

“Why I chose PureTalkUSA for mobile (cell phone) service”: 'Product Review' comparing EIGHT (8) Wireless providers

By Gordon Wayne Watts (*The Register*: GordonWatts.com / GordonWayneWatts.com) – Mon. 19 Oct. 2020

Our family has had MetroPCS as a cell phone service every since my late father, who ran the Bobby Watts Speed Shop and Auto/Engine Parts Shop, ported over the shop numbers from landline service to cell phones. In fact, mom and I kept the 2 shop numbers on our cell phones long after my father's passing in May 2018.

However, after we moved from Lakeland to Plant City^{[[**]]} upon my father's passing, we started having horrible service both making & receiving calls AND in using their data to get online^{[[##]]}. While “downtown” Lakeland & Plant City had good service, we live outside the City Limits now—in eastern Hillsborough County, in an area known as a “dead zone.” – I.e., we got 1-bar service, the phenomenon that inspired the phrase “can you hear me now,” and other jokes of Internet lore!

MetroPCS was a good company, had good prices & plans, and their Customer Service Representatives were always very polite, friendly, and had excellent communication skills^{[[^^]]} and excellent job skills

^{[[**]]} Both cities are squarely between Tampa & Orlando, Fla., and Plant City is about ten (10) miles east of Lakeland.

^{[[##]]} Internet data to get online: E.g., to do stuff like Google search, check e-mail, & use Social Media: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.

^{[[^^]]} In many cases, customer service reps were from other countries, such as the Philippines, and sometimes spoke English as a 2nd or 3rd language—but EVERY single rep—both from this company, and from ALL other companies in my personal experience—spoke excellent English, which I can personally testify shows impressive dedication & hard work on their part: Even when I got to “Spanish THREE” in college, at FSU (The Florida State University), **and got all A's in my college-level language classes (both the “Spanish I & II: combined”—for those with high school Spanish—as well as Spanish III, here)**, I can assure you that it's STILL very difficult to communicate as well as native speakers. Therefore, I think it's both silly—and quite rude—to make fun of foreign phone reps for language issues—most especially when most or all communicate quite well. (And, I add: Even *IF* they struggled with an English idiom, phrase, or word, it's still never right to make fun of anyone—*ever*: Prejudice, xenophobia, and the like, have no place in our world today.)

While I do not pretend to know all the facts about the various cellphone companies out there, **I'll share ***my*** experience with the following SEVEN (7) companies, & explain why I chose PureTalkUSA.** Please refer to the following image of my hand-written notes—where they're labeled by letter, as below:

--A-- (#1) Metro by T-Mobile (MetroPCS)

--B-- (#2) Sprint by T-Mobile (SPRINT)

--C-- (#3) Time Warner / Charter / Spectrum / BrightHouse (SPECTRUM)

--D-- (#4) Verizon / Frontier (VERIZON)

--E-- (#5) Cricket by AT&T (aka: Cricket Wireless)

--F-- (#6) Straight Talk (pre-paid provided by Wal-Mart)

--G-- (#7) PureTalkUSA (aka: PureTalk)

--H-- (#8) FreedomPop (they offered TOTALLY free talk, text, & data: And paid the ultimate price! Lol.)

--A-- (#1) Metro by T-Mobile (MetroPCS)

Web: <https://www.MetroByT-Mobile.com>

Wiki: https://En.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Metro_by_T-Mobile

Phone: (888) 863-8768 – 888-8metro8 (888-863-8768) – *611 from your Metro® by T-Mobile phone

We had a \$30.00/month plan, which was \$55.00/month for 2 phones (*a better deal if you get more phones*), and our plan had unlimited talk, text, and data—and a wifi hotspot on the phone. Only the first 2GB was “fast” data, slowing down to about 128kbps after fast data ran out—which is good to check email, Facebook, do slow searches, etc.—and, I add: Some companies SHUT OFF your data when you run out, so MetroPCS is great here, **but even *they* seem to admit that they have “connectivity” issues:**

“Tell us about your rural calling issue. [] We know every call counts, and we’re sorry for the inconvenience. Whether you’ve been dealing with early or false ringing, or problems completing calls to a rural recipient, we’re here to help. [] Call us at 1-833-578-1587 Email us” (Embedded email link: RuralCallCompletion@T-Mobile.com with embedded auto-populated subject line: “**Metro Rural Call Completion Issue**”)

Source: <https://www.MetroByT-Mobile.com/ruralcallcompletion.html>

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/wip/HbbMs>

Archive-2: <https://Web.Archive.org/web/20200215234635/https://www.MetroByT-Mobile.com/ruralcallcompletion.html>

