Alexicon *insider*

INFORMATION AND ADVOCACY FOR THE
RURAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

Regulatory Headlines

FCC to Establish New Telehealth Pilot

The FCC is seeking to establish a $100 million "Connected Care Pilot Program" to support telehealth for low income Americans. The FCC connected care pilot program will be a focus on rural residents and veterans.

Associations Oppose Huawei Rules

The Competitive Carriers Association (CCA), the Computer & Communications Industry Association, ITTA – The Voice of America's Broadband Providers (ITTA), and NTCA – The Rural Broadband Association (NTCA) have filed joint reply comments with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in opposition of the Commission's proposed rule to prohibit the use of money distributed from the Universal Service Fund (USF) to purchase or obtain equipment or services from any providers identified as posing a national security risk to communications networks or the communications supply chain.
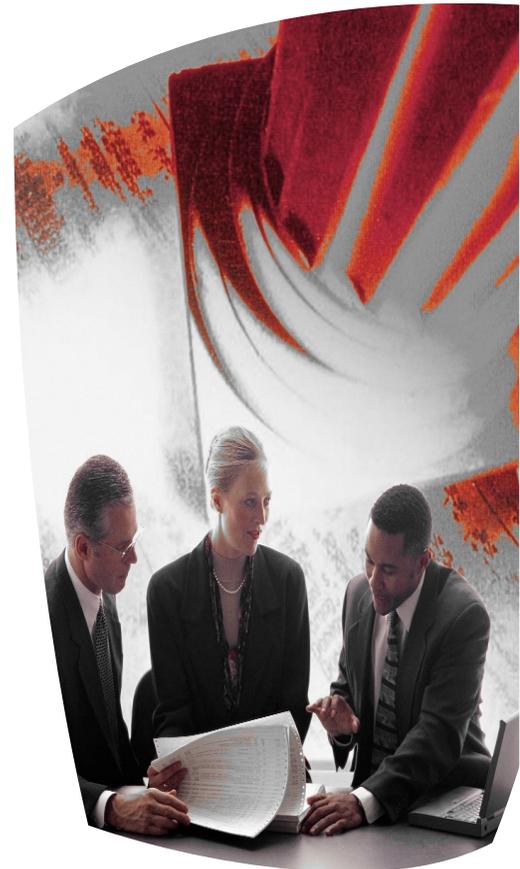
FCC Proposes to Overhaul ECFS

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is planning to overhaul its comment filing system following reports of widespread fake submissions during the commenting period on the net neutrality rollback last year.

FCC Changes Formal Complaint Process

At its July Open Meeting, the FCC adopted an Order that streamlines and consolidates procedures governing formal complaints handled by the Enforcement Bureau (Bureau). And no, the FCC won't charge $225 to complain about robocalls.

FCC Adopts NNP Order

At its July Open Meeting, the FCC adopted a Report and Order (R&O) that modifies outdated Commission rules in order to pave the way for nationwide number portability. Number portability is the ability to keep an existing phone number when changing carriers and locations. The R&O eliminates the "dialing parity" rule, which was aimed at enabling consumers to access...

Market Watch

Rural Fiber Broadband Could Cost $61 Billion

U.S. DoJ To Appeal AT&T/Time Warner Decision

U.S. Moves Closer to Lifting ZTE Ban

CBRS Profitability Report

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Questions? Comments?
Contact Chris Barron
cbarron@alexicon.net

Technology Trends

New and notable technology and services

States Have Restrictive Telemedicine Policies

The use of telemedicine is growing, and nearly all state Medicaid programs provide reimbursement for some telemedicine services, however, while state Medicaid programs are evolving to accelerate the adoption of telemedicine models, this evolution is occurring more quickly in some states than others, according to a recent analysis by healthcare advisory services firm Manatt Health.

IoT Cybersecurity Spending to Hit $6B

Spending on Internet of Things security will reach $6 billion by 2023, according to a new forecast from Juniper Research. North America is projected to lead global cybersecurity spending over the next five years and 5% of total cybersecurity spending across all businesses is expected to be devoted to IoT project security by 2023.

Cell Tower in a Box

A cell-tower network in a box may be an affordable method for remote areas to obtain internet access. GeekWire reports that Spencer Sevilla, a postdoctoral researcher in the University of Washington's School of Computer Science and Engineering and his team, are developing IslandCell, a cell-tower network in a box that's the size of a backpack, weighs approximately 20 pounds...

Hackers Selling $10 Backdoors

Cyber criminals are offering remote access to IT systems for just $10 via a dark web hacking store -- potentially enabling attackers to steal information, disrupt systems, deploy ransomware and more. The sales of backdoor access to compromised systems was uncovered by researchers at security company McAfee Labs looking into the sale of remote desktop protocol (RDP) access to hacked machines on underground forums -- some of which are selling access to tens of thousands of compromised systems.

Facebook, Twitter, Google AI Battle

When you sign up for Facebook on your phone, the app isn't just giving you the latest updates and photos from your friends and family. In the background, it's utilizing the phone's gyroscope to detect subtle movements that come from breathing. It's measuring how quickly you tap on the screen...

IN FOCUS:

Farm Bill:

House and Senate Versions

Both versions would allow RUS to refinance Title II loans, and contain priorities for applicant funding.

Interestingly, the House version allows up to 20% of any funds provided for the Broadband Loan Program to be used for middle mile projects.

The next step in the process is for a conference committee to negotiate a compromise version of the Bill, which is expected to be contentious for various reasons, including SNAP work requirements and immigration concerns.

Alexicon at Work

Meetings and Conventions

Doug Kitch will attend the National Tribal Telecommunications Association's Washington, D.C. fly-in on July 23-25

The Farm Bill, a piece of legislation that comes around every five years or so and is the primary agricultural and food policy tool of the federal government, has had a rough time in 2018. The House has already rejected one version and is now due to take up a motion to proceed to conference (HR 2). The House and Senate (S 3042) versions Farm Bill contains a number of broadband provisions, many of which differ.

Both versions contain a certain amount of appropriations that would go to broadband grants and/ or loans. The House version contains $350 million per year for grants and $150 million per year for the Broadband Loan Program, while the Senate version has just $150 million going to the loan and grant programs combined.

The minimum speed standard in each bill is 25/3 Mbps, but the House version would require the RUS to establish projected standards for up to 30 years into the future.

Each version also contains protections against overbuilding—the House would prohibit funds going to areas where an incumbent is already providing 25/3 Mbps service, along with some other restrictions. The Senate version allows for funds going to areas where 90% of the population cannot get service meeting the speed standards, and broadband service is not provided in any part of the proposed territory by two or more incumbent service providers.

ALEXICON 2018 MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

Alexicon will hold its 2018 Management Conference on August 22-24 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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cbarron@alexicon.net