

# Dish: If Sprint Bid Falls Through, There are Other Options

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Dish Network is in a heated battle with Japanese carrier SoftBank over whose bid is the best value for Sprint. But Dish Chairman Charlie Ergen seems confident that his company has other options for breaking into wireless should Dish lose out.

During Dish's first quarter conference call Thursday, Ergen [suggested](#) [1] Dish could partner with someone else in the wireless industry, sell its spectrum or sell the company.

Following a somewhat disappointing first quarter report that saw customer growth [slowing](#) [2] for the satellite-TV provider, Dish's urgency to diversify its offerings can only be intensifying. On top of that, the AWS spectrum Dish acquired last year carries an [FCC-stipulated time restraint](#) [3]. Dish must deploy service on its 20 MHz of spectrum, which covers approximately 40 percent of the country, within four years and 70 percent of the country within six years.

Building a network from scratch could prove too costly and time-consuming for Dish, which makes Sprint an attractive partner for Dish. Dish's spectrum lies just above 2 GHz, close enough to be nearly contiguous with the 1900 MHz PCS band in which Sprint is deploying LTE. During the FCC approval process for allowing Dish to deploy a terrestrial network on its AWS spectrum, Sprint [contested](#) [4] Dish's plans for its AWS spectrum for fear it would interfere with its 1900 MHz G Block as well as with the H Block that could be auctioned by the FCC in the future.

This week, SoftBank CEO Masayoshi Son argued that since his company has already deployed TD-LTE in 2.5 GHz, it would be a better suitor for Sprint seeing at Sprint stands to gain access to a lot of 2.5 GHz spectrum should its bid to buyout Clearwire go through.

Dish has pitched the value of its \$25.5 billion merger offer to Sprint in terms of a multi-play option, bundling wireless service and broadband with TV.

It's unclear who Dish could sell its spectrum or its company to if its proposed Sprint merger goes by the wayside, or if any other suitors might be willing to partner with Dish in its efforts to snatch up Sprint from under SoftBank.

Sprint shareholders are [scheduled](#) [5] to vote on SoftBank's bid June 12 so between

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then and now, Sprint needs to decide if Dish is a viable suitor.

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### **Links:**

[1] <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/05/09/us-dishnetwork-results-idUSBRE9480EV20130509>

[2] <http://www.wirelessweek.com/news/2013/05/dish-posts-disappointing-1q-shares-dive>

[3] <http://www.wirelessweek.com/news/2012/12/fcc-limits-dish-spectrum-sets-4-year-timetable-rollout>

[4] <http://www.wirelessweek.com/news/2012/10/sprint-dish-continue-spat-over-pcs-mss-rules>

[5] <http://www.wirelessweek.com/news/2013/05/report-sprint-pushes-dish-more-details-merger-bid>