Nice people—But even after repeated requests to “build another tower” near our home, they refused. **So, I had to do them like Donald Trump's “The Apprentice” would: “You're fired!” – Next...**

--B-- (#2) Sprint by T-Mobile (SPRINT)

Web: <https://www.T-Mobile.com>

Web: <https://www.T-Mobile.com/brand/t-mobile-sprint-merger-updates>

Web: <https://www.T-Mobile.com/news/un-carrier/t-mobile-sprint-one-company>

Web: <https://www.T-Mobile.com/support/account/t-mobile-sprint-merger-faqs>

Wiki: https://En.Wikipedia.org/wiki/T-Mobile_US

Wiki: https://En.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Merger_of_Sprint_Corporation_and_T-Mobile_US

Phone: 1-800-T-MOBILE (1-800-866-2453) (personal)

Phone: 1-844-428-9675 (business)

General Customer Care & Technical Support: From the T-Mobile app, on a T-Mobile phone

General Customer Care & Technical Support: From your T-Mobile phone: 611, or: Call: 1-800-937-8997

International Callers: 1-505-998-3793

TTY –service for the hearing & speech impaired: 1-877-296-1018 from 4:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m. PT, daily

The cheapest plan quoted to me when I called was \$20.00/month, for unlimited talk/text, but no data. The cheapest plan with talk, text, & data, was a “Magenta” plan, for \$35.00/month:

Source: <https://www.T-Mobile.com/cell-phone-plans/magenta>

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/wip/dqoIF> or <https://Archive.vn/wip/dqoIF>

Archive-2: <https://Web.Archive.org/web/20201012065902/https://www.T-Mobile.com/cell-phone-plans/magenta>

These are very nice people, with a powerful network of towers & great services, **but way to high** (almost TWICE as expensive as almost the same services I got from PureTalkUSA), so, thank you, **but I'll pass. Next...**

--C-- (#3) Time Warner Cable / Charter / Spectrum / BrightHouse (SPECTRUM)

Web: <https://www.Spectrum.com> (website for Internet, Cable TV, Home Phone, & Mobile)

Phone: 1-866-991-6533 (for above page)

Web: <https://www.CableTV.com/spectrum/phone-number> (Cable TV)

Phone: Spectrum Support & Customer Service Number, 1-833-780-1880

Phone: Support for Time Warner Customers, 1-800-892-4357

Phone: Support for Bright House Customers, 1-855-222-0102

Phone: Spectrum Outages, 1-833-267-6094 (for Spectrum internet, cable TV, or home phone outages)

Phone: Pay Your Spectrum Bill, 1-833-267-6094

Web: <https://Official.Spectrum.com/spectrum100/lfo-8n> (Spectrum Internet)

Phone: 1-855-219-0205 (for above page)

Wiki: https://En.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Bright_House_Networks

Web: <https://IR.Charter.com/news-releases/news-release-details/charter-communications-merge-time-warner-cable-and-acquire>

These are nice people, and are an impressive company due to the merger of at least 3 or 4 other companies—and provide a wide range of high quality products & services. However, I was told that their wireless (cell phone / mobile) services were only available for existing “home accounts.” **I was able to confirm this here:**

QUOTE: “Spectrum Mobile is only available to Spectrum Internet customers.”

SOURCE: <https://www.Spectrum.com/mobile/plans>

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/wip/ZotGI>

Archive-2: <https://Web.Archive.org/web/20200916211157/https://www.Spectrum.com/mobile/plans>

I don't even watch broadcast TV (free TV, using an “old school” antenna), much less Cable TV (not free TV). Also, I don't need more Internet or Phone service for home (which I already get through my wireless mobile cell phone). **Therefore, I'm not inclined to sign up for unneeded / unwanted services just to get one thing I need** (in this case, a mobile-based Internet service). **So, thank you, but I'll pass. Next...**

--D-- (#4) Verizon / Frontier (VERIZON)

Web: <https://www.Verizon.com>

Phone: 1-800-922-0204 (for above page—Mobile devices & plans, Mon-Sat: 8am-7pm, Sun: 8am-5pm)

Wiki: https://En.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Verizon_Wireless

Web: <https://Frontier.com/helpcenter/categories/internet/installation-setup/wireless-network-basics> (Apparently for Phone, TV, & Internet, and “wireless home” networks, **but not “wireless” mobile/cell phones**—has language like “includes a combined high-speed internet modem and wireless router,” which is “the tell,” here.)

