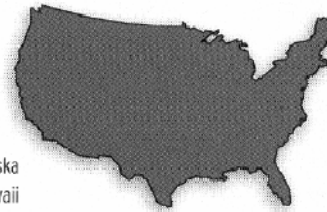


National coverage? Not quite.

These five cellular providers claim coast-to-coast or nationwide coverage, but that can be misleading. Colored areas of the maps, drawn using data from a trade association, show each carrier's licensed home area, where you can call without roaming charges—if, that is, you can get a signal. In fact, some providers don't have towers throughout their licensed areas, but they may provide service in some locales through roaming arrangements with other carriers. Carriers don't have licenses in white areas but may offer service there, again through reciprocal agreements.



- Alaska
- Hawaii

Sprint

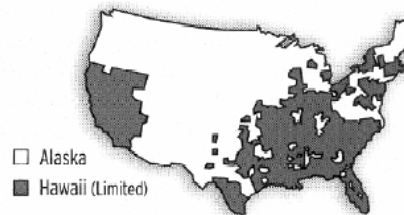
On paper, this is a nationwide network "reaching more than 230 million people." However, Sprint has not yet built the towers needed to provide service everywhere in the U.S.



- Alaska
- Hawaii

AT&T Wireless

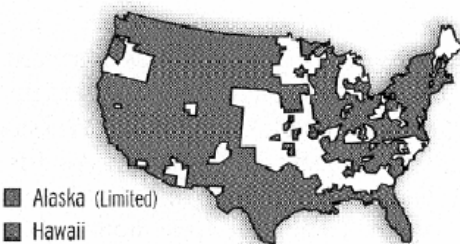
Now a separate company from AT&T long distance, AT&T Wireless has cellular service through much of the U.S. However, it has no home service for the Northern Plains states.



- Alaska
- Hawaii (Limited)

Cingular

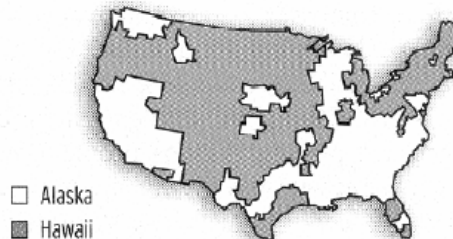
A joint venture of SBC and BellSouth, Cingular says it's "the second largest wireless company in the U.S.," serving 21.2 million customers in 38 states and the District of Columbia. But it actually has licenses only in a small geographic area. Denver, Minneapolis, New York, and Seattle are among the cities not licensed.



- Alaska (Limited)
- Hawaii

Verizon

The company bills itself as "the largest wireless communications provider in the U.S., with more than 28 million voice and data customers." It can rightly claim "coast-to-coast" coverage, but with gaps along the way—including a large swath of the Great Plains and the South.



- Alaska
- Hawaii

VoiceStream

Created through a merger with Deutsche Telekom and VoiceStream Wireless Corp., the company says it's "the nation's fastest-growing provider of all-digital personal communications services." As of mid-2001, it had some 6 million customers in 59 cities. But, like Sprint, it has not built towers to provide service in all areas.