

U.S. LTE Network Infrastructure CapEx and OpEx Forecast, 2012-2017

Market Study
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Abstract

Most of the largest U.S. operators are already well advanced in their LTE network rollouts. Others may lag behind, but LTE deployments overall are still progressing quickly – perhaps more quickly than could have been foreseen 12 to 18 months ago. Additionally, the U.S. market now offers a large selection of LTE-capable smartphones and tablets.

iGR fully expects, then, for LTE uptake to grow quickly. And, once the LTE subscriber base starts to grow, more devices become available and usage of the network increases, then the operator increases the network capacity. Operators are continually balancing their network CapEx between coverage and capacity. The engineers strive to provide sufficient coverage to be competitive and sufficient capacity to meet the needs of the growing subscriber base, while minimizing unnecessary CapEx.

Over the next few years, as the number of subscribers using LTE increases, so the corresponding network operating costs increase. While *iGR* expects the overall LTE network operating cost per subscriber to increase, the operating expense per cell site will decline due to increased efficiencies in the network.

This report forecasts the total LTE infrastructure CapEx investment per operator and OpEx in the U.S., forecasts the spending split by network component, and gives an update on the LTE rollout for the major U.S. operators.

Key questions addressed:

- How much mobile data will the LTE networks carry in the U.S.?
- How will the amount of data traffic carried on LTE networks grow in the U.S. in the next five years?
- What is the forecast for the number of LTE subscribers in the U.S. in the next five years?
- How much mobile data is each LTE subscriber expected to consume and how does this change?
- Which operators are investing the most CapEx in LTE networks?
- When do the CapEx cost curves begin – and begin to trend downward – per operator?
- How much are U.S. operators investing in LTE both individually and in the aggregate?
- How big is the LTE infrastructure opportunity in the U.S. in the next five years?

- What is the share of LTE infrastructure spending on the network components in the next five years?
- How big is the LTE OpEx in the next five years?

Who should read this report?

- Mobile network operators
- LTE network infrastructure vendors
- Small cell OEMs
- Financial and investment analysts.