Phone: 1-800-239-4430 (for above page)

Wiki: https://En.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Frontier_Communications#Purchase_of_Verizon_lines

Web: <https://www.FrontierInternet.com>

Phone: 1-833-680-0193 (for above page)

Archive-1 of above page: <https://Archive.vn/QdhTE> (I had trouble pulling it up on my end, so I archived it.)

Archive-2 of above page: <https://Web.Archive.org/web/20201002071707/https://www.frontierinternet.com/>

If I recall correctly, Verizon has the reputation for being the “best” in nationwide tower coverage. In fact, they, themselves, brag as much: “The Best Coverage and Reliability...Only Verizon’s 4G LTE is 100% LTE. [] Verizon’s 4G LTE network covers over 98% of Americans.”

Source: <https://www.VerizonWireless.com/landingpages/4g-lte-ret>

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/wip/BGYBn>

Archive-2: <https://Web.Archive.org/web/20201006013321/https://www.verizonwireless.com/landingpages/4g-lte-ret/>

And, their claim seems to be “mostly” supported by independent fact-checkers:

QUOTE: “Verizon has the best 4G LTE coverage in the U.S., with 71% nationwide coverage, beating out the likes of AT&T and T-Mobile. Several MVNOs, or small carriers, such as Visible, Page Plus, and Reach Mobile, operate on Verizon’s powerful network, providing you with the same great coverage. Out of the major carriers, Verizon’s 5G network has the top speeds but finishes dead last with area covered, with just .0014% 5G coverage.”

SOURCE: <https://www.LetsTalk.com/cellphones/carriers/verizon-wireless/verizon-coverage-map>

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/wip/Oloxk>

Archive-2:

<https://Web.Archive.org/web/20201019094041/https://www.letstalk.com/cellphones/carriers/verizon-wireless/verizon-coverage-map/>

NOTE: Hmm... Archive.org, the legendary “Wayback Machine,” is having trouble saving a snapshot of LetsTalk's page, so I'll look elsewhere for a 3rd archive, for now... Google's cache seems to have a slightly-outdated “70%” figure, below:

Archive/Cache-3: <https://WebCache.Googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:vmPWnEFvFQsJ:https://www.letstalk.com/cellphones/guides/best-coverage-map/>

WhistleOut seems to concur—**QUOTE:** “Verizon offers the best coverage in the country, with 70% of the United States covered by their 4G LTE network”

SOURCE: <https://www.WhistleOut.com/CellPhones/Guides/verizon-coverage-map>

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/wip/Yyerl>

Archive-2:

<https://Web.Archive.org/web/20200622225343/https://www.WhistleOut.com/CellPhones/Guides/verizon-coverage-map>

ANALYSIS: It seems that Verizon is either exaggerating a little bit (viz: 98% vs. 70 or 71 percent?), or, perhaps, *LetsTalk* and *WhistleOut* use a different metric to describe “coverage.” (Perhaps, if Verizon uses “number of Americans,” then maybe the 2 tech blogs are referring to surface area? This writer looked for a definition on their websites, but could not find a precise definition of what constitutes “coverage.”) However, all three (3) sources (Verizon, LetsTalk, & WhistleOut) concur and verify this writer's recollection of Verizon's “Number One” ranking of nationwide coverage.

Nonetheless, VERIZON got the boot from me—here's why:

Firstly, I recall them telling me that their cheapest wireless phone plan was \$35.00/month—period! That seems to be confirmed by their website—which describes this as “unlimited talk, text and data”:

LINK: <https://www.Verizon.com/plans/unlimited/>

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/roEkF>

Archive-2: <https://Web.Archive.org/web/20201015030457/https://www.Verizon.com/plans/unlimited/>

Secondly, however, I found a prepaid plan for \$25.00/month with unlimited “calling,” unlimited “texting,” a “Mobile Hotspot [] Share your wireless network connection with other devices over Wi-Fi,” and apparently unlimited data: “Data allowance [] Once high-speed data is used (including Mobile Hotspot), you will have 2G speeds the remainder of the month,” and reported “5 GB” of data, apparently fast data. (Things in quotes are direct quotes from their website.)

