on a 1,000-point scale) vs. a year ago, driven by improved satisfaction with the cost of service and interactions with phone-based sales representatives.

- **Brick-and-mortar remains leading sales channel**: Brick-and-mortar stores saw the highest overall volume in sales, accounting for 63% of sales among full-service customers. However, phone and online sales channels saw the largest year-over-year growth in volume, up 6% and 7%, respectively.

- **Carriers struggle to convert online sales**: Although growing numbers of wireless customers are turning to the carrier website first, they are still reaching out to a representative to make a purchase. Overall, 20% of customers who made a purchase via phone started their shopping process online.

### Study Results

Among full-service carriers, **T-Mobile** ranks highest for a sixth consecutive volume, with a score of 863. **AT&T** (853) ranks second.

Among non-contract full-service carriers, **Cricket** ranks highest for a third consecutive volume, with a score of 860. **Metro by T-Mobile** (851) ranks second.

For non-contract value carriers, **Consumer Cellular** ranks highest for a ninth consecutive volume, with a score of 877. **Straight Talk** (845) ranks second.

Now in the 17th year of publication, the U.S. Wireless Purchase Experience Full-Service Performance Study and U.S. Wireless Purchase Experience Non-Contract Performance Study are based on responses from 13,368 customers who use any one of three purchase channels and evaluate the wireless purchase experience.
experience of: phone calls with sales representatives; visits to a retail wireless store; or online/website contact with sales representatives. Overall purchase experience satisfaction with both full-service and non-contract carriers is based on responses from 13,368 wireless measured in six factors (in order of importance): store sales representative; website; phone sales representative; offerings and promotions; store facility; and cost of service. Both studies were fielded from January through June 2020.


To view the online press release, please visit http://www.jdpower.com/pr-id/2020081.

J.D. Power is a global leader in consumer insights, advisory services and data and analytics. A pioneer in the use of big data, artificial intelligence (AI) and algorithmic modeling capabilities to understand consumer behavior, J.D. Power has been delivering incisive industry intelligence on customer interactions with brands and products for more than 50 years. The world's leading businesses across major industries rely on J.D. Power to guide their customer-facing strategies.

J.D. Power is headquartered in Troy, Mich., and has offices in North America, Europe and Asia Pacific. To learn more about the company’s business offerings, visit JD.Power.com/business. The J.D. Power auto shopping tool can be found at JDPower.com.

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NOTE: Three charts follow.
Overview of Customer Satisfaction Index Rankings


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Overall Customer Satisfaction Index Ranking
(Based on a 1,000-point scale)

Non-Contract Full-Service Carriers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carrier</th>
<th>Satisfaction Index</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cricket</td>
<td>860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro by T-Mobile</td>
<td>851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segment Average</td>
<td>849</td>
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<tr>
<td>Virgin Mobile</td>
<td>839</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boost Mobile</td>
<td>837</td>
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Overall Customer Satisfaction Index Ranking
(Based on a 1,000-point scale)

Non-Contract Value Carriers

- Consumer Cellular: 877
- Straight Talk: 845
- Segment Average: 843
- TracFone: 828


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