# T-Mobile Confirms ETF Payoffs for Customers Who Switch

Ben Munson

John Legere Wedesday called family plans one of the “biggest evils” in the industry. With T-Mobile’s latest “Un-Carrier” move, the CEO aims to give families and individuals a way out of their contracts.

T-Mobile will begin paying off the early termination fees [1]—up to $350 per line—for individuals willing to switch over and trade in their device. With the trade-in and ETF payoff, T-Mobile is saying the credit could go as high as $650 per line (up to five lines per family).

“Carriers like to make you think you’re just signing up for two years with their family plans, but with staggered expiration dates and early termination fees, they’re really locking you in forever,” T-Mobile CMO Mike Sievert said in a statement.

While confirming the T-Mobile rumors, Legere went ahead and announced some T-Mobile fourth quarter preliminary results live and claimed the carrier saw more than 1.6 million net customer adds for the quarter. He added that T-Mobile tallied 4.4 million net adds for all of 2013.

Both CTO Neville Ray and Legere set aside lots of time to talk about how T-Mobile is beating its competitors. Ray touted T-Mobile’s LTE network, calling it “wideband” and pointed to downlink numbers putting T-Mobile ahead of the other three major carriers.

Legere gave Verizon “huge credit” for acknowledging its network problems and addressing them. He called Sprint a “pile of spectrum waiting to be turned into a capability.” And he called AT&T his source of amusement.

Ray was a bit more menacing toward AT&T, saying T-Mobile was going to “frighten

the crap out of them" because of the low-band spectrum his carrier just bought from Verizon for $2.4 billion.

It could take a while for T-Mobile's LTE network to really shape up, but the carrier's new ETF payoff deal could go a long way toward breaking up the contract business model.

Rumors of T-Mobile's move got AT&T to offer up to $450 per line for customers that switch from T-Mobile [2]. But, as T-Mobile repeatedly said during its press conference, AT&T's deal is for a limited time only; T-Mobile's is permanent.

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