

ACSI® Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026

May 19, 2026



Focusing on Fundamentals Boosts Customer Satisfaction Across Telecommunications and Cell Phone Industries

Customer satisfaction with the internet service provider (ISP) industry overall increases 1% this year to an ACSI score of 73 on a 100-point scale, with both the fiber and non-fiber segments improving at the same rate. Fiber ISP satisfaction rises from 75 to 76, while non-fiber ISP satisfaction ticks up from 70 to 71. These gains signal continuing progress across a rapidly evolving connectivity landscape. The improvements coincide with the ongoing expansion of broadband infrastructure nationwide, fueled in part by federal funding efforts designed to extend internet access to more households. As providers scale their networks and compete for newly connected customers, incremental gains in satisfaction underscore the importance of delivering consistent, reliable service alongside broader availability.

Satisfaction with wireless service providers advances 3% to a record-high ACSI score of 77. This improvement is industrywide, including a substantial 4% satisfaction increase for the full-service mobile virtual network operator (MVNO) segment, along with 1% gains for both mobile network operators (MNOs) and value MVNOs. Nearly all customer experience ratings are better this year across the three measured segments, which contributes to the upward momentum. Core network performance also improves across the major network operators, but close scores for call quality and network capability may signal a need for service providers to move beyond strengthening the fundamentals to gain a future competitive edge.

INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS

73 ▲ 1%

WIRELESS PHONE SERVICE

77 ▲ 3%

CELL PHONES

79 ▲ 1%

SMARTWATCHES

77 ◀▶ 0%

Cell phone satisfaction also rises modestly in 2026, up 1% to 79 after experiencing a sharp decrease last year. The highest-rated customer experience metrics are primarily basic functionalities such as phone calling and text messaging. AI feature performance, measured by the ACSI for the first time, debuts near the top alongside the table-stakes benchmarks. This indicates that AI integration into cell phone functionality has proven largely beneficial rather than detrimental to customer satisfaction. Satisfaction with flagship models (82) far outpaces legacy phones (76) and foldables (72).

In its second year of measurement, smartwatch satisfaction holds steady with a score of 77 for 2026. However, there is positive movement beneath this still surface. Every customer experience benchmark sees progress at the industry level. In particular, the service metrics for repairs all advance substantially this year.

While year-over-year results vary across the industries measured, customer satisfaction continues to be shaped by how effectively providers deliver on the fundamentals of the experience. Reliability, service quality, and ease of engagement remain central drivers of satisfaction, even as products and technologies evolve.

ACSI results are based on surveys conducted over a 12-month period ending in March 2026. ACSI scores are reported on a 0 to 100 scale.

Key Takeaways

INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS

- The internet service provider industry is up 1% to an ACSI score of 73 with both service types (fiber and non-fiber) contributing to this improved score.
- For the second year in a row, the top-ranked fiber and non-fiber providers earn the same ACSI score as Verizon 5G Home Internet surges 3% to meet AT&T Fiber (+1%) at 79.
- Customer experience benchmarks across both the fiber and non-fiber segments improve, contributing to the overall satisfaction gains for both.
- Industrywide, the complaint rate is lower compared to last year, while complaint handling performance improves.

WIRELESS PHONE SERVICE

- Wireless phone service satisfaction rebounds and gains ground in 2026, rising 3% to an all-time high ACSI score of 77, after dipping 1% in 2025.
- Mobile network operators post smaller gains than the overall industry, improving 1% to 76, with scores for all national brands clustered tightly, ranging from 76 (Verizon and AT&T) to 78 (T-Mobile).
- While network fundamentals improve this year, there is little differentiation among the mobile network operators, reinforcing that strong call quality and network capabilities are increasingly viewed as core expectations for the industry.
- Satisfaction with full-service mobile virtual network operators rises 4% to 77, matching the industry average and driving most of the overall industry's improvement.
- Value mobile virtual network operators remain the highest-rated wireless service segment at 79, although the gain is a more modest 1%.
- Customer experience factors tied to ease, reliability, and digital interactions strengthen, helping support overall satisfaction gains.

CELL PHONES

- After a sharp drop one year ago, cell phone satisfaction increases 1% to an ACSI score of 79 as manufacturers find ways to add capabilities while preserving battery reliability.
- Samsung takes the top industry spot (81), narrowly ahead of Apple (80); Google and Motorola move up to 77 each.
- Customer assessment of AI features debuts with a score of 85, placing AI capability among the highest-rated attributes for cell phones.
- Core reliability remains table stakes for the industry: ease of making phone calls and text messaging lead all measured experiences (both 86).

SMARTWATCHES

- Customer satisfaction with the smartwatch industry holds at an ACSI score of 77 for the second year despite the addition of several brands including Garmin, Google Pixel, Motorola, and OnePlus.
- A drop in satisfaction among Samsung watch owners results in a tie with Apple at the top of the leaderboard at 80.
- The individual customer experience touchpoints reveal universal improvement, from design and durability to connectivity and app integrations.
- Strong improvement in the service experience for smartwatches narrows the gap considerably to the cell phone service experience.

Study Findings

Customer satisfaction plays a pivotal role in shaping both the financial performance of individual companies and the overall strength of the U.S. economy. New findings from the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI®) offer benchmark insights for internet service providers, wireless phone service, cell phones, and smartwatches. In addition, the ACSI captures consumer opinions about critical elements of the customer experience, tailored specifically to each industry.

INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS

The 2026 ACSI internet service provider results once again rank brands by technology solution, distinguishing fiber ISPs that deliver service over 100% fiber-optic networks from non-fiber ISPs, which include providers offering cable, DSL, wireless, or satellite connections.

Overall, the ISP industry shows improvement as ACSI scores for both fiber and non-fiber providers increase, boosting customer satisfaction by 1% to 73. This marks continued progress across the industry and underscores the sustained upward trajectory of customer satisfaction with internet service.

Looking over a broader scope of time, however, the industry’s momentum is notable. In 2022, the overall ISP industry earned an ACSI score of 64. Today it stands at 73, representing a significant 14% satisfaction gain achieved over the past four years. While advancements in broadband technology play an important role in this improvement, ACSI benchmarks indicate that providers are also strengthening performance across fundamental customer experience dimensions, including service quality, reliability, and support. As competition intensifies, ISPs appear to be placing greater emphasis on the full customer experience, not just speed or access, contributing to satisfaction gains across both ISP segments this year.

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS

0-100 Scale

INDUSTRY	2025 ACSI	2026 ACSI	% CHANGE
Internet Service Providers	72	73	1%
All Others (Fiber and Non-fiber)	71	76	7%

Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026. © 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.

Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

Fiber Internet Service Providers

Customer satisfaction in the fiber segment improves 1% to an ACSI score of 76. Mirroring this 1% improvement, AT&T Fiber remains on top for the fourth year in a row with a score of 79. While AT&T Fiber maintains its lead, the remainder of the fiber segment reflects some notable changes across brand performance. Brightspeed Fiber, a relative newcomer, advances an impressive 8% year over year to 78, placing the brand in a close second. Xfinity Fiber, with its 3% improvement, rounds out the top three at 77. Notably, Optimum Fiber moves ahead of three of its closest competitors with a 4% satisfaction gain, landing at a score of 74.

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX
FIBER INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS

0-100 Scale

BRAND	2025 ACSI	2026 ACSI	% CHANGE
Fiber Internet Service Providers	75	76	1%
AT&T Fiber	78	79	1%
Brightspeed Fiber	72	78	8%
Xfinity Fiber (Comcast)	75	77	3%
Google Fiber	76	75	-1%
Verizon Fios	76	75	-1%
Optimum Fiber (Altice USA)	71	74	4%
CenturyLink/Quantum Fiber (Lumen Technologies)	71	72	1%
Frontier Fiber	71	72	1%
Kinetic Fiber by Windstream	72	71	-1%
Earthlink Fiber	64	69	8%

Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026. © 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.
Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC.
No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

Reversing minor declines reported in the segment last year, fiber providers show improvement across all customer experience benchmarks, signaling a meaningful rebound in performance. Most notably, call center satisfaction increases 7% to 77. Additional gains are seen in performance during peak hours and speed of store or service center transactions, both improving 5% to 82 and 83, respectively.

Taken together, these results indicate that fiber providers are responding to rising customer expectations, not only for the reliability and speed associated with fiber technology, but for the broader end-to-end customer experience.

At the same time, these findings serve as an important reminder for the growing number of new fiber entrants coming to market: State-of-the-art network technology alone is not sufficient to sustain customer satisfaction. As performance expectations normalize, customer perceptions are increasingly shaped by service interactions, billing clarity, responsiveness to incidents, and overall ease of doing business. Providers that pair advanced infrastructure with disciplined customer experience execution are best positioned to maintain momentum as fiber adoption scales.