LINK: <https://www.Verizon.com/prepaid/>

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/wip/jXnRJ>

Archive-2: <https://Web.Archive.org/web/20201015062417/https://www.verizon.com/prepaid/>

Now, it was a little disturbing to find a lower-priced plan on their website that their rep apparently overlooked, but we're all human & make mistakes—so, I won't be too harsh here. **Nonetheless, even *this plan is more expensive than the very similar plan with PureTalk, so I would still pass.* – Next...**

--E-- (#5) Cricket by AT&T (aka: Cricket Wireless)

Web: <https://www.CricketWireless.com>

Phone: 800-CRICKET (800-274-2538) –or 611 from a Cricket phone Mon-Sat 9am–9pm, Sun 10am– 9pm ET

Wiki: https://En.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Cricket_Wireless

My notes (see image) show that I was told I could get a plan with unlimited talk, text, and 2GB of fast data for \$30.00/month, using the powerful AT&T tower network. I also recall that I would have “unlimited” data, once

the 2GB of fast data ran out—except that it would slow to 128kbps for the rest of the billing cycle.

QUOTE: “For those phone service plans with a limited amount of high-speed data access, we've developed a process to reduce the customer's data download throughput speed once the customer exceeds the high-speed data access usage threshold for the customer's plan. In that situation, the customer may continue to consume data at no extra charge, but at significantly lower speeds when connected to the cellular network. Specifically, after a customer uses their available high-speed data allotment in a month of service, **the customer's service over the cellular network will transmit data at a maximum of 128kbps for the remainder of the monthly plan cycle unless the customer purchases additional high-speed data access** for the remainder of the month of service. Once a customer's speeds are limited, the customer's connection over the cellular network should still allow viewing a web page or checking email. Bandwidth-intensive activities, including audio and video streaming, picture and video messaging, select apps and services, as well as other usage will be impacted and may not be fully functional. But once the next month of service begins, the customer will once again have access to download speeds up to 8 Mbps with our LTE service or up to 4 Mbps on our 4G HSPA+ service. Using Wi-Fi can help avoid reduced speeds. Speeds are not reduced while connected via Wi-Fi, and data activity over Wi-Fi does not count toward the high-speed data usage threshold.”

Editor's Note: Emphasis added in **boldface and underline for clarity**—not in original.

LINK: <https://www.CricketWireless.com/legal-info/mobile-broadband-information.html>

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/wip/nIeXL>

Archive-2: <https://Web.Archive.org/web/20200229191347/https://www.CricketWireless.com/legal-info/mobile-broadband-information.html>

KUDOS: This is always good manners—indeed, some phone companies STOP your data altogether when your “Fast Data” runs out. (You're stuck with a “flat tire” on the “Internet highway!”) – **However**, while this was the same price as my MetroPCS plan (for 1 phone), it was still more expensive than the eventual offer I got from PureTalk:

QUOTE: “1 Line [] \$30/mo...[] 2 GB of high-speed data [] Unlimited talk, text & picture messages in the U.S. HD Voice & Wi-Fi Calling with compatible phone”

LINK: <https://www.CricketWireless.com/cell-phone-plans>

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/wip/zXduP>

Archive-2: <https://Web.Archive.org/web/20200930172020/https://www.cricketwireless.com/cell-phone-plans>

Moreover, I ran into one VERY HUGE problem with Cricket Wireless—that was a “deal breaker”: My notes show a clear comment that **their plan would not let me use my smartphone as a “Wifi Hotspot,”** to allow other devices (like desktop or laptop computers—or other smartphones) to get online. This is absolutely ridiculous: If I am paying for Internet Data, why can't I be able to use it as I see fit!? – This is a serious allegation, so I'll try to verify this online:

QUOTE: “Is the Mobile Hotspot feature available with these plans? [] Yes, Mobile Hotspot is available as an add-on feature with the Cricket Core Plan and is limited to 10 GB each month.”

LINK: <https://www.CricketWireless.com/support/plans-and-features/unlimited-data.html>

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/wip/P83RK>

Archive-2: <https://Web.Archive.org/web/20190517181743/https://www.CricketWireless.com/support/plans-and-features/unlimited-data.html>

Indeed, I vividly recall asking not one—but two—customer service reps about this, and asked, specifically, if I had a “wi-fi” hotspot feature/app already installed on my smartphone, would it not work with their service: They both clearly and unambiguously said 'no' – that it would not. **If I have to purchase an “add-on” simply to get online with my desktop, this is untenable—so I passed on their (more expensive, and less powerful) offer with haste.** – *Next...*

--F-- (#6) Straight Talk (pre-paid provided by Wal-Mart)

Web: <https://www.WalMart.com/cp/straight-talk-wireless/1045119>

Phone: Oddly-enough, I could not find a phone number of their “Contact Us” page, linked here: <https://www.WalMart.com/help> – However, you can call you local Wal-Mart stores for details.

