

Report: SoftBank Could Buy Deutsche Telekom's Stake in T-Mobile

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SoftBank might be interested in buying Deutsche Telekom's (DT) 74-percent stake in T-Mobile USA, if the Japanese carrier's \$20.1 billion bid for Sprint falls through.

Reuters is [citing three sources familiar](#) [1] with the situation saying that the talks—a continuation of preliminary negotiations between SoftBank and DT that began last year—have recently ramped up in light of Dish's [competing bid of \\$25.5 billion for Sprint](#) [2].

Reuters places the market value of T-Mobile at around \$15 billion.

News of the possible deal comes less than a week before Sprint shareholders are scheduled to vote on SoftBank's offer to acquire a 70-percent stake in the Kansas City-based carrier. Bloomberg reported that Sprint was considering postponing the June 12 vote but Sprint has indicated the vote is on track.

SoftBank's deal for Sprint has been in place since late 2012 and has somewhat hinged on Sprint acquiring the remaining 49 percent it doesn't already own of wireless broadband carrier Clearwire. Dish complicated the deal by trumping Sprint's \$3.40 per share bid for Clearwire with a \$4.40 per share offer of its own. Clearwire's board [rescheduled](#) [3] its vote on Sprint's offer for June 13 to provide more time to review Dish's offer. Meanwhile, Sprint has come out against Dish's Clearwire bid, going so far as to [call it illegal](#) [4].

Sprint, the U.S.'s third-largest carrier, has struggled financially but the SoftBank deal looked to be a good source of capital that would allow Sprint to accelerate its LTE network plans and start catching up with AT&T and Verizon. But with Dish's raised offer for Clearwire, whose spectrum represents a large part of the value of Sprint deal, SoftBank would likely either have to raise its offer to Sprint so Sprint could raise its offer to Clearwire, or walk away. With T-Mobile as an option, walking away might be an easier decision for SoftBank.

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[1] <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/06/07/us-tmobile-softbank-sprint-idUSBRE95615B20130607>

[2] <http://www.wirelessweek.com/news/2013/04/dish-leapfrogs-softbank-255-billion-bid-sprint>

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