

Carriers Face Challenge as Customers Keep Wireless Devices Longer, Use More Data, J.D. Power Finds

[Videotron, TELUS Mobility and SaskTel Rank Highest in Respective Segments](#)

TORONTO: 10 May 2018 — Customers in Canada are not in a rush to upgrade their wireless devices to newer models and, as a result, are experiencing more network quality issues, especially among heavy data users. According to the J.D. Power 2018 Canada Wireless Network Quality Study,SM 23% of customers have had their phone for more than two years, an increase from 21% in 2017.

Further, customers who own a newer phone (six months or less) experience fewer slow web and app connection incidents (10 problems per 100 network connections for web and 7 PP100 for app), compared to those with devices older than two years (12 PP100 for web and 9 PP100 for app).

The study finds that unlimited data plans in Canada are of limited availability, compared with the United States (6% vs. 36%, respectively), and remained unchanged from last year. Similarly, customers in Canada with unlimited data plans or those with higher data caps experienced more web and app network-related issues, compared to lighter users with smaller data plans.

“Consumers’ increased appetite for heavy data-based websites and apps, such as streaming HD videos, are causing bottlenecks and impairing the performance of wireless networks when coupled with older devices,” says **Adrian Chung, Director of the Technology, Media & Telecom Practice at J.D. Power in Canada**. “Although these issues are more related to end-user devices and their ability to process data rather than network capacity, it has a negative effect on a carrier’s brand image.”

According to the study, consumers with fewer network problems have a more favorable brand image of their wireless carrier and are less likely to switch providers than those experiencing more network problems. Specifically, 37% of consumers who experienced fewer than 4 PP100 plan to stick with their carrier, compared with only 18% of those who experienced 12 PP100 or more. The former group also perceives their wireless provider as more innovative, reliable and of good value.

“Since 1 in 3 Canadians are opting for 5 GB or higher data plans to enable increased data-driven wireless experiences, wireless networks and devices are pushed to their limits,” Chung said. “Carriers should be mindful about this trend and the effect it has on their reputation. Network upgrades and more compelling trade-in programs for heavy users are examples of potential remedies.”

Following are some additional findings of the 2018 study:

- **Rural Canada is more disconnected:** Canadians in rural areas experience the highest number of network incidents of all types (call, text message and web browsing), with an overall score of 10 PP100, compared with only 9 PP100 in urban areas.

- **Younger Canadians consume more data:** Gen Z¹ consumers have the highest data cap plans, with 14% having a data cap of 10 GB or more. By contrast, while 37% of Pre-Boomers have a small data allowance of less than 2 GB, only one-fourth of Gen Y and Gen Z (24% and 23%, respectively) opt for similar light-data plans.
- **Size of data plans on the rise:** High-volume data plans are on the rise in Canada, boasting year-over-year growth. The percentage of both 5 GB and 10 GB data plans in Canada has grown from last year (25% to 33% for 5 GB or more).

Study Rankings

In the East region, **Videotron** (7 PP100) ranks highest in overall network quality, followed by **Rogers Wireless** and **TELUS Mobility** in a tie (8 PP100).

In Ontario, TELUS Mobility (8 PP100) ranks highest in overall network quality, followed by **Bell Mobility** (10 PP100).

In the West region, **SaskTel** and TELUS Mobility rank highest in a tie with 8 PP100.

The 2018 Canada Wireless Network Quality Study was conducted online in English and French. The study, which measures problems per 100 connections (PP100), includes four wireless carriers in the East region; four wireless carriers in Ontario; and five wireless carriers in the West region. The study is based on 13,981 responses and was fielded in February-March 2018.

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For information about the Canadian Wireless Network Quality Study, visit <http://www.jdpower.com/resource/canadian-wireless-network-quality-performance-study>.

See the online press release at <http://www.jdpower.com/pr-id/2018062>.

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NOTE: Three charts follow.