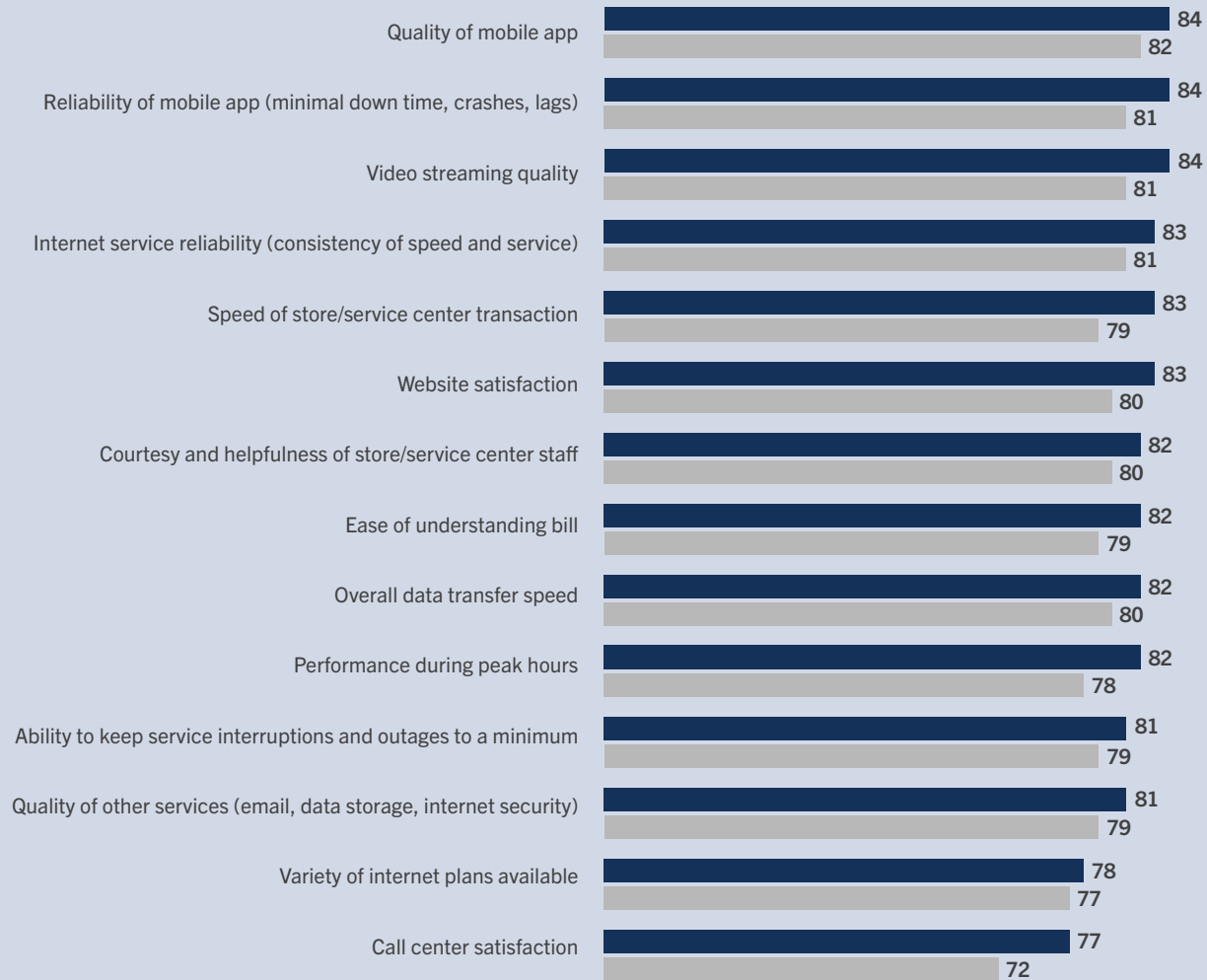
AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX

FIBER INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS

Customer Experience Benchmarks Year-Over-Year Industry Trends

0-100 Scale

2026 2025



Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026.

© 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.

Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

Non-fiber Internet Service Providers

Satisfaction with non-fiber internet service providers improves 1% in 2026 to an ACSI score of 71. While this represents continuing progress among non-fiber providers, a 5-point gap between the fiber and non-fiber ISP segments remains. Despite this disparity, the non-fiber segment results provide strong evidence that non-fiber options continue to meet customer needs. Notably, scores for the top-performing fiber provider (AT&T Fiber) and non-fiber provider (Verizon 5G Home Internet) are on par with each other at 79.

Verizon 5G Home Internet improves 3% to 79 and pulls ahead of T-Mobile 5G Home Internet (78) to replace it in the lead. Satellite provider Starlink debuts at a score of 76, rounding out the top three non-fiber providers. Beyond the segment leaders, several brands show notable year-over-year improvement. In particular, Frontier Communications (+9%), CenturyLink (+8%), and Cox (+6%) post the largest gains across the category. These gains suggest that competitive pressure is extending beyond network technology alone, with increasing emphasis on service execution, responsiveness, and end-to-end customer experience.

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX
NON-FIBER INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS

0-100 Scale

BRAND	2025 ACSI	2026 ACSI	% CHANGE
Non-fiber Internet Service Providers	70	71	1%
Verizon 5G Home Internet	77	79	3%
T-Mobile 5G Home Internet	78	78	0%
Starlink	NA	76	NA
Cox	68	72	6%
AT&T Internet	70	71	1%
Spectrum (Charter Communications)	71	71	0%
Xfinity (Comcast)	69	71	3%
Sparklight (Cable One)	71	70	-1%
CenturyLink (Lumen Technologies)	62	67	8%
Optimum (Altice USA)	63	64	2%
Xtream (Mediacom)	63	64	2%
Frontier Communications	58	63	9%

NA = Not Available

Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026. © 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.

Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

Building on the progress observed last year, non-fiber providers show year-over-year improvement across nearly all customer experience benchmarks, indicating momentum across the customer experience. The most pronounced gains appear in transaction speed (+8% to 80) and staff courtesy (+5% to 80), alongside notable improvements in performance during peak hours and minimizing interruptions and outages (both up 5% to 78). Together, these changes point to advances in both store/ service center support and capacity management. Customers also report improved quality of services such as email (+5% to 77), along with 4% gains in several areas including plan variety and call centers.

These results suggest that non-fiber providers are increasingly responding to customer expectations not only for acceptable performance, but for a more dependable and easier-to-navigate end-to-end experience. As competition intensifies and performance expectations continue to rise, particularly as fiber options expand, non-fiber providers that pair network investments with disciplined execution in service, billing clarity, and issue resolution will be best positioned to sustain customer satisfaction gains over time.

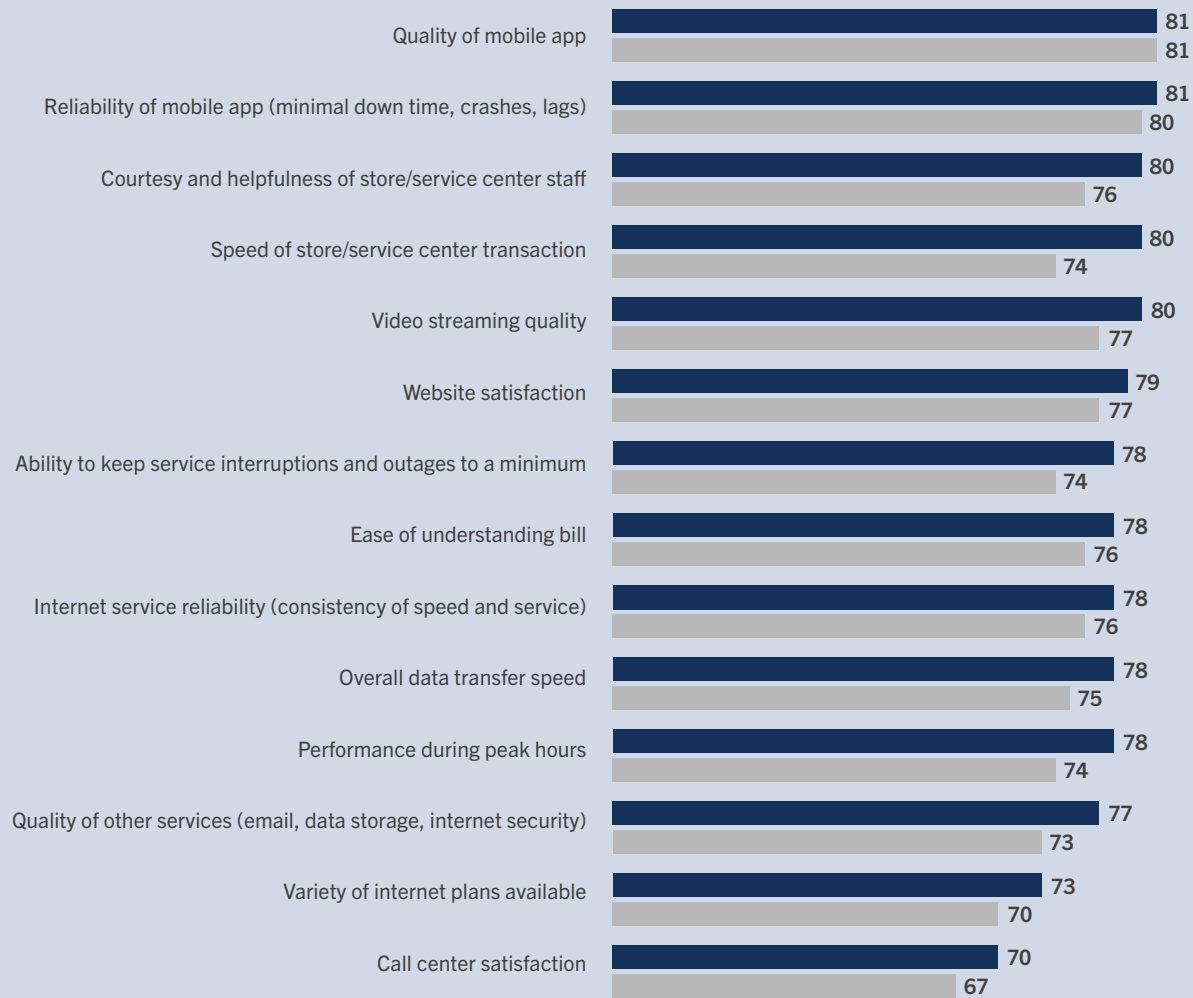
AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX

