

TEAM 6 PROJECT ASSIGNMENT 2 - COMPANY ANALYSIS

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Executive Summary

Verizon, T-Mobile, and AT&T have all made progress on sustainability, with efforts focused on clean energy, social impact, and reducing their environmental footprint. But while they've each taken steps in the right direction, their reputation with stakeholders has taken a hit, mostly because of past issues around data privacy. T-Mobile has stood out for hitting 100% renewable energy use across its operations by 2021. AT&T has focused more on climate resilience, creating tools that help communities prepare for extreme weather. All three carriers are also working on becoming more energy-efficient and reducing waste, showing commitment to social and environmental responsibility. That said, all three companies were fined in recent years for sharing customer location data with third parties without proper consent. This raised some concerns about how seriously they take ethical responsibility and shook the trust of many stakeholders. In short, while Verizon, T-Mobile, and AT&T are clearly investing in sustainability and social impact, they're also working to rebuild trust after past missteps. Their long-term leadership in the industry will depend on how well they balance innovation with accountability.

Sustainability Reporting

AT&T's sustainability website features a Corporate Responsibility component that includes a Reporting Hub. In accordance with guidelines such as GRI, SASB, TCFD, and CDP, they provide an annual Sustainability Summary and comprehensive issue briefs, and corporate responsibility reports ([AT&T - Corporate Responsibility - Corporate Responsibility Reports](#)). Verizon's ESG Resources Hub centralizes sustainability disclosures. Their 2023 ESG Report provides information on social and environmental performance, including renewable goals and greenhouse gas emissions. Their ESG reports are published annually, they also do a press release

on their sustainability milestones ([Verizon ESG Report 2023](#)). T-Mobile's "Our Planet" section includes comprehensive environmental content and a Corporate Responsibility Reporting Hub. They comply with SBTi, CDP, SASB, and GRI standards. T-mobile publishes their annual corporate sustainability report. They have been consistent from 2020-2023.([T-Mobile 2023 Corporate Responsibility Report](#)).

Sustainability's Role in the Company

Evaluating AT&T, Verizon, and T-Mobile's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) reports, each company implements sustainability in different approaches, considering the various avenues of strategic priorities and systematic integration. AT&T positions sustainability as a fundamental aspect of its business plans, emphasizing environmental and social responsibility as critical for risk management, cost effectiveness, and profitable expansion. According to the AT&T report, the company emphasizes the connection between sustainability, strategic planning, and company procedures, consisting of objectives such as carbon neutral by 2035 and using technology to help other industries minimize their emissions. This strategy emphasizes sustainability as an imperative need and a chance for innovation, which is mirrored in the executive supervision and ESG focused governance frameworks (Connecting People to Greater Possibility, 2024).

The next company evaluated is Verizon and the company incorporates sustainability with its business plan in a similar way, but it emphasizes technology as the primary force for impact.

According to Verizon's ESG report, sustainability is critical to upholding robust networks and assisting clients with their sustainability objectives. The company describes how its fiber and 5G networks are meant to contribute to a decrease in energy consumption and pollution in society. Verizon emphasizes sustainability as part of its innovation concept and differentiation in products, in contrast to AT&T, which more openly links sustainability to business culture and efficiency in operations. Furthermore, as a way to demonstrate Verizon's belief that sustainability is a strategic and monetary possibility, the report also illustrates how its sustainability tactic is connected to financial methods, such as the issuance of \$6 billion in green bonds (Verizon ESG Report, 2023).

The final company evaluated is T-Mobile and their CSR largely serves to strengthen the company's reputation and relationships with its clientele. Although T-Mobile reached a significant achievement by obtaining all of its electricity from renewable energy sources, the report views these initiatives as a component of a larger pledge to be an "Un-carrier", which is characterized by ethical business conduct. T-Mobile's sustainability plan seems to be less integrated into its main financial and operations plan besides AT&T and Verizon. However, the focus is on business leadership through observable environmental objectives, public image building, and public agreements. T-Mobile's accomplishments are impressive, but they are portrayed mainly as claims of the company's principles than as strategic plans for future business transformation or cost control (T-Mobile 2023 Corporate Responsibility Report).