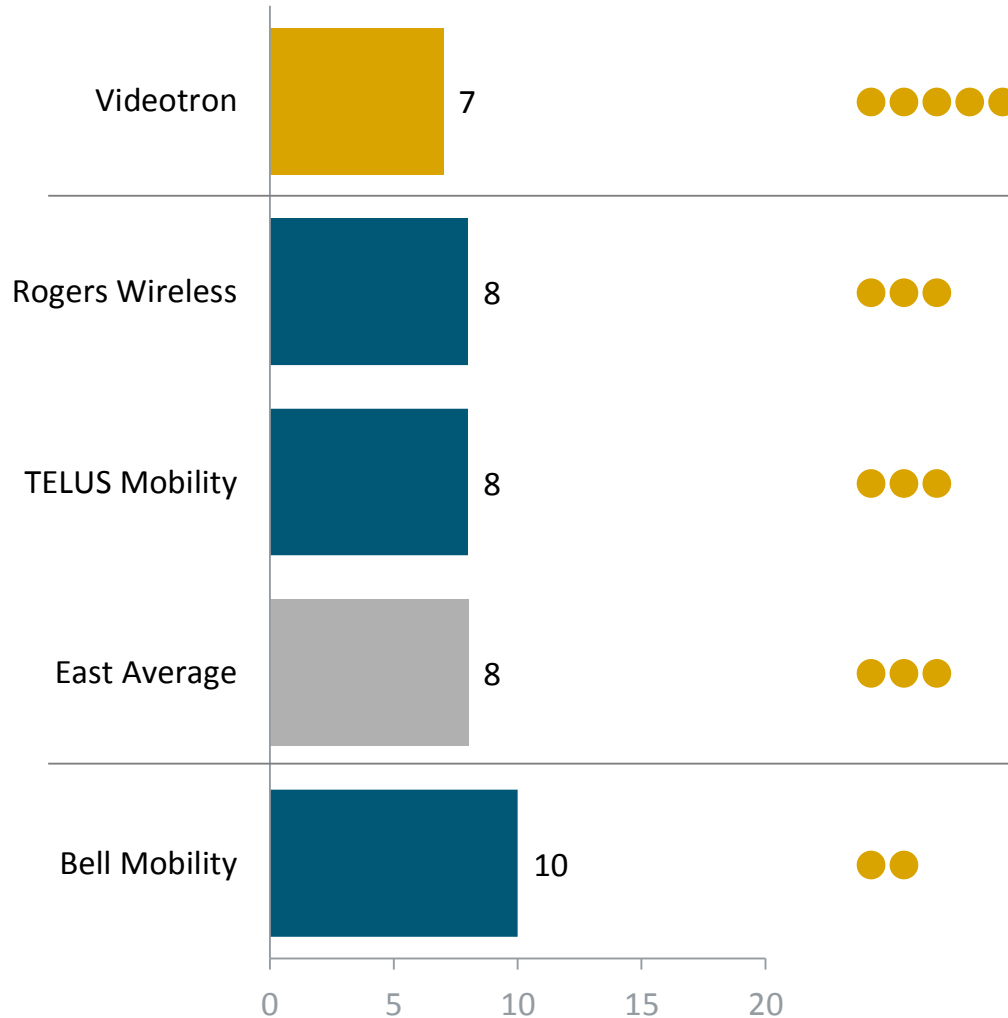
¹ J.D. Power defines generational groups as Pre-Boomers (born before 1946); Boomers (1946-1964); Gen X (1965-1976); Gen Y (1977-1994) and Gen Z (1995-2004). Xennials (1978-1981) and Millennials (1982-1994) are subsets of Gen Y.

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East Region

Problems per 100 Network Connections (PP100)

JDPower.com
Power Circle Ratings™
for consumers:



Note: Included in the East Region are New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Quebec.

Note: Included in the study but not ranked because they do not operate their own network are Fido, Koodo Mobile and Virgin Mobile.