NON-FIBER INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS

Customer Experience Benchmarks Year-Over-Year Industry Trends

0-100 Scale

2026 2025



Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026. © 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.

Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

Non-fiber Internet Service Providers by Region

For the first time, the ACSI is reporting regional rankings among non-fiber internet providers, in addition to the national rankings for the segment. This offers companies a more precise view of how they perform against their direct competitors within specific regions of the country. These regional comparisons provide insight into where providers are excelling, where challenges persist, and how customer experience performance varies by market.

At present, regional rankings for fiber providers are not provided due to uneven fiber market share and customer feedback volumes across regions. As fiber adoption grows and customer participation increases, regional fiber rankings will be incorporated when the data supports reliable, statistically sound comparisons.

Across regions, customer satisfaction with non-fiber internet providers at the brand level varies meaningfully, reflecting differences in competitive intensity, provider mix, and local execution. While national benchmarks provide a useful high-level view, regional results reveal where providers are outperforming peers and where regional market dynamics may be shaping customer perceptions. Segment improvement in three of the four regions in 2026 leads to highly comparable average satisfaction levels, with regional scores clustering at 71 to 72.

Non-fiber Internet Service Providers: Northeast Region

In the Northeast, overall satisfaction among non-fiber providers improves 4% from 68 to 71, marking progress year over year. Verizon 5G Home Internet strengthens its position with a 4% increase to 77, while T-Mobile 5G Home Internet maintains a narrow lead at 79 (+1%). Other non-fiber providers show mixed movement, with Xfinity posting a notable 7% gain to 73, while Optimum declines slightly (-2% to 62). These results point to growing competitive pressure and improving performance among select providers, even as satisfaction levels in the Northeast region are somewhat lower than in other parts of the country.

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX
NON-FIBER INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS
Customer Satisfaction by Region: Northeast
0-100 Scale

NORTHEAST			
BRAND	2025 ACSI	2026 ACSI	% CHANGE
Non-fiber Internet Service Providers Northeast	68	71	4%
T-Mobile 5G Home Internet	78	79	1%
Verizon 5G Home Internet	74	77	4%
Xfinity (Comcast)	68	73	7%
Spectrum (Charter Communications)	67	69	3%
Optimum (Altice USA)	63	62	-2%

Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026. © 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.
Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

Non-fiber Internet Service Providers: Midwest Region

Satisfaction in the Midwest holds steady at 71, indicating a more mature and stable competitive landscape. Verizon 5G Home Internet edges up 1% to lead at 79. After tying for the top score in 2025, T-Mobile 5G Home Internet experiences a 3% decline to 76. Some of the other providers show limited movement overall as gains for Xfinity (+1% to 72) and Xstream (+3% to 64) are offset by similar declines for other brands. The lack of broad regional movement suggests that Midwest customers are seeing incremental changes rather than transformational improvement.

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX

NON-FIBER INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS**Customer Satisfaction by Region: Midwest**

0-100 Scale

MIDWEST			
BRAND	2025 ACSI	2026 ACSI	% CHANGE
Non-fiber Internet Service Providers Midwest	71	71	0%
Verizon 5G Home Internet	78	79	1%
T-Mobile 5G Home Internet	78	76	-3%
Xfinity (Comcast)	71	72	1%
Spectrum (Charter Communications)	72	71	-1%
AT&T Internet	69	69	0%
Xstream (Mediacom)	62	64	3%

Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026. © 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.

Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

Non-fiber Internet Service Providers: South Region

The South posts a modest 1% overall improvement, with regional satisfaction increasing from 71 to 72. Verizon 5G Home Internet and T-Mobile 5G Home Internet both strengthen their positions, with Verizon reaching 80 (+3%) and T-Mobile rising to 79 (+1%). Several other providers see meaningful gains, most notably Cox, which improves 6% to 72. These results suggest rising expectations paired with tangible performance and service improvements across a wider range of providers in the South.

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX

NON-FIBER INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS**Customer Satisfaction by Region: South**

0-100 Scale

SOUTH			
BRAND	2025 ACSI	2026 ACSI	% CHANGE
Non-fiber Internet Service Providers South	71	72	1%
Verizon 5G Home Internet	78	80	3%
T-Mobile 5G Home Internet	78	79	1%
AT&T Internet	72	74	3%
Cox	68	72	6%
Spectrum (Charter Communications)	72	72	0%
Xfinity (Comcast)	70	71	1%
Optimum (Altice USA)	64	66	3%

Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026. © 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.

Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

Non-fiber Internet Service Providers: West Region

The West shows the strongest year-over-year improvement among non-fiber providers, with average satisfaction rising 6% from 68 to 72. Verizon 5G Home Internet makes a notable 5% gain to 79, while T-Mobile 5G Home Internet increases 3% to lead the region at 80. Other providers also demonstrate significant improvement, with Cox and CenturyLink posting double-digit (+11%) gains, pointing to meaningful progress from relatively lower satisfaction levels in 2025. The West’s results reflect a highly competitive environment where investments and service improvements appear to be resonating with customers.

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX
NON-FIBER INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS
Customer Satisfaction by Region: West
0-100 Scale

WEST			
BRAND	2025 ACSI	2026 ACSI	% CHANGE
Non-fiber Internet Service Providers West	68	72	6%
T-Mobile 5G Home Internet	78	80	3%
Verizon 5G Home Internet	75	79	5%
Cox	66	73	11%
Spectrum (Charter Communications)	68	73	7%
Xfinity (Comcast)	67	69	3%
AT&T Internet	68	68	0%
CenturyLink (Lumen Technologies)	61	68	11%

Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026. © 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.
Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC.
No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

The In-Home Wi-Fi Experience

The ACSI measures key aspects of the in-home Wi-Fi experience for both fiber and non-fiber internet customers. In 2026, fiber service continues to deliver the most satisfying Wi-Fi experience overall, but non-fiber providers also post broad-based gains across reliability and performance measures.

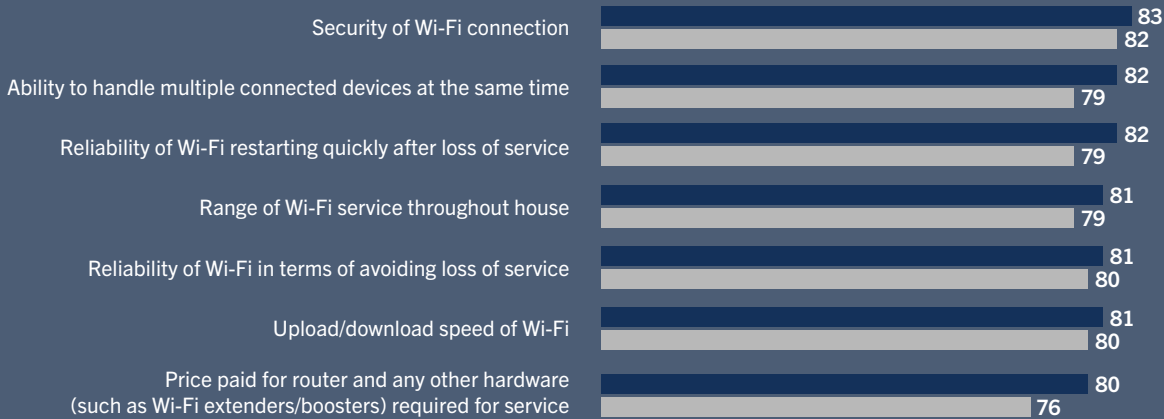
Among fiber customers, scores are better across all Wi-Fi attributes. Aside from the improvement for router prices (+5%), the largest gains occur in restarting quickly after a service loss and ability to handle multiple connected devices (both +4%), reinforcing fiber’s advantage for high-demand households. Security of the connection (83) remains the strongest aspect of the fiber Wi-Fi experience, while elevated expectations continue to make fiber customers more sensitive to reliability disruptions.

