

## **Report: FCC “Highly Skeptical” of Possible Sprint-T-Mobile Merger**

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FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler expressed strong skepticism about a possible tie-up between Sprint and T-Mobile, the U.S.’s third and fourth largest carriers.



Wheeler yesterday [met with SoftBank CEO Masayoshi Son and Sprint CEO Dan Hesse](#) [1] and said he would keep an open mind about the potential merger, [according to Reuters](#) [2]. But in general Wheeler’s thoughts on the matter were in line with Justice Department officials who’ve already signaled doubts.

The DoJ’s Bill Baer last week noted the strong competitive landscape that began taking shape after the FCC shot down AT&T’s \$39 billion bid to buy T-Mobile.

The FCC and DoJ last year both signed off on SoftBank’s purchase of a majority stake in Sprint. Sprint’s new Chairman Son now is reportedly looking to buy Deutsche Telekom’s approximately 67-percent share of T-Mobile. SoftBank and DT are rumored to be in talks, while Sprint is exploring ways around regulatory hurdles, and lenders are lined up to fund the deal.

But with AT&T dramatically [lowering the cost of some of its shared data plans](#) [3], regulators have another sign of a competitive market benefitting consumers and another reason to say no to further U.S. wireless industry consolidation.

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**Links:**

[1] <http://www.wirelessweek.com/news/2014/02/report-softbank-ceo-meeting-fcc-chairman-wheeler>

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Published on Wireless Week (<http://www.wirelessweek.com>)

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[2] <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/02/04/us-usa-sprint-fcc-idUSBREA1300D20140204>

[3] <http://www.wirelessweek.com/blogs/2014/02/un-carrier-effect-t-wide-awake-verizon>