Ultimately, comparing and contrasting the three companies, the view that CSR performance is intrinsically linked and reflected in AT&T's sustainability strategy, which is the most thoroughly incorporated with risk management and operational effectiveness. Furthermore, Verizon links sustainability to product development and funding, presenting it by the means of

the perspective of technology innovation and market leadership. T-Mobile shows its dedication to sustainability by presenting it as a component of stakeholder involvement and brand distinction, but it makes less references of how these procedures impact its business objectives or future financial performance. By this comparison, all three businesses acknowledge the value of sustainability, but they incorporate it into their plans in distinctive methods that are consistent with their company identities and their competitive objectives.

Social or Environmental Emphasis

AT&T and T - Mobile shows a balanced approach in terms of Social and Environmental sustainability as compared to Verizon where the company is more focused on environmental sustainability as shown in their sustainability reports. AT&T aims at lowering greenhouse gas emissions from the company's operations and assisting their business clients in lessening their environmental impact by leveraging their connectivity. Verizon and AT & T are focused on achieving a net zero greenhouse gas by 2035.

Here are examples of some of the company's achievements and aspirations in relation to environmental sustainability. By 2023, AT&T wants all of its operations worldwide to be carbon neutral, which includes a 63% decrease in direct and indirect (scope 1: direct emissions from sources owned by the company and scope 2: indirect emissions from electricity purchases) emissions by 2030 as compared to their baseline from 2015 (AT&T, n.d.). Verizon wants to get all of its electricity from renewable sources by 2030 and has established a science-based goal to achieve net-zero operational greenhouse gas emissions (Scope 1 and 2) by 2035. Verizon recovered or reused almost 47 million pounds of e-waste in 2023(Verizon,2024). Since 2019, the corporation has issued around US \$6 billion in green bonds, mostly to fund renewable energy

projects(Verizon, 2024). By the end of 2023, its market-based operational emissions had decreased by 44%, and 34.4% of its electricity came from renewable sources (Verizon,2024). Whereas T-mobile aims at achieving a net zero in 2040. As part of it's goals to reach net zero emissions by 2040, T-mobile reduced its overall scope 1,2,and 3 greenhouse gas emissions by 30% between 2020 and 2023, sourced all of its electricity from renewable sources, increased energy efficiency by 62% per petabyte of data traffic, and collected over 10 million devices for recycling (T-mobile, 2024, pp. 4-6)

In terms of Social sustainability, AT&T established Integrated Education Units that provide internet connection, laptops, and digital skills training while T-mobile allocated 4.4 million teaching hours, provided education help, and expended \$3.1 billion on varied providers; Also,Verizon Facilitates workforce enhancement, wellness initiatives, and internal diversity, equity, and inclusion endeavors. In comparing all these three examples it can be concluded that AT&T, Verizon and T-mobile are well invested in giving back to society through learning a skill or supporting educational needs. Educating the people is a better key to transforming the community. From the ESG reports, Verizon and AT&T promote diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) through corporate training, supplier diversity, and recruiting goals.

Stakeholder Criticisms/Negative Publicity

In today's day and age, it is imperative that customers' privacy and security are of major importance. For this reason, the actions of major wireless carriers are being investigated with a very fine-tooth comb. Many companies are investing large amounts of money to make sure they

have top-of-the-line services to prevent any hackers illegally accessing data or any data leaks from happening. Unfortunately, not much can be done when some of these companies voluntarily provide third parties with their customers' information. This is exactly what happened with the 4 big wireless carriers: Sprint, AT&T, Verizon, and T-Mobile. Without letting their customers be aware or without their consent, they shared data regarding their customers' online shopping habits, among other sensitive data. We are going to go over exactly what led to this, and what penalties the FCC imposed on them because of these violations.