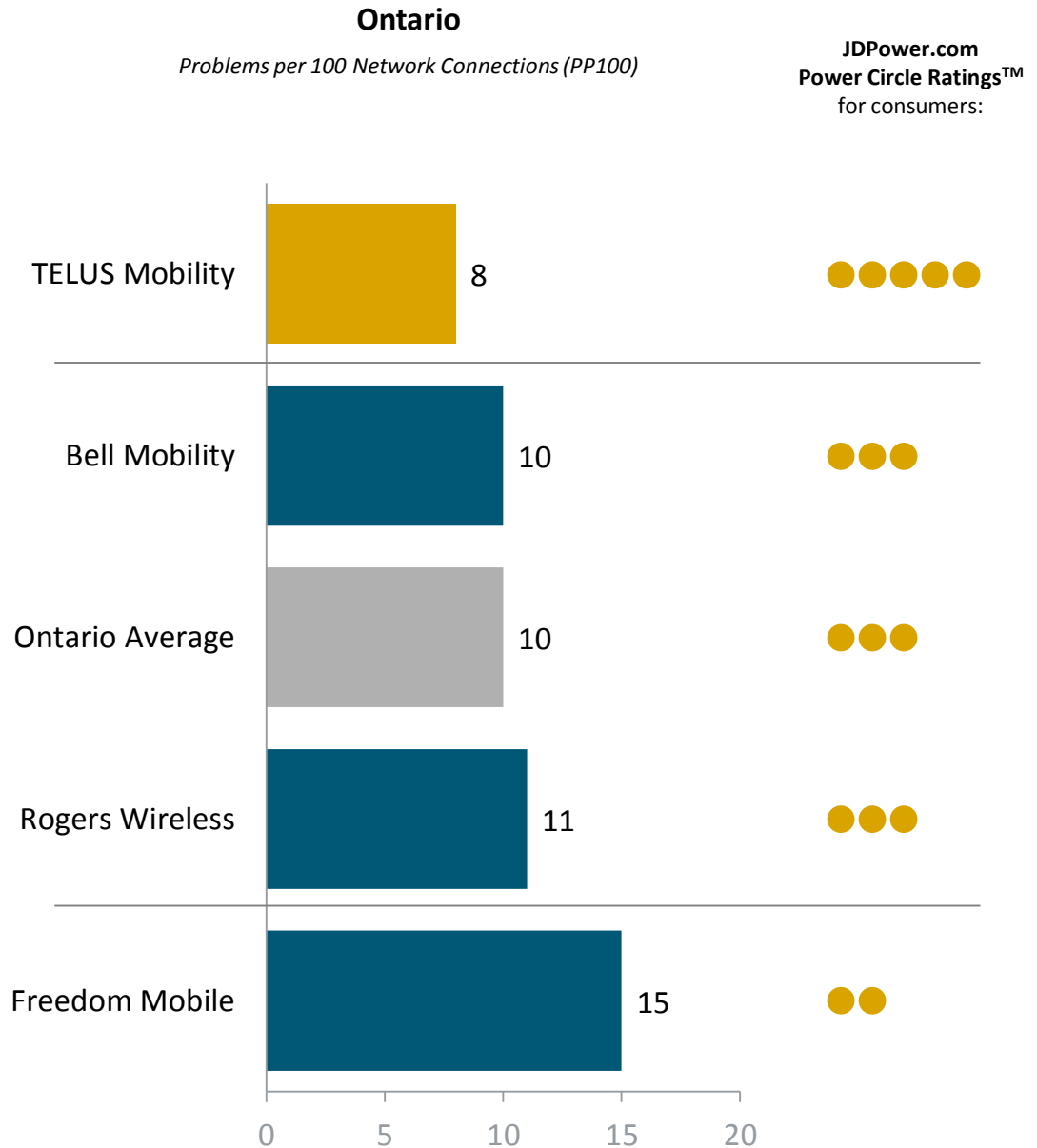
Source: J.D. Power 2018 Canada Wireless Network Quality StudySM