At the same time, non-fiber providers continue to improve, with gains of about 3%-4% across most measures. Advances in speed, range of service, and managing multiple devices reflect the growing competitiveness of hybrid and fixed-wireless offerings. Improvements in avoiding service loss and restoring service more quickly further support rising perceptions of non-fiber reliability.

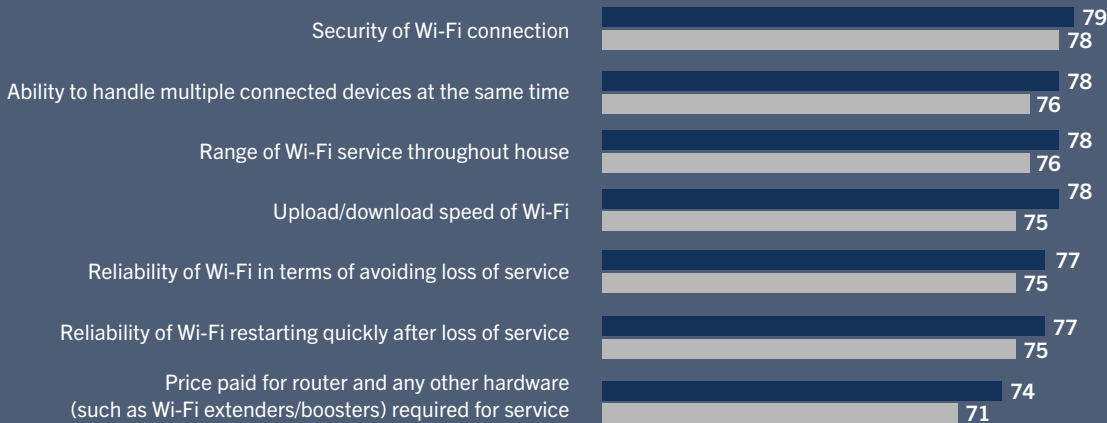
AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX
WI-FI EXPERIENCE: FIBER INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS
Customer Experience Benchmarks Year-Over-Year Industry Trends

0-100 Scale

2026 2025



WI-FI EXPERIENCE: NON-FIBER INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS
Customer Experience Benchmarks Year-Over-Year Industry Trends



Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026. © 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.
Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

Customer Complaints and Complaint Handling

The 2026 ACSI results show improvement across both complaint rates and complaint handling according to fiber and non-fiber customers, providing additional context to overall satisfaction performance. Reported customer complaint rates declined year over year for both segments, with a modest decline among fiber customers (down 3 percentage points to 24%) and a more substantial reduction among non fiber customers (down 6 percentage points to 20%).

At the same time, perceptions of how well companies handle complaints improve across both ISP types. Complaint handling scores increase 6% to 70 for fiber providers and 7% to 58 for non fiber providers. Taken together, these findings suggest progress on two fronts: fewer problems escalating to complaints and improved effectiveness when complaints do occur.

While complaint handling performance remains stronger among fiber providers, the year over year gains in both segments point to continued focus on issue resolution and customer support processes as an important contributor to overall customer satisfaction.

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX
INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS
Complaints and Complaint Handling
0-100 Scale

	2025		2026	
	Percentage of complaining customers	Complaint handling	Percentage of complaining customers	Complaint handling
FIBER	27%	66	24%	70
NON-FIBER	26%	54	20%	58

Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026. © 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.
Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

Customer Comments

As part of its broadband benchmarking, the ACSI collects open-ended feedback from internet service customers. An AI-based analysis of these comments highlights several recurring themes among fiber customers, including service reliability, speed consistency throughout the home, pricing and billing transparency, and the responsiveness of customer support—offering insight into where the fiber experience is delivering value and where improvements remain.

An AI-based analysis of the open-ended feedback from non-fiber customers points to both overlapping and distinct themes compared with fiber. While reliability, outages, and customer support responsiveness remain common concerns, non-fiber comments place greater emphasis on slow speeds, inconsistent performance, coverage limitations, and price sensitivity. Together, the feedback suggests that non-fiber customers are more focused on baseline performance and value, while fiber customers more often react to gaps between expected and delivered service.

WIRELESS PHONE SERVICE

For the wireless phone service industry, ACSI results include three segments: mobile network operators (MNOs), full-service mobile virtual network operators (MVNOs), and value MVNOs. MNOs are companies that own networks in the United States. MVNOs are carriers that deliver service over one or more of the major networks. Full-service MVNOs often have a retail presence and broader service offerings, while value MVNOs tend to be more focused on price.

Customer satisfaction with wireless phone service improves this year, rising 3% to an ACSI score of 77, more than rebounding from the decline reported in 2025 and posting an all-time high score. While all categories do better this year, the industry-level improvement is largely fueled by increased satisfaction with full-service MVNOs (up 4% to 77 and exceeding the score of 76 reported in 2024). Meanwhile, scores for mobile network operators (76) and value MVNOs (79) are up 1% compared to last year.

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX
WIRELESS PHONE SERVICE
0-100 Scale

INDUSTRY	2025 ACSI	2026 ACSI	% CHANGE
Wireless Phone Service	75	77	3%

Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026. © 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.
Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

Mobile Network Operators

The ACSI score for national mobile network operators increases 1% to 76. All national brands show improvement this year, with T-Mobile retaining the top position after a 2% boost to 78. Verizon and AT&T also post gains of 1% and 3%, respectively, to land at 76, reflecting continued clustering among the leading providers.

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX
WIRELESS PHONE SERVICE
Mobile Network Operators
0-100 Scale

BRAND	2025 ACSI	2026 ACSI	% CHANGE
Mobile Network Operators	75	76	1%
T-Mobile	76	78	2%
Verizon	75	76	1%
AT&T	74	76	3%

Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026. © 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.
Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

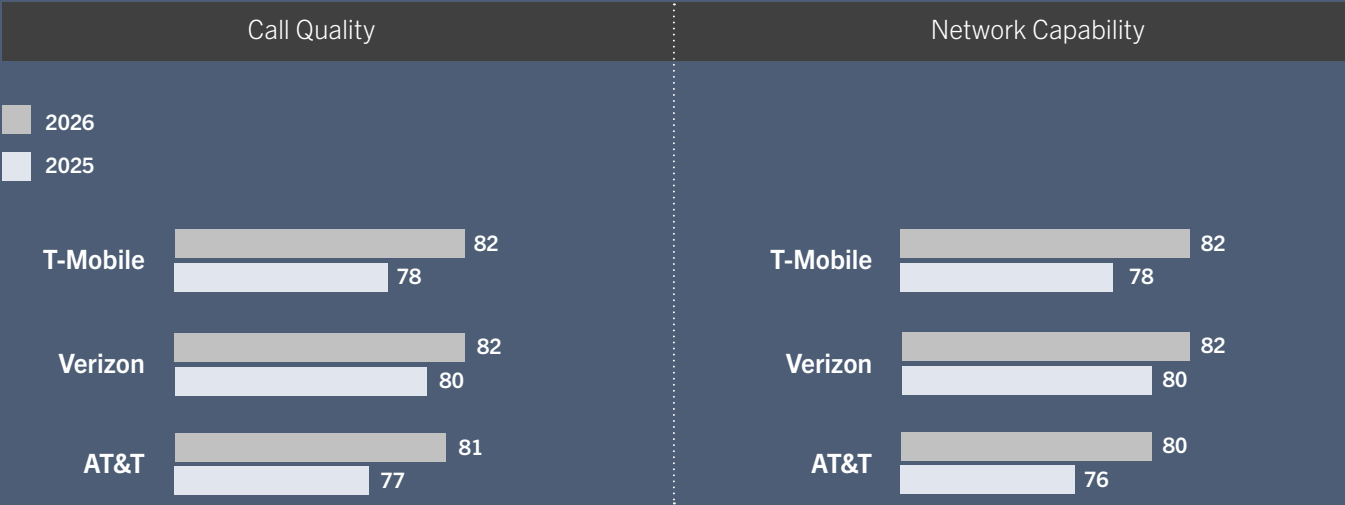
Call Quality and Network Capability

In addition to measuring customer satisfaction for mobile network operators, the ACSI provides two unique measures: call quality and network capability. Call quality is based on assessments of call clarity and strength, as well as reliability in terms of frequency of dropped calls. Network capability is based on network coverage and data speed.

Call quality and network capability improve across all mobile network operators in 2026, signaling continued progress in core network performance. Scores remain relatively close across providers, however, suggesting that customers increasingly view reliable coverage and call performance as core expectations of wireless service. As these fundamentals strengthen, competitive differentiation is shifting toward areas beyond coverage and speed, placing greater emphasis on service interactions, perceived value, and ease of doing business.