The Federal Communications Commission regulates interstate and international communication by all forms available, through wire, radio, television, cable and satellite. Their involvement in this investigation was several years and investigated how these wireless carriers shared real time location data without the consent of the consumers. The investigation began in 2018 and was extended until 2020 after most of the needed information was collected. They deduced that these carriers violated Section 222 of the Communications Act regarding the Customer Proprietary Network information, that also includes regulating the sharing of location information. This section states that these carriers are legally required to be careful not to disclose customer location data and are required to obtain their consent before sharing any of this information.

This mistake was costly to all four providers. Each of the carriers had a set fine imposed based on the gravity of their violations. For example, T-Mobile(formerly Sprint) was fined a total of \$80 million, while AT&T was fined a total of \$57million for its violations. The "lightest" fine was given to Verizon with a grand total of \$47 million for its damages. The basis of each fine was imposed based on how long each of these carriers decided to continue sharing the customers' location data after they were specifically told it was an illegal act. T-Mobile

continued sharing customers' information 386 days after it had been told it was illegal, earning the heaviest fine. AT&T and Verizon both continued sharing the data after 320 days of being informed. Clearly they were not intending on stopping this action until the fines were imposed on them.

The three companies sold the customers' location information to companies called aggregators, who turned around and resold this data to other service providers that provide services based on customers' locations. The interesting part was that the phone carriers mainly passed on the responsibility for consent to these third parties, which obviously were not very keen on getting the customers' consent. Even after several attempts to let them know that what they were doing was illegal they didn't worry too much about applying any security measures to ensure the customers' data and information was safe. The neglect on behalf of these carriers caused a wave of incidents that affected millions of their customers.

In one instance a Sheriff in Missouri accessed data that included the location via an application called Securus, a "location finding service". Other investigations exposed the fact that certain aggregator applications allowed anyone to track any of their users. This raised alarms regarding security and safety. Exposing this data is considered especially dangerous according to the FCC. The Enforcement Bureau also agreed with this statement because they reiterated that if this information fell into the wrong hands, it would pose a risk to all customers involved.

The carriers expressed that they would be fighting these fines, claiming that they can't control what the aggregators did with the information they had. They also claimed that the carriers' intent was for positive services like roadside assistance and fraud protection as well as other convenient features.

The fines that the FCC implemented against the big three carriers display the importance of making sure consumer data remains private. As time goes on, consumer data will be more valuable than ever, and sadly it will be vulnerable as well. This situation serves as a reminder that consumer data must be private and this is a necessity, not a want. This brings light to the importance of regulation by the FCC of companies that handle information like this.

Stakeholder Endorsements/Recognition/Positive Publicity

Verizon is the best at performance, AT&T has the best general ESG reliability, and T-Mobile has the most inclusive and moral culture. In terms of stakeholder prioritization AT&T will be suited with investors (AT&T), environmental regulators (Verizon), or an inclusive and moral workforce (T-Mobile). These will determine their choices. Regulators and investors who are concerned about sustainability recognize Verizon as the industry leader in environmental sustainability. AT&T expands its value to communities and investors by striking a balance between its environmental plan and high external reputation through ratings and adaptability awards. T-Mobile is a leader in workplace ethics and culture, appealing to ethical customers, DEI supporters, and employees. This influences stakeholders' decisions.

In terms of awards and recognition, AT&T and T-mobile both have earned CDP A-list for environmental transparency and climate change respectively. Due to its excellent environmental disclosure and strategy, AT&T received its top score of A from CDP for climate leadership while Verizon's recurring awards show better performance in operations. According to 3BL Media (2022), AT&T was recognized as a sustainability leader for its corporate responsibility efforts. AT&T also earned the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Citizens Award for its climate risk and resilience work, signaling strong community impact (AT&T, 2024). Verizon

is a leader in operational energy conservation because of its RE100 pledge and continuous ENERGY STAR awards. Additionally, T-Mobile received specialized EU-level ESG storytelling awards, showcasing their global environmental reach.