Web: <https://Shop.StraightTalk.com/shop/en/straighttalk/phones>

Web: <https://www.StraightTalk.com/wps/portal/home/support/contactus>

Phone: 1-877-430-CELL (2355) (Existing customers)

Phone: 1-855-222-CELL (2355) (Sim Customers)

Phone: 1-800-299-7784 (“Home Phone,” apparently land-line service?)

Phone: 1-877-430-CELL (2355) (Apparently for Mobile Hotspots?)

Hours: “Call Center Hours: 8 AM - 11:45 PM (EST) 7days a week,” as listed on the website above.

Wiki: https://En.Wikipedia.org/wiki/TracFone_Wireless#Straight_Talk

News Coverage—QUOTE: “Wal-Mart has announced that it will be offering its own wireless plans, completely contract-free, called Straight Talk.”

Link: <https://www.TomsGuide.com/us/walmart-straight-talk-verizon-plan.news-4869.html>

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/wip/GeBue>

Archive-2: <https://Web.Archive.org/web/20200727231921/https://www.tomsguide.com/us/walmart-straight-talk-verizon-plan.news-4869.html>

My notes it seem to not say what the local Electronic Department employee at the local Wal-Mart told me regarding their pre-paid plans & prices. However, I seem to recall it was around \$25.00 or \$30.00 per month with unlimited talk, text, & 4GB of fast data, unlimited “slow” data after that, and a mobile wi-fi hotspot feature—and an offer to help me unlock my phone (if my company let me) and port over the number. (Wal-Mart is a well-known quantity—so, it's not surprising that they would be user-friendly, here.)

Useful info to confirm Wi-Fi hotspot functionality:

Link: <https://Support.StraightTalk.com/faqs/1648662?device=24866>

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/R0f8m/image>

Archive-2: <https://Web.Archive.org/web/20201019115236/https://support.straighttalk.com/faqs/1648662?device=24866>

Maybe my my memory was a little more “rosy” than reality—when my notes were missing something: It seems their actual plan is not quite as good—and a probably reason why I passed on their offer. Here is the best plan I could find online:

TITLE: “Straight Talk \$35 Unlimited 30-Day Plan (with 5GB of data at high speeds, then 2G*) e-PIN Top Up (Email Delivery)”

QUOTE: “Straight Talk’s \$35 Unlimited 30-Day Plan includes unlimited talk, text, and data with the first 5GB of data at up to 4G LTE speeds, then 2G.* [] Nationwide coverage on America’s largest, most dependable 4G LTE networks. [] No contract...*At 2G speeds, the functionality of some data applications such as streaming video or audio may be affected.”

LINK: <https://www.WalMart.com/ip/Straight-Talk-35-Unlimited-30-Day-Plan-with-5GB-of-data-at-high-speeds-then-2G-e-PIN-Top-Up-Email-Delivery/300594019>

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/wip/o8emo>

Archive-2: <https://Web.Archive.org/web/20201015064944/https://www.WalMart.com/ip/Straight-Talk-35-Unlimited-30-Day-Plan-with-5GB-of-data-at-high-speeds-then-2G-e-PIN-Top-Up-Email-Delivery/300594019>

Comments: This appears to require you to use an e-PIN and manually “top up” each billing cycle—and not be automatically renewed. (Though I may be wrong, it is certain that their website is not clear here—which is, itself, not good.) Also, if I'm right, it would be very inconvenient to have to manually “top up,” as opposed to a monthly automatic “auto-pay” from your Credit Card. Wait a second: I think they *do* have an auto-pay option:

Link-1: <https://www.StraightTalk.com/whyst/refill>

Link-2: <https://www.StraightTalk.com/wps/portal/home/h/refill/setupautorefill/AutoRefillSetup>

Conclusion: Besides the slightly cryptic website, **their \$35.00/month plan is almost *DOUBLE*** what I get from PureTalkUSA—and almost the same product. **So, thank you, Wal-Mart, bur I'll pass. – Next...**

--G-- (#7) PureTalkUSA (aka: PureTalk)

Web: <https://www.PureTalkUSA.com>

Phone: (877) 820-7873 or dial 611 from your Pure Talk phone

Phone: (888) 746-3577 – “For questions about getting a new line of service or other sales related questions”

Hours: Mon – Fri, 9AM - 11PM EST ; Sat, 10AM - 9PM EST ; Sun, 12PM - 9PM (EST) (from their website)

