Verizon 5g Home Routers

Background

In early 2018, Verizon announced plans to be first-to-market in the consumer home 5G race. In the fourth quarter that year, the company began introducing 5G in several test markets: Houston, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, and Sacramento.

To evaluate the rollout, SignalFrame’s Verizon 5G Case Study looks at 5G router adoption in each of the four test markets. It leverages crowdsourced signal scans from SignalFrame’s panel of SDK-enabled smartphones that detect new routers within each city as they appear. The data reveals a relatively even and stable initial rollout across all markets during the first two months. Momentum subsequently shifted from four cities to three, and then eventually to just one market (Indianapolis), which ended up with nearly as many 5G routers deployed as the other cities combined.
2018 – Early 5G adoption by market

The first Verizon 5G routers were deployed in the two California test markets, Sacramento and Los Angeles, in mid-August 2018. About a month later, on September 12, routers also began to appear in Indianapolis and Houston. By the end of October, Indianapolis and Sacramento became the leading markets for 5G home routers (127 and 146 respectively), while Los Angeles and Houston lagged slightly behind (90 routers each).

For the remainder of 2018, Indianapolis gradually emerged as the leading 5G test market (574 units), while the emphasis on Los Angeles dissipated (177 units). Houston and Sacramento ended the year with nearly the same distribution of 5G routers (435 and 441).

Early 2019 – California lags

By the end of February 2019, both Houston and Indianapolis had more 5G routers than either Sacramento and Los Angeles.
March 2019 – Delivery spike

Verizon’s 5G footprint had the single biggest expansion on March 1st. The network grew by 18%, including a 23% increase in Indianapolis (from 1559 to 1919 deployed units). Just over a week later, deployments spiked again, increasing by 22% from March 10 to March 13. By the end of March, there were 7,628 routers deployed across the four test markets, up from 3,967 at the beginning of the month.

June 4 and 5, 2019 – Next wave

Through April and May, Verizon’s 5G router network steadily grew by around a half percent daily. Then, over two days on June 4th and 5th, another 8.6% spike occurred. While Los Angeles still lagged behind the other test markets, it saw the greatest relative increase (nearly 13%, from 745 to 841). June ended with a 36.5% increase in 5G adoption across the four test cities, from 10,313 to 14,078 units.

Continuing summer surge in Indianapolis and Houston

After experiencing growth in June 2019, the Los Angeles market lost momentum through the summer, practically plateauing by September. By the end of September 2019, Los Angeles had 1,327 deployed Verizon 5G home routers. Conversely, Indianapolis maintained the strongest adoption rate, with the 5G network more than doubling from 4,387 in June to 9,106 units by the end of September. Adoption in Houston also continued at a rapid rate, with a 114% increase (from 3,070 to 6,562 routers) over the same period. Sacramento nearly doubled its 5G router network from June through September, increasing from 2,129 to 4,190 deployed units.
5G in the future

As of today, over a year after Verizon’s initial rollout in the four test markets, SignalFrame has seen nearly twenty thousand Verizon 5G home routers. Verizon’s ambition for 5G in every US home still has a long way to go. Whether Verizon stays the course, expands, or revises its strategy around consumer home 5G, SignalFrame’s data will be the first to know.