



Improvements in Data Networks Lessen Network Quality's Impact on the Canadian Wireless Customer Experience

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Continued investment in next-generation data networks has paid off for Canadian wireless carriers. Satisfaction with network quality has improved over the past three years as issues related to data networks have been steadily on the decline. 4G networks allow customers to access faster, more reliable and efficient data connections than in the past which is crucial in today's environment. Carriers are increasingly ensuring that data speed and reliability meet customer needs and expectations, and as a result will need to turn to improvements in other aspects of the customer experience to lift both customer satisfaction and retention metrics.

Data networks have become less of a differentiating driver in the customer experience as data problems become less prevalent. As a result, carriers will need to focus on improving other factors of the customer experience such as customer service, purchase process, cost of service, offerings and promotions, and account management to stand out against the competition.

DATA-RELATED PROBLEMS PER 100 CONNECTIONS

	2012	2013	2014
Overall Data PP100	17	16	14
Slow Mobile Web	20	18	15
Web Connection Issues	11	11	10
Email Connection Issues	6	6	5

Source: J.D. Power 2014 Canada Wireless Total Ownership Experience

Behind the Numbers

- Carriers have made significant strides in offering better network quality with improvements being made with data networks in particular. Satisfaction with network quality among full-service customers has improved to 738 (on a 1000-point scale), an increase of 26 points from 712 in 2012. Similarly, satisfaction with network quality among stand-alone customers has improved to 760 from 744 in 2012.
- Full-service customers in particular are experiencing fewer problems related to data connections in 2014 due to these improvements as total data issues have declined to 14 problems per one-hundred network connections (or PP100) from 17 in 2012.
- Both data speed and connectivity are improving. For full-service customers, issues related to slow mobile web experiences have declined to 15 PP100 from 20 PP100 in 2012 which can be largely attributed to broader rollouts of 4G networks. Similarly, issues with email and web connections have declined slightly over the same time frame.
- While still key to the customer experience, network quality now represents 20% of the total ownership index model, a decline from 25% in 2013. Carriers have reduced variability in network quality performance which has resulted in a lower importance weight for this particular aspect of the experience. In 2014, just 3 PP100 separate the highest and lowest ranked carriers.
- This increasingly positive and consistent experience with their network across carriers translates into increased usage and loyalty for wireless customers, but it also means carriers need to rely on improvements in other aspects, such as service touch points to succeed. For example, satisfaction is 779 among those who have selected their carrier primarily based on high quality customer service, compared with 731 among those who have chosen their carrier based on its network. More importantly, just 8% of those who have chosen their carrier for customer service are likely to switch, compared with 13% who have opted for a carrier based on its network.