

Verizon said last April that it would sell other spectrum if regulators allowed the company to complete the cable deal with SpectrumCo a consortium of cable companies they were entering into exclusive marketing agreements with to re-sell services and also buying AWS licenses from in addition to airwaves from Cox Communications. Public interest advocates warned against that deal and that even if they are allowed to acquire these airwaves and do commit to a spectrum sale the most likely buyer of the lower 700 MHz licenses they would sell would be AT&T. There are no benefits for the public in such a sale. Instead the spectrum should be sold to a smaller wireless carrier strengthening competition in the cellular market. The prospect of an AT&T Verizon duopoly in the wireless market would be grim for consumers. I stand with Public Knowledge and other advocacy groups opposed to any such deal between AT&T Mobility and Verizon Wireless. As such AT&T already has plenty of 700 MHz licenses it was allowed to buy from Qualcomm and a small firm named 700 MHz LLC and it has acquired recently some AWS licenses from another company. Some of the 700 MHz licenses Verizon owns come with open access requirements that resulted in Verizon having to sell the iPhone 5 unlocked for 3G GSM carriers.

The AT&T Verizon transaction raises serious concerns as Public Knowledge's Harold Feld has said. Feld is right to say "This proposed sale only continues the wireless market's spiral into a duopoly". Verizon Wireless began selling the 700-megahertz spectrum licenses early last year, the Basking Ridge, New Jersey-based company has stated recently on its website. If this deal is at all approved it should be on the condition that some airwaves be sold to a smaller nationwide or regional carrier like Sprint, T-Mobile, C-Spire, US Cellular etc. However, I strongly urge the Commission to deny this deal.