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○ ISSUE 8 | ○ VOL 8-17 | ○ 2018

Alexicon *insider*

INFORMATION AND ADVOCACY FOR THE
RURAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

Regulatory Headlines

[FCC Broadband Progress NOI](#)

The annual FCC broadband progress report has generated controversy virtually every year since it was established, and the 2019 report is shaping up to be no exception. The FCC yesterday released a notice of inquiry (NOI) seeking input on key parameters for next year's report and raising the usual thorny questions including broadband speed definition and whether mobile service is a reasonable substitute for landline broadband.

[Court Halts FCC Tribal Lifeline Order](#)

A \$25 monthly subsidy that's meant to help low-income households on tribal lands get phone or internet service will remain in place for the time being, after a court found that the Federal Communication Commission's plan to largely remove the subsidies seems to have been made without properly considering the harms to customers and businesses.

[Pai: WH Called About Sinclair](#)

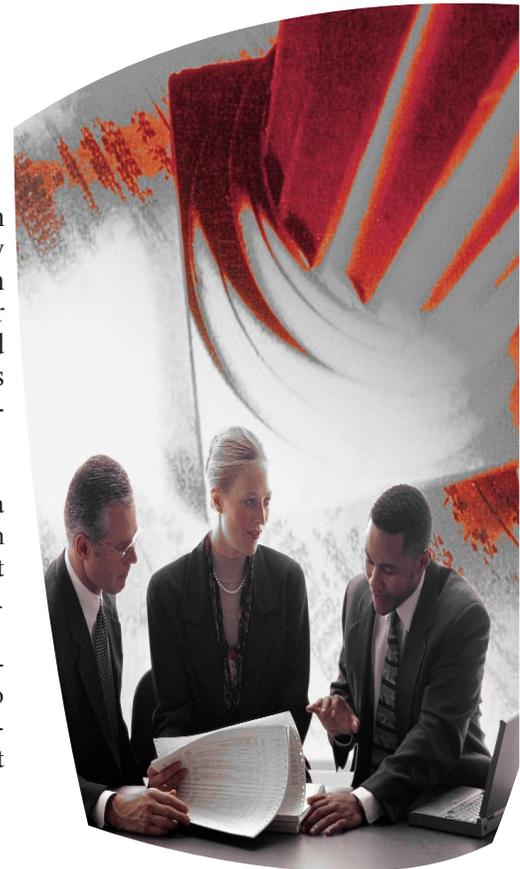
Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Ajit Pai on Thursday revealed that White House counsel Don McGahn called him about the merger between Sinclair Broadcast Group and Tribune Media last month as the deal was imploding due to opposition from regulators.

[FCC Boosts DOJ's Appeal of Merger](#)

The Justice Department is challenging a court's decision to allow the \$85 billion AT&T-Time Warner merger, and now it could be getting a small assist from the FCC.

[AT&T, VZ Battle Over Small Cells](#)

The wireless industry continues to urge regulators at the federal, state and local levels to make it cheaper and easier for network operators and others to install wireless equipment including small cells in new locations.



Market Watch

[Report Questions Impact of Rural Broadband](#)

[Connecting America Through Fixed Wireless](#)

[Cost Reduction Should be Part of Planning](#)

[Midband Spectrum for 5G Needed Now](#)



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Questions? Comments?
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Technology Trends

New and notable technology and services

Top Tech Disrupters of 2018

FierceTelecom is tracking the companies that are having the biggest impact in the telecommunications space as technology continues to evolve at a rapid clip. Here are the top telecom tech disrupters for 2018. While some of the larger telcos, namely AT&T and Telefónica, have been surfing the virtualization wave for several years, we're not even close to hitting the high water mark.

Tech that 5G will Positively Disrupt

Disruption is the name of the game in the world of tech. We're constantly on the cusp of some new innovation—interactive technologies, for example, are changing how consumers shop and how brands set out to improve the ever-important customer experience. The next big tech innovation—5G—stands to revolutionize these and so many more, as it will be a major driver of digitalization.

FirstNet Board Approves \$81m Budget

FirstNet board members unanimously approved an \$81 million operating budget for the 2019 fiscal year, as well as putting another \$81 million in a new reserve fund and \$79 million in a fund designed to pay for network reinvestment as part of the organization's sustainable business model.

Investor Sues AT&T Over Cryptocurrency

U.S. entrepreneur and cryptocurrency investor Michael Terpin filed a \$224 million lawsuit on Wednesday against telecommunications company AT&T (T.N), accusing it of fraud and gross negligence in connection with the theft of digital currency tokens from his personal account. In a 69-page complaint filed with the U.S. District Court in Los Angeles, Terpin alleged that on January 7, 2018, the tokens were stolen from him through what he alleged was a "digital identity theft" of his cellphone account.

7 Surprising Places Hackers Hide

The internet of things has made everything from refrigerators to thermostats smarter. But as with connected technologies grow in popularity, malicious hackers can find ways to take advantage of these innovations, increasing the need for awareness and vigilance. While strengthening your passwords and utilizing other security applications can help, blocking access can be a great first step.



IN FOCUS: Another Rural Call Completion Order

The FCC recently released another order implementing certain rules on rural call completion in response to the Rural Call Completion Act passed by Congress earlier this year. As reported in the May 11, 2018 *Insider*, the FCC's 2nd RCC Order eliminated an intermediate provider reporting requirement adopted in 2013 in favor of rules that allow for covered providers to monitor performance of carriers involved in the call path.

In the 3rd RCC Order, the Commission establishes the registry that a defined subset of intermediate providers will be required to use.

- * "Intermediate providers" are defined as those that "(A) enter into a business arrangement with a covered provider or other intermediate provider for the specific purpose of carrying, routing, or transmitting voice traffic that is generated from the placement of a call placed (i) from an end user connection using a North American Numbering Plan resource; or (ii) to an end user connection using such a numbering resource; and (B) do not, either directly or in conjunction with an affiliate, serve as a covered provider in the context of originating or terminating a given call."
- * Intermediate providers required to register with the FCC are those that charge any rate for the transmission of covered voice communications.

Under the process adopted in the 2nd RCC Order and continued in

the 3rd RCC Order, "covered providers" (basically LD carriers involved in the call path decision-making process) are required to monitor the performance of intermediate providers, and now cannot utilize intermediate providers that are not registered with the FCC.

Intermediate providers will be required to register with the FCC within 30 days after the 3rd RCC Order is approved by the OMB.

While there are no huge surprises in this latest iteration of the FCC's RCC efforts, and indeed the 3rd RCC Order represents a decent outcome given the circumstances, more is still to come. For example, the FCC has yet to decide upon whether and when to sunset recording and record retention rules (they are expected to do so in the near future). It remains to be seen if these new rules will help or hurt the ongoing efforts to ensure rural call completion and quality, but at least there are now some tools to use for holding covered and intermediate providers accountable.



Alexicon at Work

ALEXICON 2018 MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE—LAST CHANCE!

Alexicon will hold its 2018 Management Conference on next week in Colorado Springs. The conference will be held at the Antler's Hotel at 4 South Cascade Avenue, and will feature a diverse cast of topics and presenters. Included, on August 22 are a golf or gambling outing, and a group dinner on the evening of August 23.

Plan on joining us in Colorado in August! Contact Juli Charter at 719-531-6342 or jcharter@alexicon.net if you have any questions, need further information, or would like to register.


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