

# **Mobile Backhaul Forecast, 2011 - 2016**

Market Study  
First Quarter 2012





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## Abstract

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The decisions to lease, reengineer, or build a Mobile Backhaul (MBH) network is the critical dilemma facing wireless carriers over the next four years. This study examines MBH today, where MBH is heading, and the options, issues and challenges that wireless carriers must manage through.

The wireless industry is at the point where 2G, 2.5G, 3G, HSPA+ and 4G LTE technologies must be simultaneously supported in order to maintain financial performance and a high degree of subscriber satisfaction. This, in turn, means that expansive growth and rising MBH costs will continue exploding due to bandwidth demands required to support data, content, and more sophisticated multimedia communications that are the byproduct of new 4G networks and the plethora of new terminal equipment.

Legacy networks were tuned for voice communications, with some data, but now the trend is completely reversed and MBH networks are being stressed to their limits. The legacy 3G and new 4G networks must now be equipped to support a very high Quality of Service (QoS) for very dynamic transmission of customized data.

MBH is now **THE** critical link between the Radio Access Network (RAN) and the carrier wireless backbone that supports smartphones and new sophisticated multimedia rate plans. MBH transports mobile data from the end-user terminal equipment to mobile networks or traditional landline networks. This demand has led to atmospheric growth in bandwidth demands— *iGR* forecasts the demand for U.S. mobile backhaul will grow at a CAGR of nearly 58 percent between 2011 and 2016. And the growth of fiber backhaul is expected to reach a CAGR of nearly 85 percent over the same period.

### Key Questions Addressed:

- How much mobile backhaul will be required in the U.S. from 2011 to 2016?
- How will the split of mobile backhaul between microwave, copper and fiber change between 2011 and 2016?
- How will the current mobile backhaul solutions change to meet the increased demand for 4G networks?
- What is the Interim Hybrid Model for mobile backhaul?
- How will Ethernet networks impact mobile backhaul?
- What are the main challenges to be overcome by mobile backhaul solutions?

This report is recommended for:

- Cellular carriers, particularly those servicing the U.S. market
- Mobile backhaul providers, including telcos and cable MSOs
- Mobile OEMs, particularly those servicing the U.S. market
- Wireless infrastructure vendors, particularly those servicing the U.S. market
- Government utility organizations (Federal, State and Local)
- Financial and investment analysts.