Wiki: https://En.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Pure_TalkUSA

Editor's Note – Before I get started, I must address one point: I recall hearing some ads bragging that this company is American—and has American customer service reps. While it is good to “buy American,” I do not have anything bad to say about other great companies who, sometimes, use very highly qualified foreign customer service reps (other than, of course, we should try to give jobs to our own citizens, if possible). – Indeed, PureTalkUSA is based in Atlanta, GA, and is local—and offering our citizens a job is an added bonus, but I'm not prejudiced: That's not why I chose them: Had other, foreign, companies offered a better deal, I might have done business with them. It's always good to “buy local,” if all things are equal (in terms of the offers each company offers) –and/or in “emergency” circumstances (such as a huge need to employ American citizens during periods of huge unemployment). – But, as my report is primarily about the “best deal” (and not Nationalism politics), I will not dwell on this point—and simply say that we should all love our neighbours as ourselves—local or foreign—as much as is humanly possible: God wants us to have both wisdom and love. [[#Balance – Buy local if possible – not if not possible. #Balance]] – **End of Editor's Note. – *Continuing...***

I heard about PureTalk on talk radio, and called them to see if **their \$20.00/month plan** was for real. Like Cricket Wireless, they also operate on the powerful AT&T tower network—offering great nationwide coverage, and (hopefully) few “dead zones.” – I recall PureTalk's radio ads offering **unlimited talk, unlimited text, and 2GB of fast data for this price—plus their website and customer service reps add: Unlimited “slow” data** after the fast data runs out. **Plus, they also allow my phone to provide a Wi-Fi hotspot for other devices to log on to the Internet.**

All of this was confined on their website—and in my personal experience:

“\$20 [per] MONTH [] Unlimited Talk & Text [] 2 GB Data*... []

*After you have used your plan's high-speed data allowance, we will not turn off your data. Your speed will be throttled to 128 kbps. Typically, you can expect to experience download speeds of 4-35Mbps and upload speeds of 1-5Mbps with an average device to network edge round-trip latency of less than 60ms. The average speed and latency of our 4G LTE network is suitable for video and audio streaming, web browsing and other general Internet usage consistent with Pure Talk terms and conditions. **After 30GB of data usage you will experience slower speeds.”

Link: <https://www.PureTalkUSA.com/cell-plans>

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/AViVL>

Archive-2: <https://Web.Archive.org/web/20201019125213/https://www.PureTalkUSA.com/cell-plans>

Also, regarding the hotspot availability, I found this on their website:

“To help answer your questions quickly, please choose a category from the drop down menu below. [] Plans, Phones & Services [] Is mobile hotspot feature available? [] Answer: [] Yes! We do support mobile hotspot from

your cell phone. This feature is automatically turned on for all iPhone users. However, we cannot guarantee access to this feature for all Android users and some carrier-branded phones will have this feature blocked. Android users will need to contact Customer Support at 1-877-820-7873 or dial 611 from your Pure Talk phone to inquire about turning on mobile hotspot.”

Link: <https://www.PureTalkUSA.com/contact#>

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/Q8ULM>

Archive-2: <https://Web.Archive.org/web/20200803173840/https://www.puretalkusa.com/contact>

Note: This writer was unable to get either Archive machine to properly archive the quote above, from the drop-down web-page menu, however, I represent to my readers that this is what their website says.

Conclusion: PureTalkUSA offered me unlimited talk, text, & data—with 2GB of “fast” data, and unlimited “slow” data once the fast data ran out. In fact, I'm online right now, using my desktop computer, and using my smartphone as a Wi-Fi hotspot: The Internet availability is “slow but sure.” They indeed did charge me \$20.00/month, and gave me the first month for \$14.60 as a discount offer—apparently because I mentioned that I had heard their ad on talk radio. **Therefore, PureTalkUSA beat out all the competition—lowest price, and very good “unlimited” plan and – with WiFi hotspot ability.**

P.S.: Oh, one more thing: I'm done with my “Product Review” report – but I just notice that they have some “referral” deal where I get a credit on my phone account if others “sign up” for PureTalkUSA through my unique referral link: <https://PureTalkUSA.com/r/5f8e2d01>

I don't recall, exactly, what type of credits I'll get (and would be glad to give them good press & positive news coverage even **without** such a benefit), but so long as I'm giving them a good reference, I think it's only appropriate to refer a few customers and share the love: While many good companies exist (and some may be better for you—depending on your needs), nonetheless, here's that link again, should you want to try them out:

>> Click here: ** >> → <https://PureTalkUSA.com/r/5f8e2d01> ← << ** Click here. <<

BONUS: While I'm done with my report, I do recall one “totally” free mobile phone company, that offered TOTALLY free talk, text, & data—though NOT unlimited. (Anyone want to guess what happened to this company? Yeah, it went under! There IS no “free lunch” – but just for fun, let's take a trip back in history and look at FreedomPop.) **BEARS REPEATING, so I shall: PureTalkUSA beat out all the competition—lowest price, and very good “unlimited” plan and – with WiFi hotspot ability.**

--H-- (#8) FreedomPop (they offered TOTALLY free talk, text, & data: And paid the ultimate price! Lol.)