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX
WIRELESS PHONE SERVICE
Mobile Network Operators

0-100 Scale



Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026. © 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.
Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

As network fundamentals become increasingly table stakes, greater emphasis is needed on other dimensions such as value, service interactions, and ease of doing business to drive differentiation. In that context, a review of the customer experience benchmarks shows renewed strength across several experience measures. After some softening in 2025, nearly all overall customer experience scores improve in 2026, with mobile app reliability and mobile app quality reaching 84, the highest-scoring benchmarks this year.

The strongest gains appear in billing ease (+5% to 82) and reliability-focused measures such as network speed and reliability (+5% to 81) and call reliability (+4% to 81). Call quality, network coverage, and call center performance also are up 4%, highlighting the role of consistent service fundamentals in overall satisfaction.

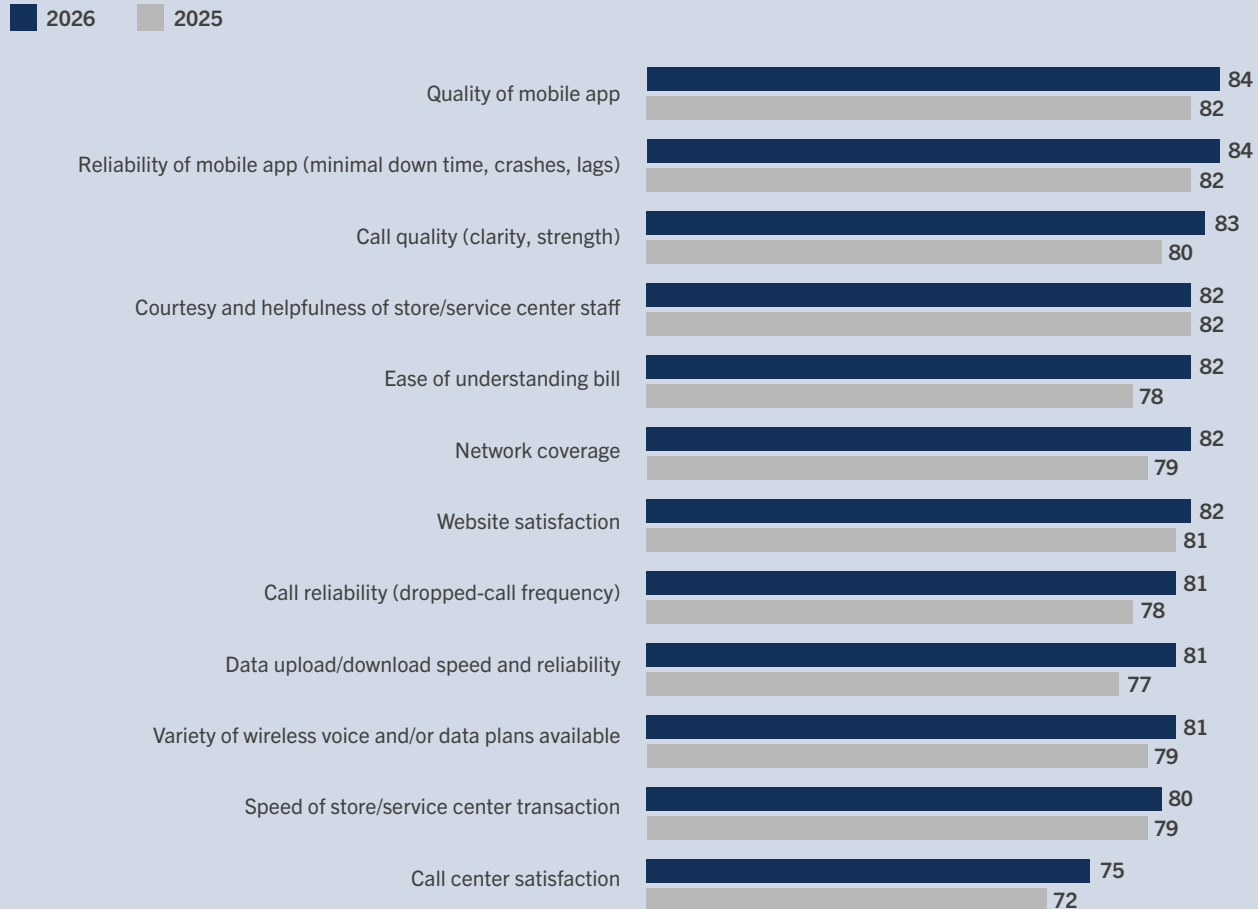
AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX

WIRELESS PHONE SERVICE

Mobile Network Operators

Customer Experience Benchmarks Year-Over-Year Industry Trends

0-100 Scale



Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026. © 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.

Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

Full-Service and Value Mobile Virtual Network Operators

Satisfaction with full-service MVNOs increases 4% in 2026 to an ACSI score of 77, bringing the segment in line with the industry average. Following a 4% improvement, Metro by T-Mobile ties with Spectrum Mobile for the highest score in the category at 78. Other full-service MVNOs post mixed but generally positive results, including a 4% increase for Boost Mobile. The gains contribute to the overall segment improvement, continuing a trend toward narrowing the difference between full-service providers and their value-focused counterparts.

Value MVNOs remain the highest-scoring wireless segment in 2026, improving 1% to an ACSI score of 79. Consumer Cellular continues to lead the category at 84 (+2%), with several other providers posting gains, including a 4% rise for Google Fi. Although year-over-year improvement among value MVNOs is more modest than in the full-service segment, the category maintains a consistent satisfaction advantage, reflecting the ongoing importance of value positioning and simplicity in shaping customer perceptions.

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX
WIRELESS PHONE SERVICE
Full-Service and Value MVNOs
0-100 Scale

BRAND	2025 ACSI	2026 ACSI	% CHANGE
Full-Service MVNOs	74	77	4%
Spectrum Mobile (Charter Communications)	78	78	0%
Metro by T-Mobile	75	78	4%
Xfinity Mobile (Comcast)	75	76	1%
Cricket Wireless (AT&T)	76	76	-1%
Boost Mobile	71	74	4%

BRAND	2025 ACSI	2026 ACSI	% CHANGE
Value MVNOs	78	79	1%
Consumer Cellular	82	84	2%
Straight Talk (Verizon)	78	80	3%
Mint Mobile	79	79	0%
Tracfone (Verizon)	77	78	1%
Google Fi	72	75	4%
Total Wireless (Verizon)	72	74	3%

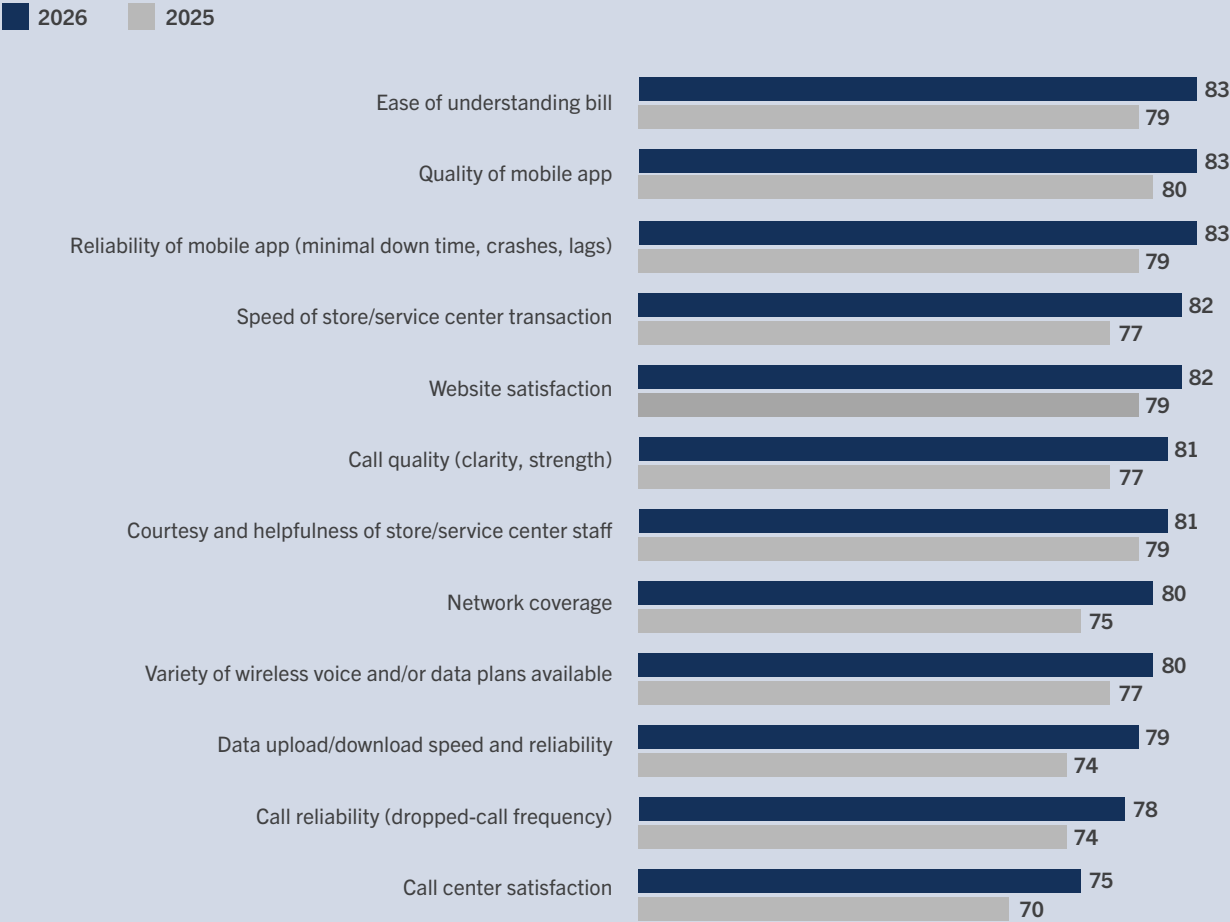
	2025 ACSI	2026 ACSI	% CHANGE
All Others (Full-Service and Value MVNOs)	75	77	3%

Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026. © 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.
Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC.
No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

Customer experience benchmarks for both full-service and value MVNOs show signs of recovery in 2026, following broader softening reported last year. Improvements are most evident across digital and ease-of-use measures, including mobile app quality, mobile app reliability, website satisfaction, and ease of understanding the bill. While call center satisfaction trails other aspects of the experience, it is much higher in both segments compared to a year ago and exceeds 2024 levels.

Full-service MVNOs post stronger improvement across a wider set of benchmarks, consistent with the segment’s larger satisfaction gain. Value MVNOs maintain relatively strong performance on billing clarity and digital experience measures, but the recovery from last year’s general downturn is partial. Overall, the results suggest that customer experience performance is largely improving for the full-service segment, with targeted gains helping offset some of last year’s declines for the value segment.

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX
WIRELESS PHONE SERVICE
Full-Service MVNOs
Customer Experience Benchmarks Year-Over-Year Industry Trends
0-100 Scale



Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026. © 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.
Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC.
No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX

WIRELESS PHONE SERVICE

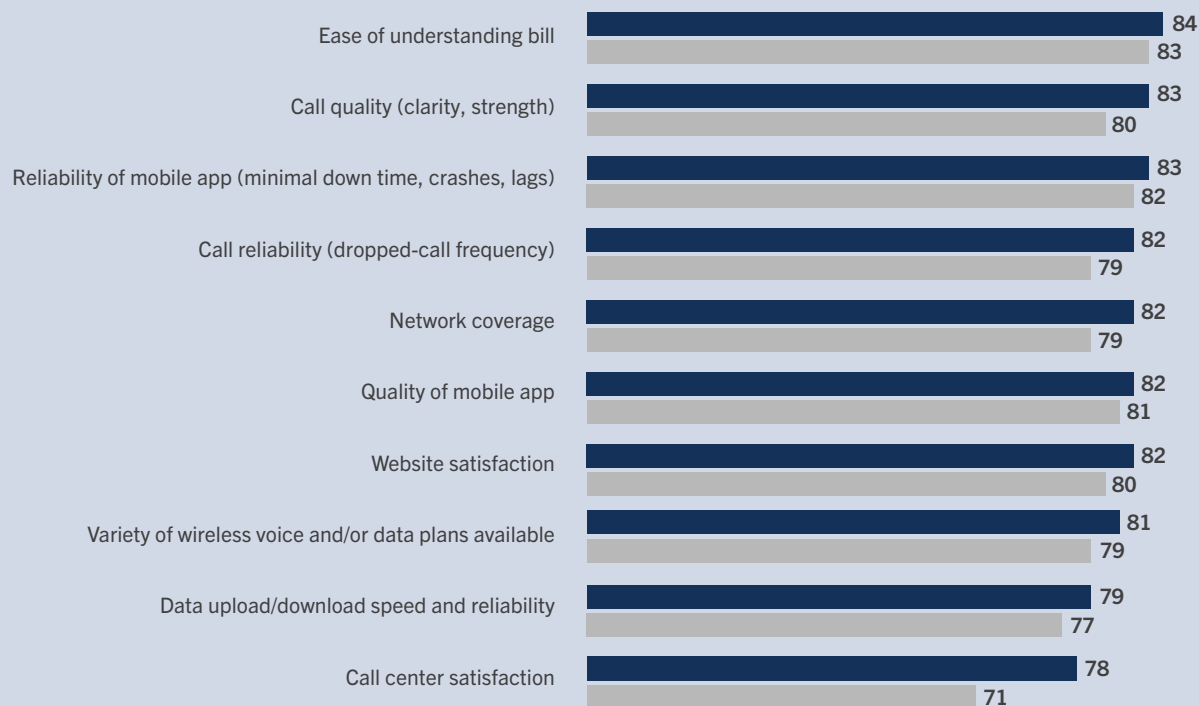
Value MVNOs

Customer Experience Benchmarks Year-Over-Year Industry Trends

0-100 Scale

2026

2025



Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026.

© 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.

Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

CELL PHONES

The cell phone manufacturer industry shows modest but meaningful momentum this year, with the overall ACSI score rising 1% to 79. Just a year ago, the industry’s satisfaction declined 4% to 78, reaching its lowest score in a decade. While innovation continues to be a differentiator, the data indicates that satisfaction improves most when new features translate into everyday value without introducing new pain points (for example, performance tradeoffs that reduce battery life).

This year’s results suggest manufacturers are increasingly delivering that balance. AI integration, measured for the first time, scores 85 overall, signaling that customers are not only aware of AI features but find them useful. At the same time, improvements in battery life (up 5% to 81) point to better optimization as devices take on more compute-intensive workloads.

At the company level, Samsung breaks last year’s tie with Apple for customer satisfaction leadership: Samsung scores 81 while Apple posts 80. Google and Motorola both improve year over year but continue trailing the leaders, each earning an ACSI score of 77.

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX
CELL PHONES
0-100 Scale

COMPANY	2025 ACSI	2026 ACSI	% CHANGE
Cell Phones	78	79	1%
Samsung	81	81	0%
Apple	81	80	-1%
Google	75	77	3%
Motorola (Lenovo)	75	77	3%
All Others	68	73	7%

Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026. © 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.

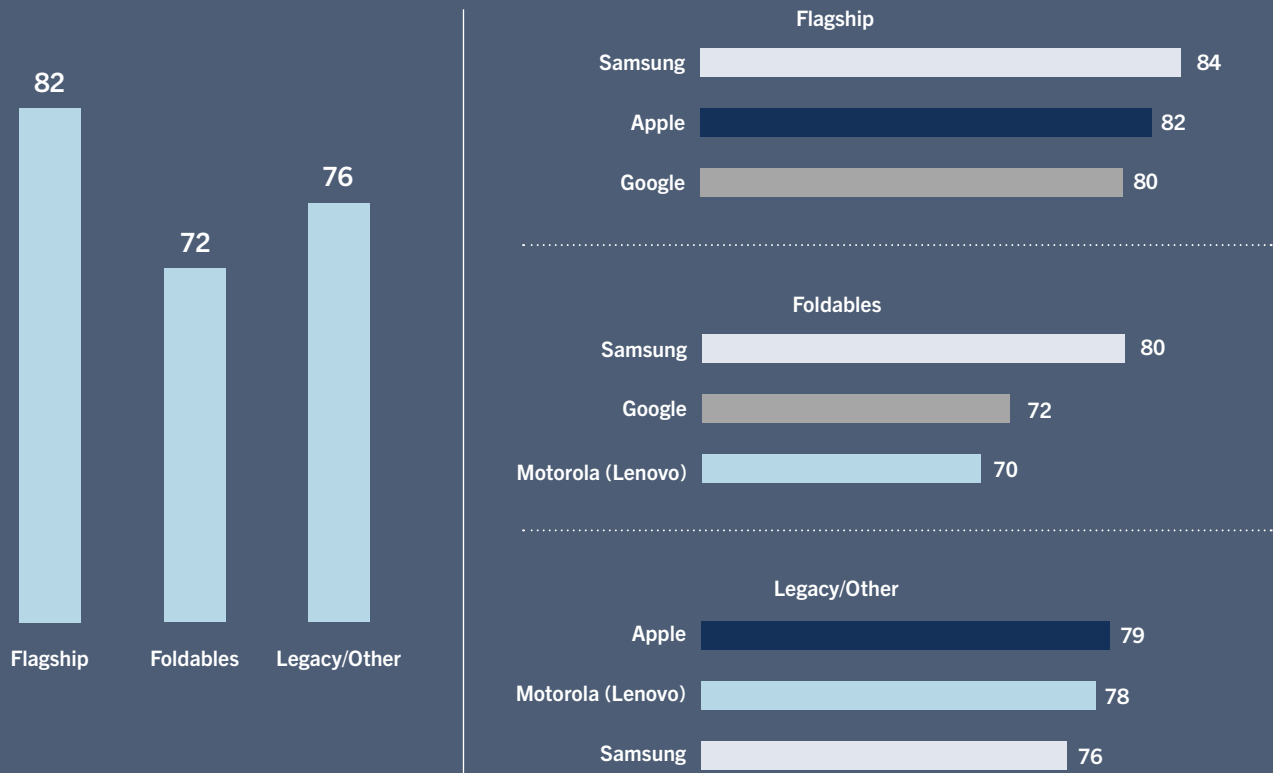
Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

Customer Satisfaction by Model Type

Flagship devices set the satisfaction ceiling for the industry with an overall ACSI score of 82, reflecting stronger performance, higher perceived quality, and more robust ecosystems. Among new flagship owners, Samsung’s newest S-series leads at 84, followed by new iPhone owners at 82. Google’s flagship models score 80, indicating promise but also suggesting that its premium experience still lags the top two leaders.

