



## CONTENTS

- 1 Who is The Wireless Wizard? 7**
  - Why does he hates wires? 7
  - Where did all these questions come from? 8
  - What can The Wireless Wizard teach you? 8
  
- 2 A brief history of, well, a brief history 9**
  - How did The Titanic disaster lead to a worldwide movement promoting the use of wireless? 10
  - How did WWII walkie-talkies lead to today's wireless? 10
  - Why were waiting lines sometimes years long to get a mobile telephone, when the technology was so antiquated? 12
  - What was the big improvement that we might laugh at today? 13
  - Why is advanced better than improved? 13
  - What is the Public Switched Telephone Network & why do we need it? 14
  
- 3 What makes this mysterious radio stuff work? 15**
  - What can The Beach Boys and country lakes teach us about how radio waves work? 15
  - Who was Mr. Hertz (not the rental car guy) and why did we name the measurement of radio frequencies in his honor? 16
  - But why do I see initials in front of the "Hz" abbreviation and what do they mean? 17
  - Why are there so many different divisions on a spectrum chart – and what do they all mean? 17
  - Why are pagers, two-way radios & wireless phones like traveling on one-way streets, express lanes and interstate highways? 18
  - How can light bulbs and flashlights help us understand the way that radio signals are transmitted? 20
  
- 4 How do wireless systems work, anyway? 21**
  - What does your favorite FM radio station teach you about the next advancement in mobile phone technology? 21
  - So keeping the transmission area small is what makes wireless phone systems work? 22
  - I don't get it ... How do you increase capacity by decreasing the size of cells? 22
  - What does hand-off mean, and how often does it happen? 23
  - What really happens when I turn on my phone? 23
  - How does the system know where I am? 24
  - How does it let me place a call? 25
  - How did the "Send" button get such a silly name? 25
  - What does the send button actually do? 25
  - How does a call get to me? 26
  - Why won't the phone work in some places? Can't companies just put up another tower when they need to? 26

**5 What are the components of a wireless system? 28**

What's in a cell site? 28

OK, wireless is cool, but the world is shifting to the Internet. Is that going to change the wireless business, too? 31

How can shipping a car from New York to Los Angeles teach us the difference between a circuit switched and packet data connection? 32

What's the difference between analog, CDMA & TDMA technologies? 34

**6 What's the difference between services, standards, and technologies? Why is it important? 37**

How can you win a bet with your boss and prove that everyone refers to standards, incorrectly, as GSM, TDMA, and CDMA? 37

So why is it so incorrect that everyone in the wireless industry refers to GSM, TDMA, and CDMA as standards? 39

Why isn't there a worldwide standard – or at least a worldwide frequency that all wireless phones work on? 39

**7 What makes the wireless industry tick? 40**

If the industry is already so successful, where will all the future users come from? 40

I don't get it – Why is coverage so lousy in some places? Can't the wireless companies just put up another tower site where they need one? 40

Why does the government get involved in regulating some of the stuff? 41

What is churn, and why is it so important for wireless companies to avoid it? 43

If some countries already have 25%–50% penetration, from where is the future growth for the wireless industry going to come? 44

I've heard some people talking about "3G". What does that mean? Should it be important to me? 45

**8 What's next? Is my wireless phone ever going to become obsolete? Will newer technologies take over? 46**

I hear a lot of talk about satellite services. Does the wireless industry use them now? 46

Has anyone thought about providing Internet access via wireless? Is that what LMDS is all about? 47

**9 The Wizard's Apprentice 48**

GLOSSARY OF WIRELESS INDUSTRY TERMS 49

BIBLIOGRAPHY 67