

## **HOW DO I GET THE MOST CELLULAR SERVICE FOR THE LEAST AMOUNT OF MONEY?**

### **VOICE**

#### **1. Choose the “right” voice plan**

- Carriers offer a variety of flat rate voice plans. For many users, the basic plan offers more than enough minutes. Additional minutes cost more than the included minutes. You can change your voice plan as your usage changes.

#### **2. Review your bill month and adjust your voice plans as necessary.**

- If your usage changes, change your voice plan if the usage change will happen the next month and the change in minutes used is large enough to impact the total charge. E.g. your monthly plan includes 250 minutes for \$20, the next plan includes 450 minutes for \$32 and additional minutes cost \$0.10 on both plans. If you are using more than 250 minutes but less than 370 minutes, choose the 250 minute plan. If you are using more than 370 minutes, then choose the 450 minute plan.

#### **3. Consider pooling voice minutes with other users on the same account.**

- If you and others on the same cellular account usually use most or all of the included minutes or some use very few minutes while others use more than the included minutes, pooling could reduce overage charges. E.g. 10 lines on the same account each have 250 minutes for a total of 2500 minutes. There would be no additional charges as long as the total voice usage doesn't exceed 2500 minutes.

#### **4. Roaming (i.e. using your phone outside Canada)**

- If you travel infrequently and/or won't be using your phone much, consider a roaming package. Voice roaming packages will usually include a number of international text messages.
- If you travel frequently and/or use your phone a lot, buy a local SIM card. This requires an unlocked cellular phone. You can purchase an unlocked device or arrange with your carrier to unlock your phone. If you don't require data services, another alternative is to buy an inexpensive local phone.
- If you have access to free or inexpensive WiFi or inexpensive local data, use Skype.
- *Track your usage either using applications native to your device or through apps that are available through the stores associated with your device.*

### **TEXT**

#### **1. Determine how many text messages are included with your voice plan.**

- a. Most voice plans include some text messaging and may include unlimited text messaging. Check with your carrier to see how many text messages are included and the cost for additional text messages. If necessary, add the appropriate text messaging plan to your line. Remember that international text messages are *not* included.

#### **2. Roaming (i.e. using your phone outside Canada)**

- If you have added a Voice roaming package, it will usually include a limited number of international text messages.

## **DATA**

### **1. Choose the “right” data plan**

- Carriers offer a variety of flat rate data plans. Carriers often have separate data plans for BlackBerry users. Some plans include tethering (i.e. using your device as a hotspot); others do not. Determine what costs, if any, you will incur if you tether. Additional data usage is usually very expensive.

### **2. Review your bill month and adjust your voice plans as necessary.**

- If your usage changes, change your data plan if the usage change will happen the next month and the change in megabytes or gigabytes (GB) used is large enough to impact the total charge.

### **3. Consider pooling data usage with other users on the same account.**

- If you and others on the same cellular account usually use most or all of the included MB or GB or some use very few minutes while others use more than the included MB or GB, pooling could reduce overage charges.

### **4. Roaming (i.e. using data outside Canada)**

- Turn off “data roaming” and cellular data when you leave Canada. This prevents background data usage. You can turn these back on when/if you need to use cellular data.
- If you travel infrequently and/or won’t be using your device for much data, consider a roaming package. Even with a roaming package, data roaming is expensive.
- If you travel frequently and/or use your phone a lot, buy a local SIM card. This requires an unlocked cellular phone. You can purchase an unlocked device or arrange with your carrier to unlock your phone.
- *Track your usage either using applications native to your device or through apps that are available through the stores associated with your device.*