In the foldable segment, Samsung establishes a clear lead with an ACSI score of 80, which is 8 points ahead of Google (72) and 10 points ahead of Motorola (70). The size of the gap implies that foldable satisfaction is highly sensitive to execution details (durability, display performance, hinge design, and service support), where category experience and iteration cycles can matter. ACSI data indicates that foldable owners are three times as likely to complain than non-foldable owners. Competitive dynamics among foldables may change as Apple’s rumored entry into the foldable space is anticipated for later this year.

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX
CELL PHONES
ACSI by Model Type
0-100 Scale



Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026. © 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.
Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

For the cell phone industry, the highest-rated customer experience metrics this year are the fundamental functions of making phone calls and sending text messages (both score 86). Notably, AI feature performance debuts at 85, nearly matching the top table-stakes interactions, suggesting that AI is moving from novelty to practical utility for many customers.

Several everyday performance and usability measures also strengthen (for example, battery life increases 5% to 81 and speed/ performance rises 4% to 83), reinforcing the idea that consistency and reduced friction are central to satisfaction gains.

Warranty coverage debuts at 80, although scores vary meaningfully by manufacturer.

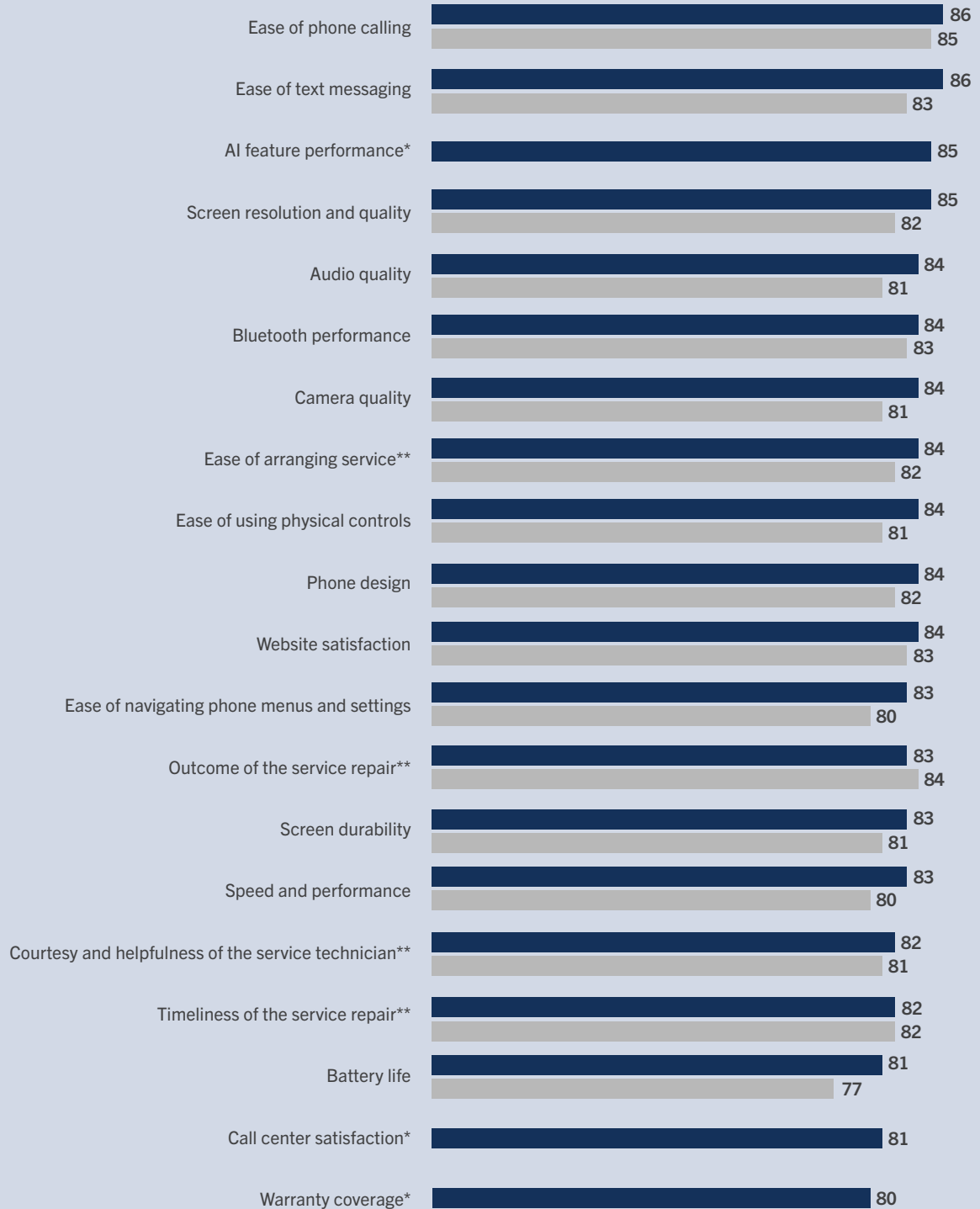
AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX

CELL PHONES

Customer Experience Benchmarks Year-Over-Year Industry Trends

0-100 Scale

2026 2025



*Not measured in 2025.

**Represents manufacturer-provided service only.

Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026. © 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.

Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

SMARTWATCHES

Satisfaction with smartwatches is flat this year at 77, although there is more than meets the eye with this aggregated ACSI score. Brands measured in each of the last two years see very different directional results and enhanced data collection has allowed for the reporting of several brands for the first time.

Newly reported smartwatch brands include Garmin (76), Google Pixel (74), OnePlus (70), and Motorola (69). Meanwhile, among the three brands reported for the past two years, Apple holds steady at 80, while Samsung drops 4% to create a first-place tie. As Google winds down its Fitbit-branded watches, Google Fitbit is the big mover this year, gaining 8% to an overall rating of 78. While the company is now focused on engineering for the Pixel watch and Fitbit trackers, the enhanced satisfaction of Fitbit watch owners likely relates to only the most loyal, and therefore most satisfied, customers remaining.

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX

SMARTWATCHES

0-100 Scale

BRAND	2025 ACSI	2026 ACSI	% CHANGE
Smartwatches	77	77	0%
Apple	80	80	0%
Samsung	83	80	-4%
Google Fitbit	72	78	8%
Garmin	NA	76	NA
Google Pixel	NA	74	NA
All Others	NA	71	NA
OnePlus	NA	70	NA
Motorola (Lenovo)	NA	69	NA

NA = Not Available

Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026. © 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.

Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

Customer experience characteristics of smartwatches are universally rated higher this year at the industry level. The biggest year-over-year increases include ease of navigating menus and settings (+7% to 80), app and accessory connectivity (+5% to 83), battery life (+5% to 80), ease of using physical controls (+5% to 80), ease of text messaging (+5% to 79), and several attributes related to the service experience.