Power Circle Ratings Legend

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

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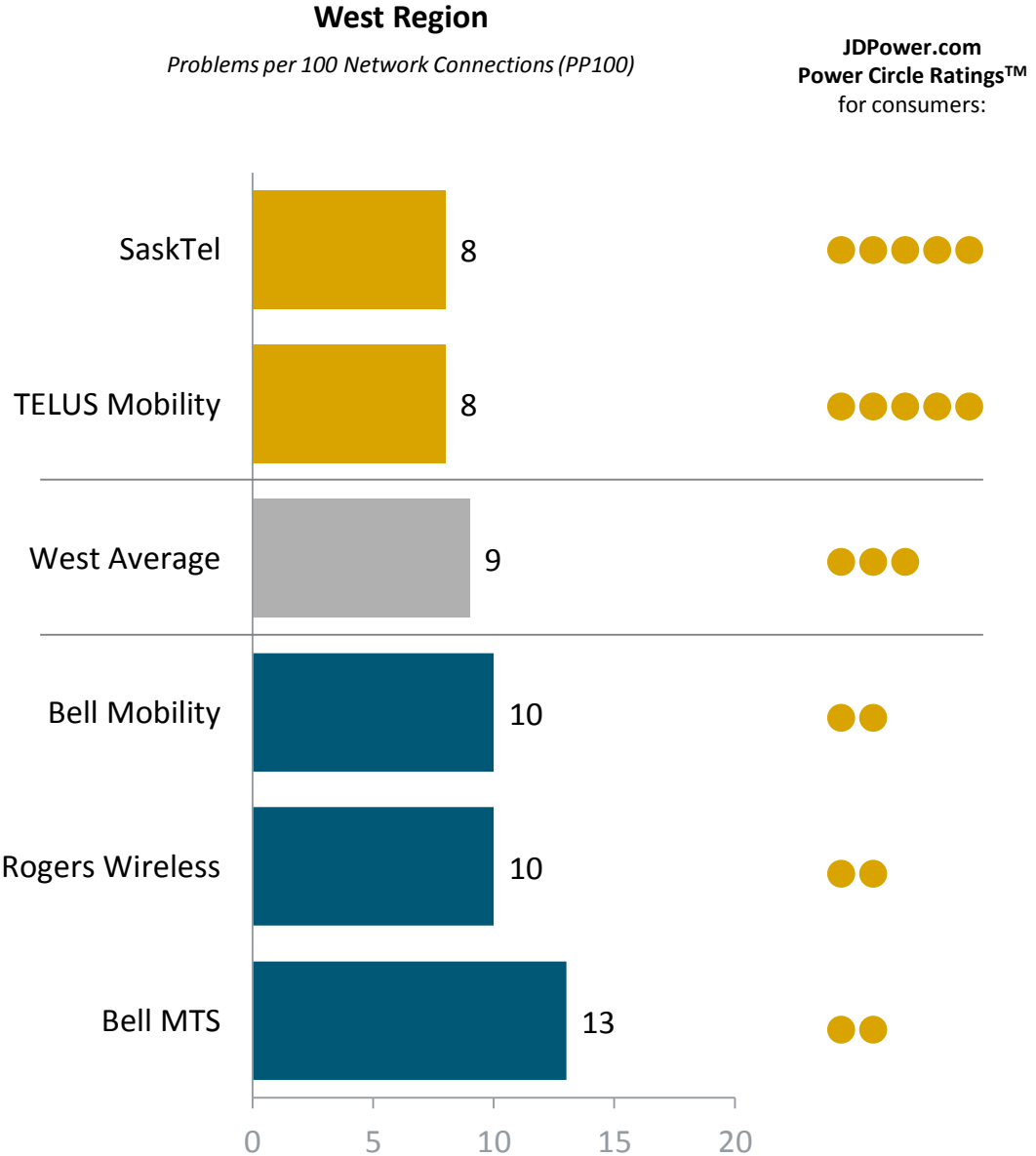
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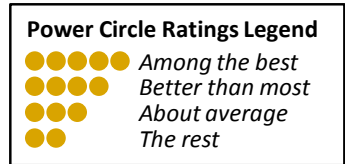


Note: Included in the West Region are Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Saskatchewan and Yukon Territory.

Note: Included in the study but not ranked because they do not operate their own network are Fido, Koodo Mobile and Virgin Mobile.

Note: Included in the study but not ranked due to market share is Freedom Mobile.

Source: J.D. Power 2018 Canada Wireless Network Quality StudySM



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