Sprint Eliminating 800 Customer-Service Jobs

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NEW YORK (AP) — Sprint is eliminating about 800 customer service jobs because fewer people are calling its centers, the company said Tuesday. With growth in other parts of the business, however, Sprint said it expects the company's work force to remain at about 40,000.

Sprint Corp. said most of the affected workers were notified last Thursday. Others will be told next month after Sprint figures out which additional positions will be cut. The company said the cuts are at various locations across the country.

Sprint's headquarters are in Overland Park, Kan. Last month, Japanese investment firm SoftBank Corp. completed a $21.6 billion investment in Sprint, giving it a 78 percent stake in the third-largest U.S. wireless carrier.

Sprint said its efforts to increase customer satisfaction helped to reduce the number of calls for customer service. According to the latest American Customer Satisfaction Index, Sprint had a 71 rating out of 100. That was unchanged from last year, but an improvement from its low of 56 in 2008. Verizon Wireless was at 73, AT&T at 70 and T-Mobile at 68 this year.

"As customer satisfaction improves and in turn calls to customer care decrease, our staffing needs in this area decrease," Sprint said in a statement. "This organizational action keeps our costs in line with these efficiencies."

Growth areas include positions at its retail stores, Sprint said.

Sprint's stock fell 18 cents, or 2.6 percent, to $6.73 in afternoon trading Tuesday.

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