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Twitter Inc. shares surged in trading Friday after CNBC reported that the company was examining the possibility of a sale. CNBC's David Faber said no sale was imminent but that Twitter may receive a formal bid shortly and is engaged with suitors. Salesforce.com Inc. and Google parent Alphabet Inc. are believed to be among the suitors, CNBC said. A representative from Twitter wasn't immediately available for comment. Twitter shares jumped 14% to \$21.28 in morning trading in New York. Before Friday, the stock had fallen 30% over the past year.

In the years since its November 2013 initial public offering, which was priced at \$26, Twitter has struggled with slow user expansion and shrinking revenue growth. In its June quarter, Twitter reported 20% revenue growth, its smallest gain to-date and eighth-straight period of declining growth. Since Chief Executive Jack Dorsey retook the helm in 2015, Twitter has sought to reinvigorate its ads business around video and revive user growth by making the short-messaging service he invented easier to use.

sell sports a la carte, better exploit rights deals, Iger says

USA Today Facebook launches first nationwide voter registration drive

Associated Press 27% Of Americans Say Media Too East On Trump

Last October, the company released its Moments feature, which curates tweets,



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photos and videos shared on the service around sporting events, entertainment and breaking news, to help newcomers get pulled into the service. Last week, Twitter introduced its first live-stream of a National Football League game, with an average audience of 243,000 viewers a minute watching the New York Jets beat the Buffalo Bills. Still, that paled in comparison with the average of 15.4 million

people who watched the game on CBS and the NFL Network.

The football game was one of the first major events for Twitter's live-streaming strategy, the cornerstone of its plan to become the premier destination for live events. Twitter is trying to appeal to advertisers by capitalizing on its strength as a real-time service and the growing trend of cord-cutting viewers. Twitter plans to also stream the presidential and vice presidential debates. Twitter's struggles, alongside a deal-friendly climate in Silicon Valley, has raised questions around Twitter's future as an independent public company. — *Wall Street Journal*

Yahoo Inc. is blaming "state-sponsored" hackers for what may be the largest-ever theft of personal user data. The internet company, which has agreed to sell its core business to Verizon Communications Inc., said Thursday that hackers penetrated its

network in late 2014 and stole personal data on more than 500 million users. The stolen data included names, email addresses, dates of birth, telephone numbers and encrypted passwords, Yahoo said.

Yahoo said it believes that the hackers are no longer in its corporate network. The company said it didn't believe that unprotected passwords, payment-card data or bank-account information had been affected. Computer users have grown inured to notices that a tech company, retailer or other company with which they have done business had been hacked. But the Yahoo disclosure is significant because the company said it was the work of another nation, and because it raises questions about the fate of the \$4.8 billion Verizon deal, which was announced on July 25.

In July, Yahoo began investigating claims by hackers who were offering to sell what they said were 280 million Yahoo usernames and passwords. Yahoo said it concluded the information for sale wasn't legitimate, but the company decided to broaden its probe, eventually determining that it had been breached by "a state-sponsored actor." In a proxy filing related to the Verizon deal on Sept. 9, Yahoo said it wasn't aware of any "security breaches" or "loss, theft, unauthorized access or acquisition" of user data. Yahoo declined to comment on the filing. Yahoo didn't say how the hackers broke into its network or which country sponsored the attacks.

The intrusion, in late 2014, came during a period when many computer attacks, including on the federal Office of Personnel Management and health insurer Anthem Inc. were believed to be the work of China. More recent hacks, however, including of the Democratic National Committee earlier this year, have been blamed on Russia. Both countries have denied involvement in the hacks. It isn't uncommon for data breaches to go unreported for years. In May, [Myspace notified users](#) of a 2013 breach; the same month, LinkedIn Corp. also notified users that a 2012 incident, thought to have affected just 6.5 million accounts, had actually [compromised more than 100 million](#). "The FBI is aware of the intrusion and investigating the matter," the Federal Bureau of Investigation said. "We take these types of breaches very seriously and will determine how this occurred and who is responsible."

Verizon said it was notified of the breach earlier this week. "We understand that Yahoo is conducting an active investigation of this matter, but we otherwise have limited information and understanding of the impact," Verizon said in a statement. "We will evaluate as the investigation continues." B. Riley & Co. analyst Sameet Sinha said the breach is unlikely to affect terms of the Verizon deal. "Data breaches have become part of doing business now," he said, adding that Microsoft Corp. agreed to buy LinkedIn for \$26.2 billion in June, one month after LinkedIn notified users of the broader scope of its 2012 breach.

But Stephen S. Wu, a technology lawyer at the Silicon Valley Law Group, said the language assuring that no security breaches had occurred might give Verizon leverage to renegotiate the deal, or even to walk away. The Yahoo breach appears to be the largest ever disclosed, based on the number of users affected, said Paul Stephens, director of policy and advocacy with Privacy Rights Clearing House, a not-for-profit group that compiles information on data breaches. Credit-card processor Heartland Payment Systems Inc. said roughly 130 million credit- and debit-card numbers had been [stolen in a 2009 hack](#). The Yahoo breach, and the timing of the disclosure, quickly reverberated in Washington. Sen. Mark Warner, D-Va., said in a statement, "I am perhaps most troubled by news that this breach occurred in 2014, and yet the public is only learning details of it today."