Web: <http://www.FreedomPop.com>

Web: <http://www.FreedomPop.com/infomercialpromo>

Web: <https://www.FreedomPop.com/privacy.htm>

Phone: (888) 743-8107 (for above page – apparently Corporate Legal & Customer service)

Google search: <https://www.Google.com/search?&q=freedompop>

Phone: (855) 703-5785 (from search above)

Wiki: <https://En.Wikipedia.org/wiki/FreedomPop>

Comments: I recall my “free” plan had lots of talk & text (I forget exactly how much), and 500MB of fast data per month, but their current offer (**surprise! They DIDN'T go out of business!**) is now only 200MB of data:

QUOTE: “BASIC 200 [] \$0/month [] 200 MB Per Month [] 200 Minutes [] 500 Texts”

Link: https://www.FreedomPop.com/sim/plans_bundle

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/D2WpZ>

Archive-2a: https://Web.Archive.org/web/20181024035757/http://www.freedompop.com/sim/plans_bundle

Archive-2b: https://Web.Archive.org/web/20160811200841/https://www.FreedomPop.com/sim/plans_bundle

Note: The Wayback archive machine is having trouble archiving the page, but that's what I saw—above.

Further comments: I recall being told by FreedomPop that they were forcibly transferring some or all customers to TING, and thus discontinuing their “free” service. (Thus, while they didn't go out of business, that's the impression I got from them. Also, while their “fast data” was VERY good—and totally free (as they claimed), their “cell phone” and 'text' services were HORRIBLE and CRAPPY: If you ever needed to dial 911 for an Emergency, I advise you to NOT use any “FreedomPop” phone. I vaguely recall that recall hearing that their voice phone service used VoIP – Voice-over Internet Protocol. This seems to be correct:

Link-1: <https://Support.FreedomPop.com/hc/en-us/articles/360025858314-What-is-VoIP->

Link-2: https://www.Reddit.com/r/freedompop/comments/4ckq98/what_is_everyones_experience_with_voip/

Anyhow, I was able to confirm some of the more serious issues, just now:

QUOTE: “Earlier this month, it was announced that Ting Mobile has acquired the Sprint customers of FreedomPop. Now, those customers have a choice they need to make. [] On its website, Ting says that FreedomPop is quitting Sprint. FreedomPop customers that are affected by this move now have their service moved to them. The company also states that nothing else has changed with the phone service.”

Editor's Note – from me, Gordon Wayne Watts: That's not MY recollection: When I was told that I had to changeover to TING or else lose service, I recall that my “free” plan would be discontinued, and that I would have to either get a “paid” plan or else lose service—period.~~Gordon

Link: <https://nwida.org/ting-leaves-sprint-forces-freedompop-customers-to-make-choice>

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/wip/Lgg5y>

Archive-2: <https://Web.Archive.org/web/20201019142217/https://nwida.org/ting-leaves-sprint-forces-freedompop-customers-to-make-choice>

QUOTE: “PSA: Freedompop as we knew it is done. Check your accounts. [] +184 Deal Score [] 199,540 Views [] 1,501 Comments [] Freedompop as we knew it is no more. The Sprint customers have been sold to Ting and the GSM customers have been sold to Red Pocket. As Ting puts it: [] "Upon migration, these subscribers will have the option to accept the Ting offering or cancel or port their service elsewhere.””

Editor's Note: Now, this is what I recall—as stated above: Either accept the 'paid' TING offer or lose out.

