

Renens, 28.11.2017

November Network Update

How Disconnected is Connect?

Last week, Salt was lauded for its significant progress in terms of 4G availability – almost 10% increase between May and November 2017, reaching a level of 78,8% in OpenSignal's latest Mobile Networks Update for Switzerland. Salt is proud of that result.

To learn today that Connect has decided to rate Salt's network with "good" comes as a big surprise and generates incomprehension at Salt. Obviously, there is a clear disconnect between what Connect is measuring and customers' everyday network experience. Also, there appears to be several flaws with the test:

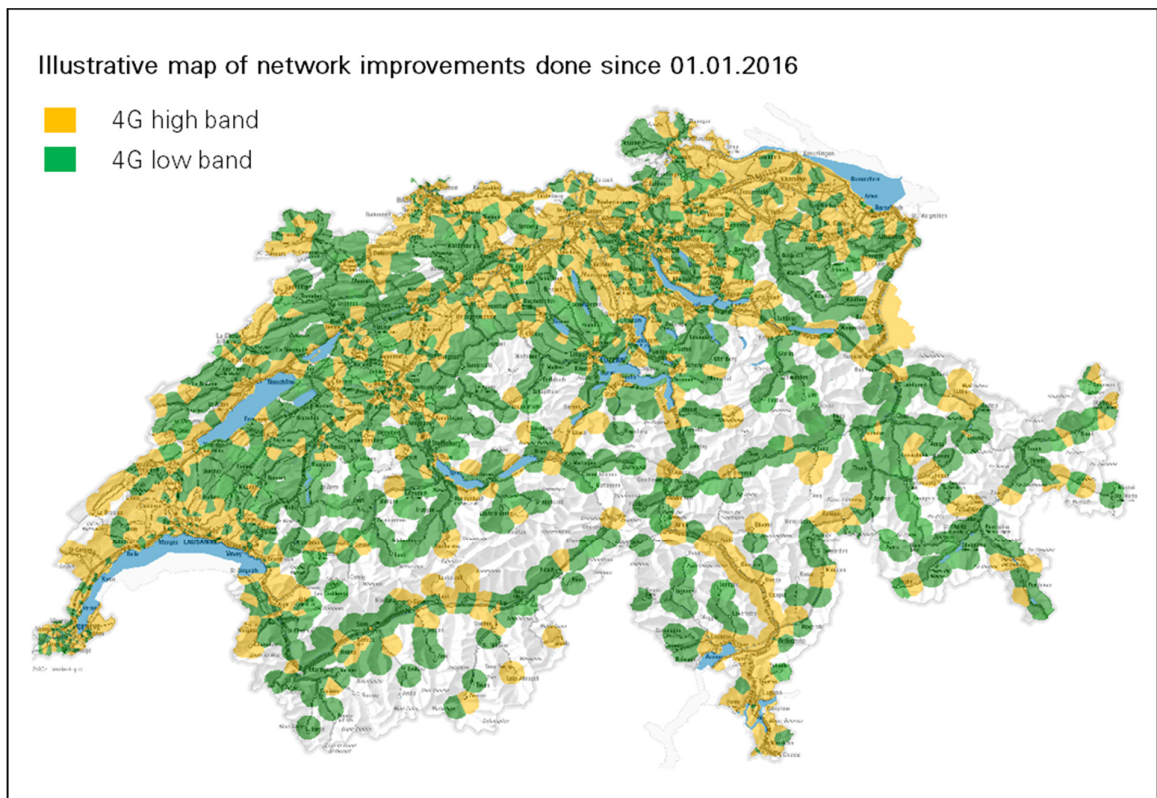
- Connect allocates a disproportionately high amount of points to Voice over LTE (VoLTE), a technology which is marginal for customer experience and was exclusively measured intra-network for this occasion;
- Connect is lacking any crowdtesting component, which over the last 12 months has rapidly established itself as the new standard of network testing;
- Connect is lacking metrics covering indoor coverage, which is where mobile users spend most of their time;
- Connect does not consider the question of volume and/or speed limitations, which is a key differentiating factor in the Swiss mobile landscape with Salt being the only operator providing unrestricted access to 4G+ – without any speed or volume limitations – to its entire customer base.

As of 2015, Salt insourced all its network operations from several external partners. With the newfound entrepreneurial spirit and a long term view, the company fundamentally changed its approach and immediately engaged in a long-term expansion plan which includes significant investments in optimizing all operations. In particular, in 2016 and 2017, Salt invested massively in the network to improve service for its clients.

These investments mainly take place along three dimensions: continuous **rollout of low band** equipped antenna sites, **carrier aggregation**, and the **upgrade of Salt's core network**.

In 2016, more than 613 network rollout operations, with a focus on new sites and low band deployment, were performed on the entire Salt network. For the first nine months of 2017, this figure adds up to 674. This has allowed Salt to reach a 4G population coverage of 97% as of September 2017, increase substantially the indoor coverage (+8,6% in 2016 and a further +4,4% in the first nine month of 2017) and reach a penetration rate of 40% for 3G/4G low-band sites as of September 2017. The successful roll out of low band equipped antenna sites in turn, allowed to multiply the instances of carrier aggregation and improved significantly the availability of Salt's 4G+ network, which is now reaching 50% of Switzerland's population. This technology allows all Salt customers to benefit from download speeds of up to 300 Mbps – without any volume or speed limitations whatsoever.

The customer experience of all customers is always at the forefront of Salt's concerns – irrespective of the subscription they have. Consequently, many Salt customers have repeatedly confirmed that their network experience has improved significantly over the last two years as illustrated recently in OpenSignal and Kassensturz last year.



Salt increased its 4G coverage by almost 10% according to the latest report by OpenSignal. Above, all rollout operations performed on Salt's network since January 2016 on either low band or high band frequencies.

Andreas Schönenberger, CEO of Salt Mobile SA: « Connect gave Salt's network a lower ranking in 2017 vs. 2016. In light of the investments we have put in our Network infrastructure in 2016 and 2017, this is above all, an attack to our staff who are on the ground every day, to our suppliers in Switzerland and to our customers. It is somewhat surprising to see that the two operators which pay additional fees for Connect's services have won the test ex aequo and both receive the score "outstanding". To have the same German private company deciding how measures are done, what coefficients are used and the way the measurements are presented does not correspond to our industry's best practice. This is particularly striking as there are various examples of relevant Quality of Service (QoS) campaigns organised in other countries such as the United Kingdom and France. In those countries, methodology is transparently discussed between the operators and the measurements are entrusted to an impartial non-commercial national organization ».

Of course, Salt will continue to deploy its network improvement strategy over the next 12 months and beyond.

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About Salt Mobile SA: With Plus (Start, Basic, Swiss, Europe, World), Young and Surf, Salt offers personal, straightforward and efficient flat rate subscriptions for everyone. Salt's mobile network has been rated "very good" by Connect magazine and in a study performed by SIQT in 2017, its customer service was given the mention "best customer care" for both the pre- & postpaid category. At up to 300 Mbps and no extra costs, Salt customers can surf on the fastest available internet connection (4G+) – without any speed or volume limitations. Salt Mobile SA in figures: 1.203 million postpaid customers (as of 31/12/2016), 88 Salt Stores and 4G coverage of 97% of Switzerland's population. Salt Mobile SA is fully owned by NJJ.