Alexicon *insider*

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INFORMATION AND ADVOCACY FOR THE
RURAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

Regulatory Headlines

Tech Gears Up for Net Neutrality Fight

The tech world is gearing up for a showdown over the Obama-era net neutrality rules. Federal Communications Commission Chairman Ajit Pai last week floated his plan to roll back the rules in a meeting with broadband industry lobbyists. A tech industry source told The Hill Pai could unveil his plans as soon as May.

FCC Votes to Deregulate Data Services

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) on Thursday voted to ease some regulations on the market that provides secure data lines to businesses. The proposal had drawn criticism from small business and consumer advocates, who said deregulating the market would hurt competition and drive up prices for the services.

Markey: New Name for FCC

Sen. Ed Markey (D-Mass.) blasted the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) on Thursday for a new order easing regulations on special data lines that critics say will reduce competition and increase prices. Institutions like hospitals, small businesses and schools rely on special high-speed internet connections, often called business data services, that they use for devices like ATMs and credit card readers.

FCC Restores UHF Discount

The FCC has voted to reinstate the commission's UHF discount pending a more holistic look at media ownership regs, saying it was erroneously repealed without considering whether the 39% national audience reach cap should also be adjusted.

FTC's New Deregulatory Policy

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) says it's getting to work cutting down its regulatory footprint in line with President Trump's agenda. Earlier this year, President Trump directed all executive branch agencies to eliminate two regulations for every new one created.

Market Watch

Half of 600 mhz Auction Winners Are Rural

SRT Exits Rural Wireless Market

T-Mobile to Launch 600 mhz Spectrum Services

Verizon Open to Deals

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Questions? Comments?
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Infrared Much Better Than WiFi

A few special "light antennas" dotted around a room would provide significantly more bandwidth for internet-connected devices than traditional Wi-Fi, says a Dutch scientist. Wi-Fi's days could be numbered if the technology works as suggested. With this new Wi-Fi replacement system that's been proposed, benign, infrared rays of light emitted from ceiling-mounted transmitters would beam bandwidth-intensive streams of data at smartphones and laptops within the room.

Humans: Weakest Cybersecurity Link

Humans remain the weak link in corporate data protection, but you might be surprised that it isn't only rank-and-file employees duped by phishing scams who pose risks. Some companies are lulled into a false sense of cybersecurity by vendors. You read that right:Some enterprises believe the shiny new technologies they've acquired will protect them from anything.

Ransomware, Malware Dominate Threats

An analysis of the threat landscape in the first quarter of 2017 suggests that ransomware will continue to pose major problems for enterprises and individual users through the rest of the year.

Homeland Security Warns of BrickerBot

A new kind of attack is targeting unsecured Internet of Things devices by scrambling their code and rendering them useless. Security firm Radware first spotted the newly found "BrickerBot" malware last month after it started hitting its own honeypots, logging hundreds of infection attempts over a few days. When the malware connects to a device with their default usernames and passwords -- often easily found on the internet -- the malware corrupts the device's storage...

IoT: High Hopes, Deep Concerns

Industrial IoT's big future is starting to become a reality, but many companies still don't think they're ready for it. Those are some of the findings in surveys released on Tuesday by the Business Performance Innovation Network and the Eclipse IoT Working Group. They reflect the views of hundreds of executives and developers from a range of industries.

IN FOCUS:

FCC Open Meeting & Lifeline Order Remand

FCC Open Meeting

At the FCC's Open Meeting yesterday (April 20), several items in addition to the headliners noted above are worth mentioning. First, and most importantly for many RoR regulated ILECs, the Commission adopted an Order on Reconsideration that makes an important change to the Capital Investment Allowance rule. Second, NPRMs were adopted to address regulatory barriers to the deployment of wireline and wireless broadband networks.

On the Construction Limit Allowance (CIA), part of the rule limited the per-location, per-project amount recoverable for new construction. If a project exceeded a specified average per-location amount (e.g., $10,000), then the entire cost of the project was disallowed for high cost support purposes. The FCC's Order on Reconsideration, in response to an NTCA petition, revises this rule so that only the amounts in excess of the per-location, per-project limit are disallowed. This is good news for those companies subject to the CIA and for all companies in that capex budgets should be easier in regards to this rule.

Next up, the FCC adopted an NPRM that is designed to address certain regulatory barriers to accelerating broadband networks. Some of the barriers to be addressed include pole attachment reforms, expediting the copper network retirement process, the FCC's ability to preempt certain state and local rules, and the process for obtaining FCC permission to alter or discontinue services.

On the wireless side, the NPRM (not released as of this writing) is supposed to remove "barriers to investment needed for America's 5G future." Included in this barrier removal are an examination of how state and local processes affect infrastructure deployment, and a look at the FCC's rules and procedures for complying with the National Historic Preservation Act and National Environmental Policy Act. As with the wireline NPRM, the Commission will also seek comment on the proper role of state and local regulation.

Comment and reply comment dates for both NPRMs are yet to be determined.

Lifeline Order Remand

The FCC recently requested the DC Circuit Court of Appeals to remand the 2016 Lifeline Reform Order in regards to the designation of Lifeline Broadband Providers (LBP). NARUC and others had petitioned the court on the FCC's LBP rules on the grounds that ETC designation is under the purview of the states. The Pai Commission now agrees with this position, and the Court granted the FCC's wish this week and remanded the order.

Alexicon at Work

Conferences and Meetings

Doug Kitch and Vince Wiemer will attend the Small Company Coalition meeting in Dallas, TX on May 3 and 4.

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