

SK pays \$920 mn for super-fast wireless spectrum

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South Korea's top mobile carrier SK Telecom has won a licence to operate super-fast wireless services after bidding 995 billion won (\$920 million), regulators said Monday.

SK beat domestic rival KT Corp in an auction for the "golden" spectrum 1.8 GHz band, the Korea Communications Commission said.

SK's initial bid was 445.5 billion won, it said.

KT dropped out of the race due to soaring bidding costs. It won the licence for the 800 MHz band for 261 billion won.

The 1.8 GHz band will be used for the super-fast 4G wireless service, based on Long-Term Evolution (LTE) technology.

SK launched its LTE service in Seoul in late June and plans to introduce its first LTE smartphone in September. KT plans to launch a 4G service in November.

South Korean operators now use domestically developed WiBro or WiMax [network technology](#), but a fast increase in [smartphone](#) and tablet users has pushed them to deploy new networks for higher-speed data services.

Official data showed gadget-mad [South Korea](#) had 15 million smartphones at the end of July. The figure is expected to hit 20 million

by the end of this year, about 40 percent of the country's overall wireless market.

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