

# T-Mobile tries to fill rural connectivity gap with 5G home broadband internet

Article

Users of T-Mobile's home broadband service will start to experience 5G speeds later this month, the company **announced** during an analyst event, an update marking a significant step forward in the company's attempt to sway customers away from more established home broadband providers. By moving forward with 5G home broadband, T-Mobile makes some

inroads into its **pledge** to cover **more than half** of US households with 5G internet within six years—a key selling point during its merger with Sprint **completed** last year.

**T-Mobile's 5G home internet builds off a years-long pilot program testing interest and network capacity.** The company **launched** a limited home broadband service two years ago offering customers connectivity via its LTE network. That program ultimately expanded to include 100,000 users across the US. Aside from gathering a pulse of consumer interest, the pilot also tested T-Mobile's network capacity abilities. **According to** the company, **20%** of the pilot customers used a sizable 500 GB or more of data per month yet T-Mobile still didn't need to place data caps.

With the new 5G push, T-Mobile plans to sign up **400,000 more customers** by the end of the year and ambitiously hopes to reel in **7–8 million** customers by **2025**.

T-Mobile isn't alone in its attempt to solve the rural internet availability problem and disrupt traditional broadband providers. **Verizon launched** its own commercial 5G broadband internet service in 2018. Separately, Elon Musk's **Starlink** satellite internet service—which also **targets** rural users—has already signed up **more than 10,000** subscribers, a figure poised to **increase** as the company launches more satellites into orbit.

**As 5G networks expand, T-Mobile and other telecoms possess a unique ability to fill connectivity gaps left by traditional broadband providers in rural areas.** A 2020 **report** by research group Broadband Now found that **42 million US residents** lack the ability to purchase broadband internet. With that figure in mind, it makes sense why the company's 5G home internet option would come to "rural, small-town and suburban" areas first, **according to** T-Mobile EVP of emerging products Dow Draper. By prioritizing underserved rural areas, T-Mobile can make steady inroads into home broadband while continuing to strengthen its 5G network.

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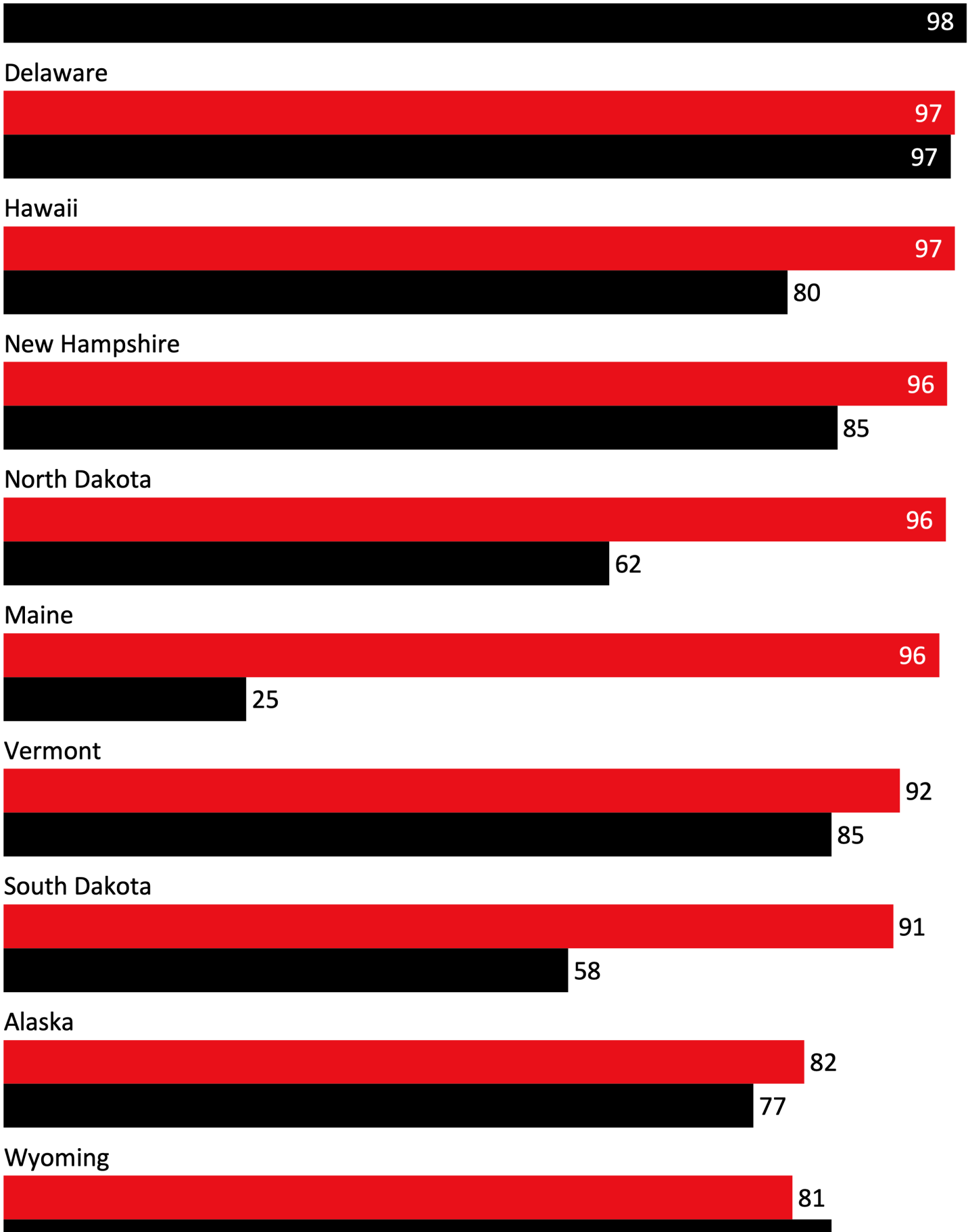
## Access to Broadband Coverage of 25 Mbps and 100 Mbps Download Speeds

### Percent of Population

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Rhode Island

98



■ 25 mbps

■ 100 mbps

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Note: States represent the least populous in US.

Source: BroadbandNow "The State of Broadband in America, Q4, 2020"

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