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New iGR study analyzes where and how U.S. mobile consumers purchase their mobile phones

Study looks at recent trends, including the increasing use of installment plans to purchase phones

AUSTIN, Texas, April 4th, 2017 – U.S. mobile consumers have a wide range of options when deciding where to purchase a mobile phone or smartphone. They can purchase it directly from their mobile service provider or the phone manufacturer, but many other options are also available, including electronics stores, such as Best Buy or Radio Shack, discount stores, such as Target, Walmart or even Costco, and online-only retailers, such as Amazon, eBay, or Newegg. And within each of these types of retailers, consumers usually have the choice to either purchase online or go to a physical store.

In addition to the many options in purchase location, consumers also have a choice in how they purchase their mobile phone: buy the phone at full price and pay for it up front, or purchase with an installment plan that allows for frequent upgrades. However, buying a subsidized phone with a two-year contract is no longer an option at the major U.S. mobile operators.

iGR, a market research consultancy focused on the wireless and mobile industry, has released a new market study that analyzes which of these options U.S. mobile consumers have chosen for their latest mobile device and which they plan to use for their next mobile phone purchase.

iGR's latest market study also analyzes mobile consumers' awareness of, use of, and interest in mobile phone installment and upgrade plans, which are now provided by all of the major U.S. mobile operators. In addition, the study discusses Apple's installment plans and how mobile consumers perceive the program, especially when compared to the installment and upgrade plans provided by their mobile service providers.

"Mobile device installment plans provided by mobile operators have risen in popularity, and in this study we discuss how many consumers have used the plans and how many are interested in purchasing their next mobile phone with this method," said Iain Gillott, president and founder of iGR. "We have also analyzed how purchasing through an Apple installment plan might compare."

iGR's new market study, [U.S. Mobile Device Distribution Channels: The Move to Installment Plans](#) discusses where and how U.S. mobile consumers purchase their mobile phones. The study also looks at the rising popularity of device installment plans from both mobile operators and device manufacturers (specifically, Apple) and consumers' awareness of and interest in the plans. When appropriate, results are compared to those from iGR's market study of January 2016. The data in the study is based on two web-based surveys of more than 1,000 U.S. mobile consumers that iGR fielded in November 2015 and March 2017.

The following key questions are addressed in the new research study:

- How often do U.S. mobile consumers visit their mobile service providers' retail stores and why?
- From what type of retailer did U.S. mobile consumers purchase their latest mobile phone?
- Did U.S. mobile consumers purchase their latest phone online or in a physical store?
- Where do U.S. mobile consumers plan to purchase their next mobile phone and why?
- What type of purchase method did U.S. mobile consumers use when they purchased their last phone – a subsidized phone plan with a contract, an installment plan, or some other method?
- What type of purchase method do U.S. mobile consumers plan to use when they purchase their next phone and why?
- What are U.S. mobile consumers' awareness of and interest in their mobile service providers' installment plans? How has this awareness and interest changed over the last two years?
- What percentage of U.S. mobile consumers have purchased their devices with mobile service provider installment plans? How does this number compare to one or two years ago?
- What are U.S. mobile consumers' awareness of and interest in Apple's iPhone Upgrade Program?
- What percentage of U.S. mobile consumers have purchased their devices with Apple's iPhone Upgrade Program?
- Would more U.S. mobile consumers prefer to purchase their next iPhone with Apple's iPhone Upgrade Program or with their provider's installment plan?
- How do the location and method of U.S. mobile consumers' mobile device purchases vary according to their mobile service provider?
- How do the location and method of U.S. mobile consumers' mobile device purchases vary according to demographic variables?

The information in this market study will be valuable for:

- Mobile network operators
- Mobile service retailers and distributors
- Mobile device OEMs
- Financial analysts and investors.

The new report can be [purchased](#) and downloaded directly from iGR's website at www.iGR-inc.com.

About iGR

iGR is a market strategy consultancy focused on the wireless and mobile communications industry. Founded by Iain Gillott, one of the wireless industry's leading analysts, in late 2000 as

iGillottResearch, iGR is now in its seventeenth year of operation. iGR continuously researches emerging and existent technologies, technology industries, and consumer markets. We use our detailed research to offer a range of services to help companies improve their position in the marketplace, clearly define their future direction, and ultimately improve their bottom line.

iGR researches a range of wireless and mobile products and technologies, including: smartphones; tablets; mobile wearable devices; connected cars; mobile applications; bandwidth demand and use; small cell and het-net architectures; mobile EPC and RAN virtualization; DAS; LTE; VoLTE; IMS; NFC; GSM/GPRS/UMTS/HSPA; CDMA 1x/EV-DO; iDEN; SIP; macro-, pico- and femtocells; mobile backhaul; WiFi and WiFi offload; and SIM and UICC.

A more complete profile of the company can be found at www.igr-inc.com.