Yahoo's breach is the latest in a series of compromises that have put billions of consumer usernames and email addresses at risk. One website, called Leaked Source, sells a searchable list of more than two billion credentials. While many other companies have disclosed large-scale breaches recently, the fact that Yahoo is linking its hack to state-sponsored hackers is noteworthy. U.S. intelligence officials have said

[China-based attacks have declined in recent months](#), following a 2015 agreement between the U.S. and China.

Over the past year, Russia has gradually taken China's place as the primary suspect of attacks on U.S. systems. Two hacking groups—linked by security researchers and U.S. government officials to Russia—have published email messages belonging to public figures, including [private Gmail messages](#) belonging to former Secretary of State Colin Powell. The Yahoo data could be used to obtain the personal correspondence of public figures. "For a government, the real value would be to look for people with real value," said Matthew Green, a computer science professor at Johns Hopkins University. "Maybe you don't get classified information, but some of those Colin Powell emails were very interesting."

Yahoo said the stolen passwords were encrypted, but computer-security experts said a determined attacker could unscramble passwords—especially simple passwords—using commonly available "cracking" software. Once cracked, hackers could break into Yahoo accounts and—if the password happened to be reused on another web service—possibly other websites too. Security experts recommend that consumers add a "second factor" of authentication to their online accounts. Typically this means receiving a short code via text message every time the user logs in from an unknown computer. Yahoo says that its users should change their passwords and security questions, and avoid using the same password on multiple accounts. – *Wall Street Journal*; [in the Washington Post, the Yahoo breach casts 'cloud' over Verizon deal; in Bloomberg, was Yahoo tipped off?](#)

Discovery Communications Inc. is considering charging Olympics fans in Europe to watch niche sports like bobsledding and speed skating, part of an effort to squeeze more profit out of the games and test its growing direct-to-consumer business. "If you want all the judo, you get it, but you pay for it," Chief Executive Officer David Zaslav said at the Goldman Sachs Communacopia conference Thursday in New York. "That's what we're looking at."

With ratings down at some networks, the owner of Animal Planet and TLC has been expanding across Latin America and Europe, where pay-TV subscribers are still growing in numbers. In 2015, the media company took full control of Eurosport, a pan-European sports media group, and paid \$1.4 billion for exclusive European broadcast rights to air the Olympics from 2018 to 2024 on platforms from TVs to tablets. With that deal, Discovery became the first media company to hold all the European rights for the games. "The Olympics will be profitable for us," Zaslav said, and also present opportunities to grow Discovery's direct-to-consumer offerings.

The Silver Spring, Maryland-based company, which generates almost half its revenue from its international networks, will either sell the Olympics broadcast to stations in each market or keep it for itself in European markets where it will air the games on its Eurosport channel, according to Zaslav. Those broadcast fees should cover Discovery's cost of the Olympics, he said.

Discovery isn't the only media company experimenting with charging to deliver niche sports directly to consumers over the Internet. Walt Disney Co. recently acquired a one-third stake in BAMTech, a technology and streaming business formed by Major League Baseball. The deal is seen helping Disney offer more of ESPN's content online, particularly for niche sports like track and boxing, which typically don't draw a big viewing audience on the cable-TV network. "This will give us the ability, with BAMTech, to create complementary product to ESPN and to mine the goldmine of those rights that ESPN has more effectively," Disney CEO Robert Iger said at the conference this week. – *Wall Street Journal*

The long-awaited confrontation between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump on Monday night at the first officially sanctioned presidential debate could prove to be a doozy. Some media experts are already predicting the size of the audience who will tune in for the clash of the political titans. TV Newser columnist Chris Ariens cites a recent Morning Consult poll which found that 73 percent of Americans said they would watch the debate.

“If we extrapolate that, if 73 percent of 146,311,000 registered voters watch the debate, that means more than 106 million will be tuning in,” writes Mr. Ariens. “That’s approaching Super Bowl status. This year’s Super Bowl was watched by 112 million. While 106 million will be a stretch, network insiders we’ve talked to think the number will easily top 80 million.”

The first 2012 debate between Mitt Romney and Barack Obama drew 67.2 million viewers, and was the second most watched debate. And the biggest audience draw up until now? That was the initial debate between then President Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan, which pulled in 81 million in 1980, long before the advent of cable news and social media. – *Washington Times*; [in Variety, advertisers are on board](#)

Atlantic Broadband completed its USD 1.5 million “FastForward Bradford” initiative. The initiative, which began in May provides new and existing customers with improved digital picture quality and sound plus HD channel additions, in Bradford, Pa. and the surrounding service areas. As part of the programme, new and existing Atlantic Broadband customers now have access to 24 additional HD channels, bringing the total number of HD channels to 85.

Among the new channels now available on Atlantic Broadband’s line-up are CMT HD, Disney Junior, Hallmark Movie & Mysteries HD, HLN HD, Investigation Discovery (ID), Lifetime Movie Network, Nick Jr HD, StarzEdge, The Weather Channel HD, Tru TV HD, TV Land HD, VH1 HD and WGN America. – *telecompaper.com*



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