In terms of disaster response, community resilience, and general social responsibility, AT&T received excellent ratings (Fortune's Telecom rankings) while Verizon was also recognized with the RippleMatch Campus Forward Award for its efforts in inclusive hiring and support for emerging talent (RippleMatch, 2025). Verizon prioritizes diversity in hiring, as seen by Campus Forward awards, which are less visible to consumers but strategically important in internal DEI. Verizon was also recognized for its superiority in stakeholder strategy and innovation by winning the Frost & Sullivan Competitive Strategy Leadership Award (Verizon, 2024b). With impeccable Human Right Campaign scores and Ethisphere ethical recognition, T-Mobile excels in workplace equality and ethics, demonstrating a solid corporate culture (T-mobile, 2020).

Sustainability Leadership in the Company's Industry

When it comes to sustainability, AT&T, Verizon, and T-Mobile each lead in different ways. None of them are perfect across the board, but each company brings something unique to the table. What stands out most is how their priorities and innovation styles shape their impact, especially around environmental and social performance.

T-Mobile has set the standard on renewable energy. As of 2023, they're running on

100% renewable electricity across all their U.S. operations: stores, call centers, and even their entire network (T-Mobile, 2023). Neither Verizon nor AT&T has fully hit that mark yet. Both are aiming for net-zero emissions by 2035, but they're still in the process of transitioning their energy sources (Verizon, 2023; AT&T, 2025). That said, AT&T is doing something different: they've partnered with Argonne National Lab to launch ClimRR, a tool that helps cities and communities prepare for things like floods, droughts, and extreme weather. It's less about reducing emissions and more about helping others adapt to the climate crisis, which is still a big deal (AT&T, 2025; Argonne National Lab, n.d.).

On the social side, Verizon stands out for the size and reach of its education programs. Their Innovative Learning initiative has given free internet access and devices to over 3 million students and teachers across the U.S. (Verizon, 2023). T-Mobile has a similar program, Project 10 Million, which supports low-income students, but its reach is a bit smaller, though still impactful (T-Mobile, 2023). Meanwhile, AT&T has been focusing more on equity within its own company. Over half of its U.S. employees are people of color, and it's made some of the strongest internal diversity commitments in the industry (AT&T, 2025).

What's interesting is how each company shows leadership in different ways. T-Mobile has woven sustainability into its brand, it even got listed on the Dow Jones Sustainability Index North America for the first time in 2023 (S&P Dow Jones Indices, 2024). Verizon has taken a finance-driven approach by issuing over \$5 billion in green bonds to fund clean energy projects (Smart Energy Decisions, 2023). AT&T hasn't been quite as bold with new initiatives, but it's been one of the most transparent companies when it comes to ESG disclosures. They align their reporting with SASB and TCFD frameworks, which helps investors and the public track their progress more easily (CarbonCredits, 2025)

Overall, T-Mobile is leading the industry on clean energy and emissions. Verizon stands out for its long-term investments in people and sustainability financing. AT&T leads in climate risk innovation and transparency. Each company is doing something worth paying attention to, and the competition between them is pushing the whole industry to do better.

Conclusion

In Conclusion, although their priorities differ, all three telecommunications incorporate social and environmental sustainability. Verizon commits to supporting social initiatives and places a strong emphasis on environmental sustainability. AT&T offers ambitious promises and has excellent balance in both areas. T-Mobile is excellent in terms of dual performance because it leads with noticeable, significant action in both areas. Strong transparency was demonstrated by AT&T and T-Mobile's CDP A-list status, while Verizon's ongoing accolades show better operational performance. In terms of stakeholder criticisms, what was evidenced in this situation was the clash between the need for monetizing data and the need for consumer privacy. This article also explained how the need for strong and sufficient safeguards is a requirement because offloading these to vendors can become a major liability in the long run. Another aspect that was highlighted was the need to see how the FCC and the FTC could clash regarding jurisdictional power.

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