

The Middle East Mobile Benchmark 2014

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Abstracts

The 63-page report supported with the all the data compared in excel spreadshhet entitled 'The Middle East Mobile Benchmark 2014' provides analysis of voice and data services for both Pre Pay and Post Pay services across 29 MNOs in 14 Middle East countries.

Countries covered include: Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, UAE and Yemen.

The report gives detailed pricing information of postpaid offers both for voice and mobile broadband. The information compares pricing for connection, rental, included usage as part of the bundle, domestic usage (voice, SMS, MMS, data), international usage as well as roaming (calling back home, calling locally, receiving a call, sending an SMS back home and data roaming).

The report provides the reader with a quick view of what a service costs and how it compares with other operators in the region. All price points referred to are compared, prices are expressed in USD.

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About

Tariff Consultancy Ltd (TCL) releases the second edition of the Middle East Mobile Benchmark service which provides a review of prices levied for mobile services both voice and data by operators in the Middle East.

The Middle East Mobile 2014 Benchmark service offers an insight into pricing for post- and prepaid services. It comprises of a database providing detailed pricing information of services namely mobile voice, mobile broadband and international usage including roaming. Additionally, the report provides a comparison of the various services in an easy-to-use format.

Some of the highlights from the findings are:

The Benchmark has found that some Middle Eastern operators offer a significantly greater number of tariffs than others i.e. Both operators Orange and Zain in Jordan. In total 220 postpaid and 116 prepaid plans are offered by the covered 29 operators offering services in the 14 Middle Eastern countries.

The Benchmark compares three postpaid plans for each operator, namely lowest priced, medium and highest priced in terms of rental charged per month. Rental charges vary from as little as USD 0.25 (Iran) to as high as USD 681 (UAE). The average rental per month of all postpaid plans is USD 51.62 per month.

The Benchmark finds that out of the 72 postpaid plans covered a total of 22 do not include any minutes, 39 of them do not include any SMS and 35 do not include any data.

i) The lowest inclusive allowance for minutes is 20, for SMS 20 & for data 50 MB

ii) Only 4 operators offer unlimited voice and SMS and 6 offer unlimited data for their highest priced plans.

Out of all the plans selected in the 14 countries both post and prepaid:

i) The per minute charge for a voice call is no more than USD 0.15 except in Lebanon where the charge is USD 0.25 per minute in peak hours dropping to USD 0.15 during off-peak hours. The average cost of a 1 minute domestic on net voice call is USD 0.07, USD 0.08 to landlines and other mobile networks.

ii) Domestic SMS prices vary from USD 0.01 to USD 0.011 and MMS from

USD 0.01 to USD 0.36, with the average at USD 0.05 for an SMS and USD 0.14 for an MMS.

The survey found that some operators levy lower international call charges to the USA than to a neighbouring country. However, the average call rate to the USA is USD 0.45 compared to Saudi Arabia at USD 0.42 per minute. IDD bundles are on the increase reveals the survey and can offer discounts of well above 50 per cent on the per minute rate.

Roaming charges attract an average of USD 2.25 per minute when calling back home from the roaming destination USA and USD 1.25 when in Saudi Arabia. Also for other services as the summary shows below, roaming in a neighbouring country like Saudi Arabia is far cheaper.

Mobile Broadband offerings since the last update have significantly increased. The survey reveals that the lowest priced mobile broadband plan valid for 30 days is available from USD 0.40 including 3 MB offered by both Syrian operators up to USD 784 for a 12-month paid upfront plan offered by a Saudi operator. Inside the bundle pricing varies from USD 0.71 per 1 GB to just over USD 1,000.

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