

# **Global Mobile Connections Forecast, 2011 - 2016**

Market Study  
First Quarter 2012





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# Worldwide Mobile Connections Forecast, 2011 - 2016

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## A Market Study

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## Abstract

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Connections can be for many types of mobile devices such as mobile phones, smartphones, tablets, mobile hotspots, portable modems, and embedded modems. Looking at the world's mobile connection data holistically allows one to see the overarching patterns that will play out over the next five years and which markets will see the most growth.

The worldwide population is expected to continue its steady growth over the next five years surpassing 7 billion people in 2012. Worldwide wireless connections are growing briskly and will surpass 6 billion connections in 2013 to reach 7.2 billion in 2016. The global wireless penetration rate will rise at an annually compounded rate of 4.8 percent over the next five years from 77 percent in 2011 to 97.4 percent in 2016.

These top-level forecast alone show how people the world over are increasingly preferring mobile devices as their main voice and data communications tool. In some regions, a mobile phone / smartphone may be the user's only connection to the Internet.

Aside from the raw increase in the number of connections, the other major change over the forecast period is the shift from 2G to 3G – and, toward the end of the forecast, to 4G. For example, in 2011, 2G connections comprised 73 percent of all mobile connections. As these 2G connections decline over the next 5 years, 3G connections will become predominant, rising to makeup 67 percent of all connections in 2015. Fourth generation technologies – primarily LTE – are still in their early stages, but will see drastic growth and reach 685 million connections in 2016.

Key questions addressed:

- How many wireless connections are there globally and in each major geographic region?
- What is the split of those connections by technology type – both air interface and generation?
- What are the key connection-related trends by technology and region?

Who should read this report?

- Mobile operators
- Device OEMs
- Content providers and distributors

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- Financial analysts and investors.

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