

3Par calls HP \$30 bid 'superior'; Dell mulls reply

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(AP) -- Data storage company 3Par Inc. says its board has determined that Hewlett-Packard Co.'s \$2 billion, \$30-per-share takeover bid is superior to a rival offer from Dell Inc., but Dell said Saturday it was mulling over a higher bid.

3Par said late Friday that it told Dell of its intention to terminate its previous deal for \$27 per share after three business days and after satisfying other conditions of its deal with Dell.

Dell has the right to match any higher bid and have its offer take precedence within three business days starting on Monday, said Dell spokesman David Frink.

He said Saturday that the company is assessing whether a higher bid would be in its best interests and said it would "make our intent known at an appropriate time."

HP and Dell, among the world's largest personal computer makers, are looking at 3Par as a way to build up their "cloud computing" businesses, delivering software, [data storage](#) and other services to customers via the Internet.

The companies want 3Par to help keep data storage costs down because the company has technology that doles out storage space on the fly.

Both PC makers can afford to continue bidding. Dell has \$12.4 billion in

cash and short-term investments at the end of last quarter. HP had \$14.7 billion.

Dell first made a play for 3Par at \$18 per share, or \$1.13 billion, on Aug. 16. That was an 87 percent premium over its previous closing price of \$9.65.

[3Par](#) shares rose \$6.43, or 25 percent, to close at \$32.46 on Friday after HP put in its latest bid, suggesting investors believe a higher bid is possible.

HP shares fell 22 cents to \$38 on Friday while [Dell](#) shares rose 14 cents to close at \$11.89.

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