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T-Mobile Dominates the Quarter, Again

AT&T, Verizon, and Sprint Gains and Losses Offset


CHICAGO, IL – Tuesday, April 19, 2016 - Consumer Intelligence Research Partners, LLC (CIRP) today released analysis of the results from its research on US mobile phone carriers for the calendar quarter that ended March 31, 2016. This analysis features findings about consumer trends in mobile phone activations from January-March, 2016 for AT&T (T), Verizon (VZ), Sprint (S), and T-Mobile (TMUS).

CIRP finds that among major mobile phone companies, T-Mobile (including MetroPCS) had the greatest gains, retaining customers at a similar rate as other carriers with much greater switching from other carriers. Sprint (including Boost Mobile) also had significant gains, but lost customers at almost the same magnitude. Similarly, both AT&T and Verizon had customer gains barely offsetting losses such that they grew slightly in the quarter.

This analysis shows that among customers that activated a phone in the quarter (approximately 12% of the US market), T-Mobile augmented its customer base 42% from other carriers' existing mobile phone owners and Sprint similarly grew its base 30% (Table 1). Verizon and AT&T had smaller competitor customer attraction rates, at 14% and 10%, respectively. These figures are relative to the number of new phone activators that started the quarter as their respective customers. CIRP analyzes carrier gains and losses among customers who activated a mobile phone during the quarter. Using quarterly activations as a base, CIRP measures each carrier's relative performance.

Table 1: Customer Gains and Losses by Carrier – 2015-Q4 Phone Activators

| | AT&T | Verizon | Sprint | T-Mobile | other |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|
| beginning of period | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| lost to other carriers | -16% | -17% | -27% | -18% | -39% |
| retained | 84% | 83% | 73% | 82% | 61% |
| gain from other carriers | 10% | 14% | 30% | 42% | 24% |
| first phone | 9% | 3% | 0% | 6% | 1% |
| end of period | 103% | 101% | 103% | 131% | 87% |



“Once again, T-Mobile showed it can attract significant numbers of new customers, while retaining its current ones,” said Josh Lowitz, Partner and Co-Founder of CIRP. “It attracted new customers from other carriers at an astonishing rate, attracting another 42% of their base of existing customers who activated a phone in the quarter. Sprint also gained a significant percentage of customers relative to its base, but lost almost as many. AT&T and Verizon saw existing customer losses slightly exceed gains, and only with the addition of first time phone buyers, did they grow slightly.”

“New phone buyers also accounted for some growth,” said Mike Levin, Partner and Co-Founder of CIRP. “While the data suggests that 9% of AT&T and 6% of T-Mobile growth came from first-time phone buyers, we think there is some noise in this result. Still, new phone customers gravitated to the major carriers, instead of to the regional and pre-paid carriers, where they had started for many quarters before this.”

CIRP bases its findings on a survey of 500 US subjects, from April 1-14, 2016, that activated a new or used phone in the January-March, 2016 period. For additional information, please contact Mike Levin (mike@cirpllc.com) or Josh Lowitz (josh@cirpllc.com) at 312.344.3664. Further information on CIRP, which provides securities research to the investment community using advanced consumer market research strategies, methods, and techniques, is at www.cirpllc.com.

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