T-Mobile to Close Verizon 700 MHz Deal, Deploy LTE on Spectrum in 2014

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T-Mobile expects its 700 MHz A Block transaction with Verizon to close by mid-year and the carrier will begin deploying LTE on that spectrum in 2014.

Speaking at Morgan Stanley Technology, Media & Telecom Conference, T-Mobile CFO Braxton Carter and CTO Neville Ray were optimistic about the LTE network potential of the spectrum. Ray said the A Block licenses cover 158 million POPs and that T-Mobile should have devices supporting 700 MHz LTE by the fourth quarter.

T-Mobile ended up spending about $2.4 billion and sending some AWS and PCS licenses to Verizon in order to get its hands on the low-band spectrum.

Outside of that deal, T-Mobile has more available spectrum on the way as its MetroPCS integration progresses.

Carter called the process a “very seamless migration” and said T-Mobile is expecting 80 percent of MetroPCS customers moved over to T-Mobile by end of 2014.

“We expect to have the vast majority of MetroPCS shut down by 2015,” Carter said, adding T-Mobile expects multi-billion dollar savings once that legacy CDMA network is decommissioned.

“The real bonus is that we secure very valuable spectrum,” Ray said talking about migrating over MetroPCS airwaves that T-Mobile will use to deploy 15 x 15 MHz and 20 x 20 MHz LTE in some markets.

T-Mobile’s merger with MetroPCS closed [1] in May 2013.

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