

The competitive implications of this [could be profound](#), as Verizon locks up more airwaves and secures its No. 1 position in the wireless market, while appearing to cede the wireline market to the cable guys. Does this mean Verizon is [done deploying FiOS](#)? It certainly means the cable guys aren't going to compete in the wireless market anytime soon.

This is also the same spectrum that AT&T was hoping to use for its LTE deployment if its purchase of T-Mobile went through. Cox also has some 700 MHz spectrum licenses, which Verizon isn't buying.

Cox had planned to use its airwaves to build out a [wireless network](#), but realized how challenging such an endeavor would be, and in [November pulled the plug](#) on any form of quadruple play that would include the web, voice, video and wireless. When the Cox wireless network's demise was rumored, I [wondered who would buy Cox's airwaves](#), thinking perhaps it could partner with Sprint. But now it looks like Verizon has locked up not just enough spectrum for one LTE network in its 700 MHz band, but has now spent roughly \$4 billion buying enough to deploy an entirely separate network in the AWS band.

If the FCC approves this deal, Verizon has just spent far less than AT&T proposed to do and took out a potential competitor that could have grown even stronger than T-Mobile USA. The cable companies' decision to decamp from the wireless market, despite owning their airwaves, also shows how hard building a network can be. If the cable guys don't have the heart, it's hard to see LightSquared or even Dish succeeding without some serious support from the few nationwide carriers still left on the field.