Link: <https://SlickDeals.net/f/13142626-psa-freedompop-as-we-knew-it-is-done-check-your-accounts>

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/wip/DNoJY>

Archive-2: <https://Web.Archive.org/web/20201019143238/https://slickdeals.net/f/13142626-psa-freedompop-as-we-knew-it-is-done-check-your-accounts>

VERY IMPORTANT INFORMATION: >> I vividly recall contemporary warnings in tech blogs about getting whacked by loads of “surprise” charges/ fees by FreedomPop (as a way to “make up” and compensate for monies lost when they offered “free” services) – Since I don't want to falsely accuse anybody, let's see if my recollection is correct, here, which even their own forums admit

QUOTE: “Unexplained fee...Lorne Duncan [] 10 months ago [] I thought Christine would like to see the review I posted on the freedompop app on the play store. "Hidden fees and unauthorised charges and total lack of transparency! That's what you can expect from freedompop! I availabled myself of two Freedompop services only to find out I was charged 1/3 more then what those services were listed for on the website. I contacted Freedompop and was told the extra fee was an administrator fee. What? And where was that listed on the website? And the answer is, NO WHERE! I was informed that those charges are listed on a separate sight. What? Wow! Beware!" I think that sums things up pretty accurately.”

Link: <https://Support.FreedomPop.com/hc/en-us/community/posts/360037744794-Unexplained-fee>

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/wip/dFkwr>

Archive-2: <https://Web.Archive.org/web/20201019144513/https://support.freedompop.com/hc/en-us/community/posts/360037744794-Unexplained-fee>

QUOTE: “DISTURBING NEWS about new FreedomPop Taxes & Surcharges [] I don't know how long the

current "Taxes & Surcharges" terms have been published on the FP website, but I think they just added/changed this info last month.”

Link: <https://www.HowardForums.com/showthread.php/1910692-DISTURBING-NEWS-about-new-FreedomPop-Taxes-amp-Surcharges>

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/wip/F59qq>

Archive-2:

<https://Web.Archive.org/web/20181117114220/https://www.howardforums.com/showthread.php/1910692-DISTURBING-NEWS-about-new-FreedomPop-Taxes-amp-Surcharges>

QUOTE: “Overview [] FreedomPop has a consumer rating of 2.14 stars from 190 reviews indicating that most consumers are generally dissatisfied with their purchases. FreedomPop also ranks 22nd among Mobile Carriers sites. The most common issues with FreedomPop are around customer service, which is not as good as expected by some customers.”

Link: <https://www.SiteJabber.com/reviews/freedompop.com>

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/JFlku>

Archive-2:

<https://Web.Archive.org/web/20201019145355/https://www.sitejabber.com/reviews/freedompop.com>

QUOTE: “Overall Rating 2.5 out of 5”

Link: <https://www.Reviews.org/mobile/freedompop-cell-phone-plans/>

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/wip/UFD62>

Archive-2: <https://Web.Archive.org/web/20200602232138/https://www.Reviews.org/mobile/freedompop-cell-phone-plans/>

QUOTE: “FreedomPop charging people's accounts long after they've left. [] I've been using FP for years and never had an issue like this. On November 17th, they charged me \$32.98 for a purchase I had never made, and of course it made me surprised. I checked to see what the charge was for and I saw that they had upgraded a SIM card that I had on the free plan for years, to one the 2GB plan and added a service, totalling \$32.98. I've tried talking with them on Twitter about it, and they say that they can't give me a refund and then give me a piece of the TOS, because they're instructed to do that. Hopefully I can still get my money back by talking to PayPal, but let this be a warning to anyone that wants to join. If you do, you should try using a disposable card, like Privacy.com. [] EDIT: They seem to have changed their stance and said they're going to refund me, which is good. <https://files.catbox.moe/5y8gsc.png>”

Link:

https://www.Reddit.com/r/freedompop/comments/9yjym4/freedompop_charging_peoples_accounts_long_after/

Archive-1: <https://Archive.vn/wip/5ndPe>

Archive-2:

https://Web.Archive.org/web/20201019150916/https://www.reddit.com/r/freedompop/comments/9yjym4/freedompop_charging_peoples_accounts_long_after/

Conclusion: See #8, here, FreedomPop? They have some, ah... PRETTY BAD “Reviews”!!.. But, while lots of others got “whacked” with numerous 'surprise' fees (for pressing a wrong button or something? – or not noticing a change in the TOS – the Terms of Service), nonetheless, they treated me well... Well, except for the horrible voice & text service – but their FREE fast data was spot on great...until it wasn't – when FreedomPop discontinued my service, and said I had to either get a “paid” plan with TING or simply lose out. – So, while they were “a thing” for a while, I'd advise you not mess with FreedomPop unless you're bored, desperate, and/or have loads of free time to mess around with an unstable quantity.

Recap: I chose #7, above, PureTalkUSA, which has – so far – treated me well.

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