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“T-Mobile Finds New Lifeline”

The article “T-Mobile Finds New Lifeline”, by Anton Troianovski discusses rumors of the possible merger between T-Mobile, the 4th largest cellular provider in the U.S., and one of the smaller regional providers, MetroPCS. Though the F.C.C. would likely approve the merger, the fact that the two companies use completely different network types would be a major stumbling block to a successful merger. T-Mobile uses a GSM type network, whereas MetroPCS uses a CDMA type network, these two network types are fundamentally different and completely incompatible (Think AM vs. FM radio). The article then goes on to explain how, though the two companies use different network types right now, MetroPCS has started rolling out a next generation LTE (Long Term Evolution) network that T-Mobile lacks, and posits that the two companies could standardize on LTE as their primary network technology.

The article also describes how Deutsche Telkom, parent company of T-Mobile attempted to sell T-Mobile to AT&T last year, but failed to obtain the necessary regulatory approval, with regulators citing likely antitrust and anti-competitive effects of the merger as their primary concerns. The proposed merger would result in a company with nearly as many subscribers as Sprint, which is currently the 3rd place cellular company in terms of subscribers. This would make the new T-Mobile\MetroPCS merger better able to compete with the much larger 1st and 2nd place AT&T and Verizon.

I find this article interesting because I follow developments in the world of mobile technology very closely as a hobby as well as to keep up with computing trends in relation to my ambition to become a computer engineer. Mobile devices such as tablets and smartphones continue to supplant the ubiquitous desktops and laptops as the general computing devices of choice for a large subset of consumers. This migration from fixed-location and portable computing devices to fully mobile devices has a huge effect on my probable career path. The merger discussed in this article would have long lasting effects on the development of mobile networking technologies and devices, effects that will inevitably affect my career in the long term. In the near term however, the merger may affect which carrier I decide to get my next phone on.