

U.S. LTE Network Infrastructure Spending Forecast, 2013-2018

Market Study
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Abstract

LTE has now been deployed by nearly all mobile operators in the U.S., both large and small. While LTE networks are being expanded, both in terms of coverage and capacity, most already provide ubiquitous coverage in the top 100 markets. As a result, the U.S. is now the leading LTE market in the world, with each operator offering a wide range of smartphones, tablets, MiFi devices and assorted LTE accessories.

iGR expects that the LTE market will continue to grow and eventually dominate the U.S. mobile landscape. In the next few years, mobile operators will increasingly refarm 2G spectrum to deploy LTE, as well as acquire additional spectrum resources. The demand for mobile data bandwidth will continue to rise and mobile operators are continually balancing their network spending 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 network spending.

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 investment per operator and network operating costs 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 in LTE networks?
- When do the network build and operating cost curves begin – and begin to trend downward – per operator?

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- 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 are the LTE operating costs in the next five years?

Who should read this report?

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

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