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## In 2016, identify the best mobile plan that offers the most value for your money

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Tarifica, a leading telecommunications pricing research firm, dedicated to helping its clients make decisions based on insightful, actionable data, recently announced their latest scores (Tarifica Score™) for postpaid mobile plans in Mexico.

The Yucatan Times is publishing this information as a service to the English speaking community in the Peninsula (and the rest of Mexico), so our readers can have a good parameter on which make the right decision for choosing the mobile communications service provider that best suits their needs.

It is worth mentioning that U.S.-based operator AT&T announced in October 2015 that Iusacell and Nextel customers with an AT&T United plan can now access 4G/LTE services in a total of six Mexican cities.

The service is available in Atlacomulco in the State of Mexico, Cuernavaca and Cuautla in Morelos, and Pachuca, Tulancingo and Tepeji del Rio in Hidalgo. Customers in the covered areas simply need an LTE-enabled smartphone and SIM card to access the network.

AT&T declared it would be in a position to offer solid 4G coverage throughout all of Mexico by the end of 2016.

### Tarifica's Take

This launch of 4G services in six major Mexican municipalities is the first step toward the realization of AT&T's stated plan to create a North American mobile service area that will eventually cover more than 400 million customers and businesses in Mexico and the U.S.

AT&T's acquisition of Nextel Mexico and Iusacell for a combined total of US \$4.4 billion earlier this year gave the U.S. operator the wherewithal to create this cross-border network. Nextel's network serves some 76 million people in a nation of 120 million, while Iusacell brought AT&T 70 percent coverage and 8.6 million customers.

However, in order for AT&T to truly integrate its Mexican network with its U.S. network, the quality levels in the two countries have to match, so it will be key for the company to have 4G in place in Mexico as well as in the U.S. This launch, though limited, points the way forward.

According to Tarifica, the dominant market player in Mexico is Telcel, owned by tycoon Carlos Slim, which has a reputation for offering the best nationwide coverage but at **higher cost and with poor customer service**.



In Mexico, Telcel has some 70 per cent of the mobile phone market. (Photo: Google)

### **What is the Tarifica Score™ ?**

The Tarifica Score™ is an advanced algorithm used to evaluate mobile plans based on the value they offer consumers. It incorporates every aspect of each mobile plan (including usage allotments, geographic coverage, data speeds, value added features and promotional elements) and weighs them against each plan's total costs to determine its consumer value. Scores range from 0 to 100.

“Movistar's four ‘without phone’ plans score best of all plans in that category primarily because it offers the largest data volumes and best download speeds of all operators in the market,” said Melissa Mascarenhas, Tarifica's Mexico Analyst. “Those factors, combined with its reasonably good coverage, make its plans the most attractive for consumers,” she continued.

In contrast, Telcel's plans are the most unattractive in both the with phone and without phone categories.

This is mainly due to its high prices, but its relatively slow speeds and limitation on use of included minutes to Mexico only also weigh down its scores.

Iusacell's scores generally fall between those earned by Movistar and Telcel. Iusacell scores better than Telcel despite being worse on both coverage and speed because of its significantly higher data volumes and more

reasonable prices. Both Iusacell and Movistar allow customers to use their included minutes to call both the US and Canada, another factor that adds value to their scores.

“The differences in score values are dramatic,” Mascarenhas said. “In the overall without phone category, Movistar’s best plan, ‘Planes sin Equipo – Plan GigaMove 1’ takes the top position with a score of 100.

Iusacell’s best plan, ‘Libertad Total – Libertad 399’ scores a respectable 79, while Telcel’s best plan, ‘Telcel Plus Todo Destino 300 – SIM Only,’ only generates a score of 43.”

Among plans that come with a phone, Iusacell’s best plan, ‘Renovacion: Di Lo Que Quieras – Fuerte Dilo,’ scores best (100), while Telcel’s best plan, ‘Telcel Plus Todo Destino 1300,’ scores a lowly 37, demonstrating it only offers about one third of the value of the top plan. (Movistar does not offer any plans that come with a phone).

“In today’s mobile marketplace, consumers are flooded with hundreds of plan variations and constantly shifting promotions and deals—the majority of which come with different costs and services and access networks of differing strengths.”

When making a decision that will likely impact them for up to two years, consumers can use Tarifica Scores to cut through the clutter and identify those plans in every market segment that offer the best value for the money,” stated Tarifica Program Manager, Will Watts.

### **About Tarifica**

Tarifica, a unit of T3i Group, has been the leading provider of telecom pricing information for close to four decades. It maintains the most robust, in-depth and up-to-date pricing database in the industry, which includes mobile and fixed line rates from over 400 operators in 85 countries, as well as historical data going back to 1997.

Tarifica also produces reports, surveys, publications and custom analyses. Its clients include carriers, regulators, enterprises and consultants in every region of the globe. For more information, please visit



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