

- ▶ USDA MOVING ON RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE
- ▶ SPECTRUM AUCTION TO START IN NOVEMBER
- ▶ PAI REJECTS SINCLAIR INVESTIGATION
- ▶ SPRINT, MOBILITIE PAY FINES
- ▶ CENTURYLINK: ALLOW OVERLASHING ...1

ISSUE 8 | VOL 4-13 | 2018

- ▶ TELCO CAPEX REPORT
- ▶ INDATEL CONNECTS RURAL AMERICA WITH THE CLOUD
- ▶ HULU & SPOTIFY EXPAND BUNDLED VIDEO, MUSIC
- ▶ HUAWEI INTRODUCES DMM CONTAINER PROJECT...1

- ▶ CHINA CLOSING THE IP RACE GAP
- ▶ TAKEAWAYS FROM ZUCKERBERG TESTIMONY
- ▶ FACEBOOK DROPS OPPOSITION TO CA LAW
- ▶ AT&T TESTS ON MOBILE 5G
- ▶ REGULATING SMART CITY TECHNOLOGY ...2

Alexicon *insider*

INFORMATION AND ADVOCACY FOR THE
RURAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

Regulatory Headlines

[USDA Moving on Rural Infrastructure](#)

Thanks to funding via the recent omnibus spending bill, USDA is moving ahead with “transformative” programs to benefit the rural infrastructure and broadband. That was the word on Monday from Steve Censky, U.S. deputy secretary of agriculture. The omnibus bill provided \$13.5 billion for 2018 work on the ag economy, infrastructure and broadband.

[Spectrum Auction to Start in November](#)

In a draft Public Notice set for a full Commission vote at the next open meeting on April 17, 2018, the FCC indicates that it will propose to auction millimeter wave spectrum bands 28 and 24 GHz starting November 14, 2018 as Auction 101 and 102, respectively. If adopted, the Public Notice would propose application and bidding procedures for licensing the two bands in the Upper Microwave Flexible Use Service in separate consecutive auctions.

[Pai Rejects Sinclair Investigation](#)

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Ajit Pai on Thursday rejected a request from a dozen senators to investigate Sinclair Broadcast Group for “distorting news” coverage.

[Sprint, Mobilitie Pay Fines](#)

The FCC has entered into consent decrees with Sprint and Mobilitie to resolve two separate but related investigations into whether the companies completed proper tower registrations and environmental and historic preservation reviews prior to construction of wireless facilities. Sprint contracted with Mobilitie, an infrastructure company, to deploy wireless network equipment.

[CenturyLink: Allow Overlashing](#)

CenturyLink says the if the FCC continues to allow attachers to overlash fiber on existing utility poles, the regulator will meet its goals to get broadband into the hands of more consumers and businesses.



Market Watch

[Telco Capex Report](#)

[IndaTel Connects Rural America with the Cloud](#)

[Hulu & Spotify Expand Bundled Video, Music](#)

[Huawei Introduces DMM Container Project](#)



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Questions? Comments?
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Technology Trends

New and notable technology and services

Takeaways from Zuckerberg Testimony

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg weathered pointed questions about data privacy and his company's power during 10 hours of congressional testimony Tuesday and Wednesday. While contrite, Zuckerberg offered a full-throated defense of Facebook and its policies. He insisted that it is doing enough to address concerns about user privacy after the Cambridge Analytica controversy

Facebook Drops Opposition to CA Law

Facebook will cease funding an effort to defeat a proposed consumer privacy law in California as it faces scrutiny from lawmakers over its own privacy protection practices. Facebook, Google and Comcast each have contributed \$200,000 since February to the Committee to Protect California Jobs, a campaign to defeat the California Consumer Privacy Act.

AT&T Tests on Mobile 5G

AT&T mobile 5G trials are achieving gigabit speeds, the carrier said in a blog post today. The speeds were achieved in trials in three cities using millimeter wave spectrum, the company said. "[W]e're confident we have all the answers we need to deploy a mobile 5G network that works for people all over the country," wrote Melissa Arnoldi, president of AT&T Technology & Operations, in the blog post.

Regulating Smart City Technology

There's a reason why one technology reporter compared wide-ranging questions posed by the Senate to Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg on Tuesday to "a five-hour tech support call." The hearing revealed a basic lack of understanding about Facebook's data-gathering business model and consumer-facing functions.

China Closing the IP Race Gap

China's rising investment in research and expansion of its higher education system mean that it is fast closing the gap with the United States in intellectual property and the struggle to be the No.1 global technology power, according to patent experts. Forecasts for how long it will take for Beijing to close the technological gap vary - though several patent specialists say it could happen in the next decade.



IN FOCUS:

Next Week
At the FCC

The FCC's April [open meeting](#) will be held Tuesday, April 17 and has several items of note on the agenda.

Protecting National Security Through FCC Programs. The Commission will consider a [Notice of Proposed Rulemaking](#) that proposes a series of steps to ensure perceived threats to national security, in the form of the purchase of equipment and services from certain vendors, do not affect the communications infrastructure. The FCC proposes to obtain or generate a list of these suspect vendors, distribute the list to stakeholders, and eliminate USF support for expenditures related to the vendors. According to the FCC, this process would be prospective only in nature.

Three parties filed ex parte communications with the FCC on this subject: [The Rural Wireless Association](#), [The National Federation of Independent Business](#), and [Nokia](#). All three parties raise interesting issues, including the effect on small businesses that have used a prohibited vendor in the past and whether alternate providers' equipment are compatible. We will report further on the NPRM once it is adopted and released.

Rural Call Completion. A [Second Report and Order and NPRM](#) will be considered that would revise some of the current rules and proposes to eliminate the recordkeeping and retention rules for covered providers once registration requirements and service quality standards are effective.

[NTCA](#) has weighed in already on the 2nd R&O and NPRM.

Business Data Services for ACAM Support Recipients. In order to continue its quest to move more RoR carriers to incentive regulation, the FCC will consider a [Notice of Proposed Rulemaking](#) that would:

- Propose to allow A-CAM carriers to elect incentive regulation for their lower speed time-division multiplexing (TDM) BDS transport and end user channel termination offerings, while maintaining the current regulatory treatment for switched services and universal service support;
- Seek comment on creating a competitive market test (CMT) to assess the availability of competitive options for last-mile service in areas served by A-CAM carriers;
- Seek comment on relieving A-CAM carriers' lower-speed TDM BDS offerings of ex ante pricing regulation in areas deemed competitive by the CMT;
- Propose to eliminate ex ante pricing regulation for A-CAM carriers' packet-based and TDM BDS offerings at speeds above a DS3; and
- Propose to allow other rate-of-return carriers receiving fixed support to opt into the same incentive regulation proposed for A-CAM carriers.



Alexicon at Work

Alexicon is keeping track of the flurry of activity at the FCC, including the above-mentioned April open meeting items, the March 23 RoR USF Order(s) and NPRM, the Tribal opex relief order ([LINK](#)), in addition to continuing participation on various NTCA and WTA committees.



Questions? Comments?
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