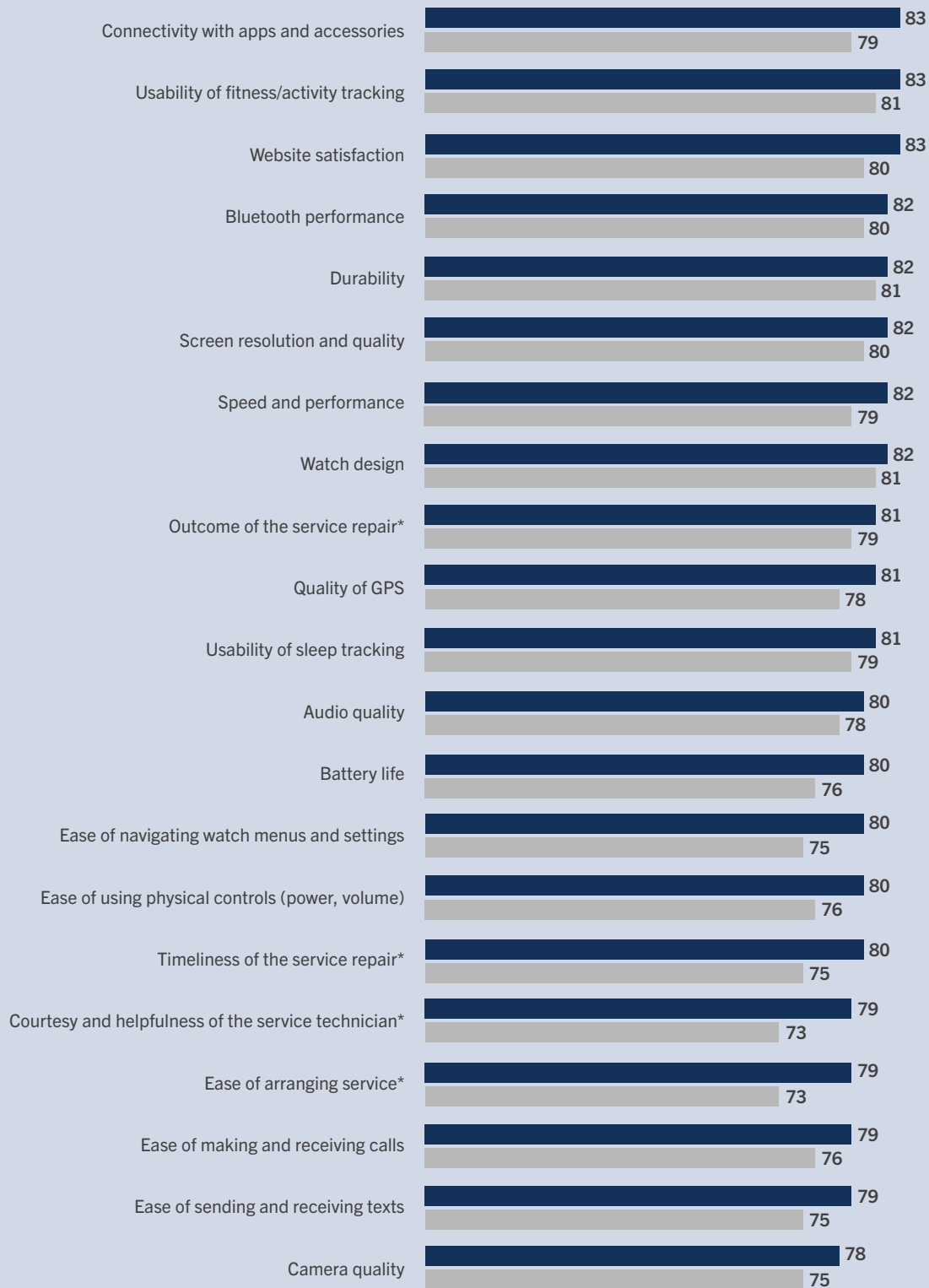
The service experience metrics are particularly encouraging as the gap between smartwatch service and that of cell phones has narrowed considerably.

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX

SMARTWATCHES

Customer Experience Benchmarks Year-Over-Year Industry Trends

0-100 Scale



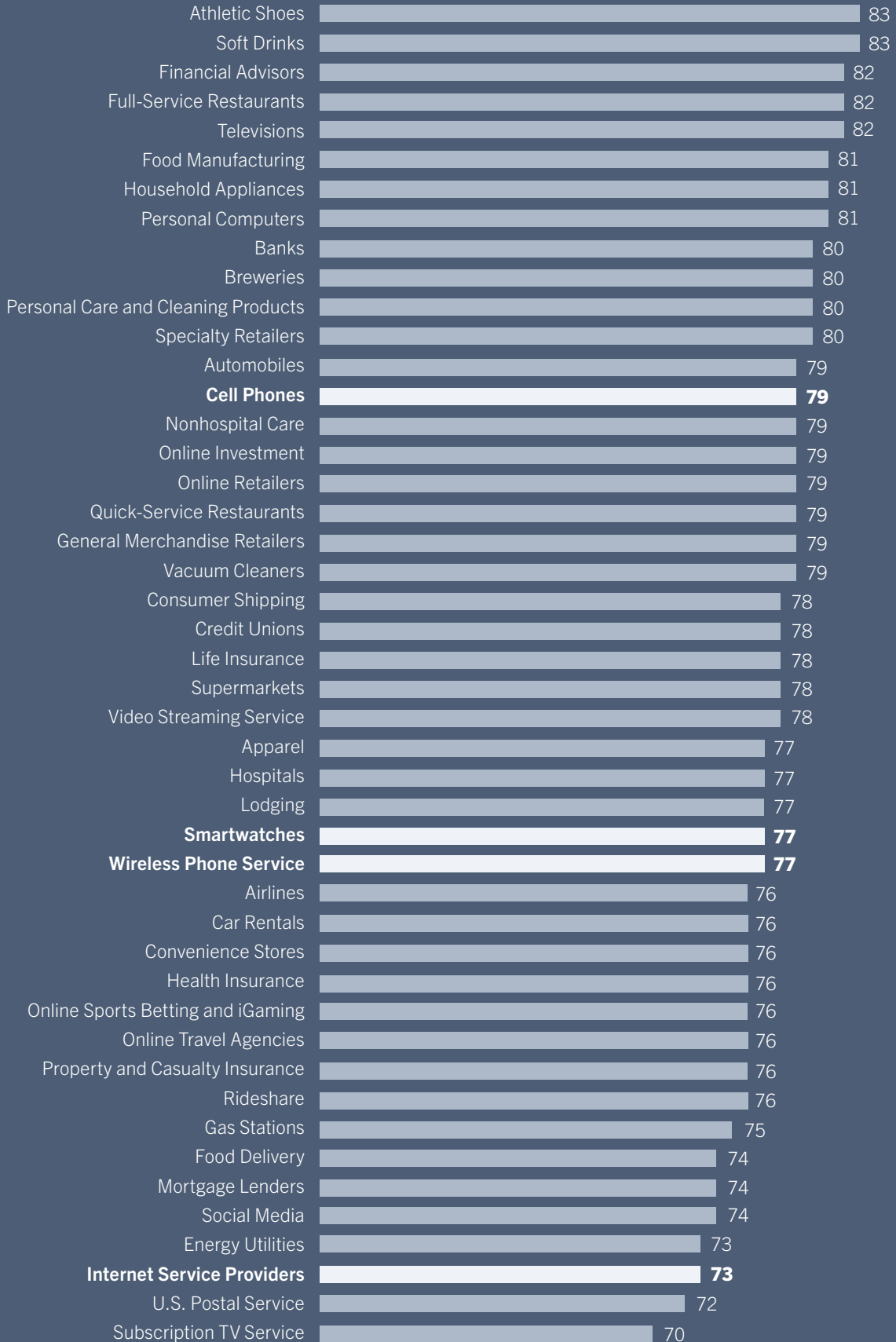
*Represents manufacturer-provided service only.

Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026. © 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.

Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX (ACSI®)
Customer Satisfaction Benchmarks by Industry

0-100 Scale



Source: ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026.

© 2026 American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. All rights reserved.

Charts extracted from this study for media use must include a statement identifying the study of origin and the publisher as the American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC. No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI.

Methodology

The *ACSI Telecommunications, Cell Phone, and Smartwatch Study 2026* is based on 26,963 completed surveys. Customers were chosen at random and contacted via email between April 2025 and March 2026. Customers are asked to evaluate their recent experiences with the largest companies in terms of market share, plus an aggregate category consisting of “all other”—and thus smaller—companies.

ACSI survey data are used as inputs to the Index’s cause-and-effect econometric model, which estimates customer satisfaction as the result of the survey-measured inputs of customer expectations, perceptions of quality, and perceptions of value. The ACSI model, in turn, links customer satisfaction with the survey-measured outcomes of customer complaints and customer loyalty. ACSI clients receive confidential industry-competitive and best-in-class data on all modeled variables and customer experience benchmarks.

About ACSI

The American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI®) is a national economic indicator and a leading provider of customer analytics products that help organizations build lasting customer relationships and prove ROI on experience investments. ACSI’s AI-enhanced platform delivers intuitive dashboards and cause-and-effect analytics that pinpoint the quality drivers most predictive of customer allegiance, retention, price tolerance, and financial performance. ACSI data has been shown to correlate strongly with key micro and macroeconomic indicators, including consumer spending, GDP growth, earnings, and stock returns.

Founded in 1994 at the University of Michigan’s Ross School of Business, the ACSI measures customer satisfaction with more than 400 companies in over 40 industries, including federal government services, based on approximately 200,000 annual interviews.

Contact Information

For more information regarding this study; the telecommunications, cell phone, and smartwatch industries; and how the ACSI can help your company harness the power of customer satisfaction to improve your bottom line, visit www.theacsi.org or contact:

ACSI LLC | 4750 Venture Drive | Suite 400 | Ann Arbor, MI 48108

Phone: (734) 913-0788 | E-mail: info@theacsi.org

ACSI and its logo are Registered Marks of American Customer Satisfaction Index LLC.

No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the data and information in this study without the express prior written consent of ACSI LLC.

