

MTS, Rostelecom Team on Infrastructure

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Mobile TeleSystems has 6,000 antenna towers that Rostelecom will have the option to use for its cellular plans. **Denis Grishkin**

Telecommunications giant Mobile TeleSystems and national operator Rostelecom have struck an agreement on joint access to infrastructure.

The deal will allow for common use of communications lines, antenna towers, premises for installing equipment and other property belonging to the two companies.

The agreement also gives MTS access to Rostelecom fiber-optic lines where the state company is virtually the sole operator of trunk lines, particularly in some regions of Siberia and the Russian Far East, MTS spokeswoman Valeria Kuzmenko said.

Rostelecom gains the opportunity to put equipment in areas where it has few of its own towers.

The state-controlled operator is prepared to work under similar schemes with other market

players, Kuzmenko said. The company has already agreed with Skartel — which operates under the Yota brand — on the mutual use of infrastructure. Skartel and MegaFon have a similar deal.

VimpelCom has an agreement on the joint laying and rental of fiber-optic lines in exchange for positions on MTS and MegaFon towers. It is also discussing with Rostelecom the laying of such lines at Sakhalin and other joint projects.

Rostelecom's trunk network stretches for 500,000 kilometers, while MTS's landlines total 117,000 kilometers. The shared usage of these will allow the two companies to save 10 percent on their capital and operating costs, which analysts calculate at about \$300 million for each.

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