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○ ISSUE 9 | ○ VOL 5-31 | ○ 2019

# Alexicon *insider*

INFORMATION AND ADVOCACY FOR THE  
RURAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

## Regulatory Headlines

### [EU GDPR Faces Tough Questions](#)

Europe's sweeping data privacy law, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), is facing tough questions at its one-year mark as regulators and industry giants intensify the fight over its enforcement.

### [Microsoft Pushes for GDPR-Like Rules](#)

With the one-year anniversary of the European Union's adoption of its General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) coming up on Saturday, Microsoft is calling on Congress to do the same in the U.S. In a blog post on Tuesday Microsoft...made the case that Congress and the federal government need to implement a privacy protection framework that is similar to...the EU's GDPR.

### [ISPs Must Ask Permission in Maine](#)

The state of Maine is taking a stand against Internet service providers (ISPs) that are monetizing customer information without consent by voting to pass a bill which will require express permission for such data harvesting.

### [USTelecom: Mapping Can Be Fixed](#)

Early data from USTelecom's broadband mapping pilot in Missouri and Virginia indicates the new methodology is working and is "superior to other [mapping] proposals," according to a communication the company sent to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

### [Pushback Against Robocall Blocking](#)

Debt collectors, banks, healthcare providers and other businesses are voicing objections to FCC Chairman Ajit Pai's proposal to allow phone companies to block unwanted calls.

### [Bill Would Fund Huawei/ZTE Replacement](#)

A bill was introduced that would...create a grant program from future spectrum auction revenue, and make available up to \$700 million from the trust fund to help network operators currently using Huawei and ZTE equipment to replace it with equipment not prohibited by federal law.



## Market Watch

[Frontier Sells Wireline Assets](#)

[Sprint, T-Mobile Consider Selling Spectrum](#)

[5G Speed Test Breakthrough](#)

[Huawei Challenges Defense Bill](#)



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# Technology Trends

New and notable technology and services

## Drones Could Help Rural Wireless

Self-flying drones built by a Missoula company can play a critical role in building out America's high-speed cellular network technology, according to a Federal Communications Commission member visiting on Tuesday. Brendan Carr, a commissioner on the FCC, was in Missoula to visit Skyfish, a drone manufacturer based in the Montana Technology Enterprise Center (MonTec) on East Broadway in Missoula.

## SpaceX Broadband Takes Next Step

SpaceX said it launched 60 low-earth orbit (LEO) satellites last week to support its ambitious plans to use thousands of LEO satellites to provide a global low-latency SpaceX satellite broadband service to be known as Starlink. By using LEO satellites, SpaceX Starlink expects to address latency issues associated with broadband service delivered from satellites in higher-altitude geostationary orbits.

## Number of Exposed Files—2.3 Billion

Over 2.3 billion files -- including sensitive data like payroll information, credit card details, medical data and patents for intellectual property -- are exposed publicly online, putting both people and organisations at risk of data theft, cybercrime, espionage and other malicious activities. Analysis by researchers at cybersecurity company Digital Shadows found the highly sensitive information stored alongside other data in publicly exposed or misconfigured online storage and cloud services, including SMB file shares, rsync servers, and Amazon S3 buckets.

## Draft Final SD-WAN Standard Released

MEF has put the finishing touches on its SD-WAN services standard, and expects to have it published in mid-July. MEF first announced its MEF 3.0 SD-WAN Service Attributes and Service Definition Standard project at the MEF 18 conference last fall.

## Finnish IoT Company Surges

Finland's Uros, a little known Internet of Things services company, saw its sales soar 171% to 1.31 billion euros last year and could become Finland's next tech star after Nokia...Uros, a privately owned company based in Oulu, sells mobile connections for industrial devices and sensors and sees more rapid growth ahead from a Qualcomm partnership.



## IN FOCUS

### 2019 Broadband Deployment Report

For the second year in a row, the FCC concludes that advanced telecommunications capability is being deployed to all Americans in a reasonable and timely fashion. This finding, required by Section 706 of the Telecommunications Act, is based on the data available to the FCC—mostly Form 477. For the last report, the Pai-led FCC had to change how broadband deployment is considered under Section 706—from availability to progress in deployment. This allowed the FCC for the first time to make a positive conclusion under the Act.

The Report claims that locations with access to 25/3 Mbps service increased by 18%. Of those gaining access, 4.3 million connections were added in rural areas. While there are still around 21.3 million Americans without access, the FCC still believes, based on the *progress* towards universal availability theory, that a positive finding under Section 706 can be made.

This year's report does not arrive without some controversy. First, the Democrats on the Commission, Jessica Rosenworcel and Geoffrey Starks, both dissented. The complaints noted in the separate dissenting statements were varied, but both concluded that the FCC, for the second year in a row, is declaring victory too soon. Both noted that the data relied upon (Form 477) has been found numerous times not to be reliable. Commissioner Rosenworcel, for the second time, calls for an increase in the speed threshold to 100 Mbps.

Commissioner Starks spends most of his dissenting statement discussing the poor data relied upon by the FCC to draw its conclusion, and questions the FCC's capabilities to process the data. He spends substantial time dis-

ussing an issue that arose publicly after the (non-public) draft report was circulated in February 2019, and that, absent Commissioner's discussion, was basically swept under the rug. The issue surrounded a reporting company, BarrierFree, that reported availability of broadband service to 62 million people residing in 1.5 million census blocks. One (of many) problems is that BarrierFree had reported zero availability in its previous reports. In addition, it reported FTTH availability to the entire state of New York, quite a feat to say the least. The FCC apparently, and uncritically, relied on this data to report somewhat different results contained in the draft report than what are noted in the final report. Needless to say, Commissioner Starks is not impressed with the FCC's data and analytical expertise, and correctly states "I don't believe that we know what the state of broadband deployment is in the U.S. with sufficient accuracy."

Regardless of the Pai Commission's legal gymnastics to be able to report a positive result under Section 706, all parties to some extent agree that Form 477 data is not sufficient to accurately map where broadband is and is not available today. This type of data is crucial for policymakers, the industry, and consumers to efficiently determine where service is and should be available. To this end, the industry has been working on solutions (see above article about USTelecom's efforts), but this will take time. Meanwhile, stakeholders are forced to rely on data that some call "garbage" or "fake news."



## Alexicon at Work

### Conferences and Meetings

Dion Nero will attend the Oklahoma Telephone Association and Arkansas Telecommunications Association Summer Conference in St. Louis, MO on June 2-5.



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