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# Alexicon *insider*

INFORMATION AND ADVOCACY FOR THE  
RURAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

## Regulatory Headlines

### Senate Confirms Carr, Starks to FCC

The U.S. Senate has confirmed Geoffrey Starks and Brendan Carr to new terms as Commissioners to the FCC. Starks, who was nominated in June and is a Kansas native like FCC Chairman Ajit Pai, was most recently Assistant Chief at the FCC’s Enforcement Bureau. Previously, he served as Senior Counsel at the U.S. Justice Department.

### Pai Applauds Congress on Net Neutrality

FCC Chairman Ajit Pai celebrated a failed attempt by Congress to bring back the Obama-led net neutrality rules. Before adjourning for new members and an ensuing Democrat majority, the GOP-led U.S. House of Representatives voted against reinstating the net neutrality rules that were put in place in 2015 under the auspices of then-FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler.

### US Telcos Caught Selling Data

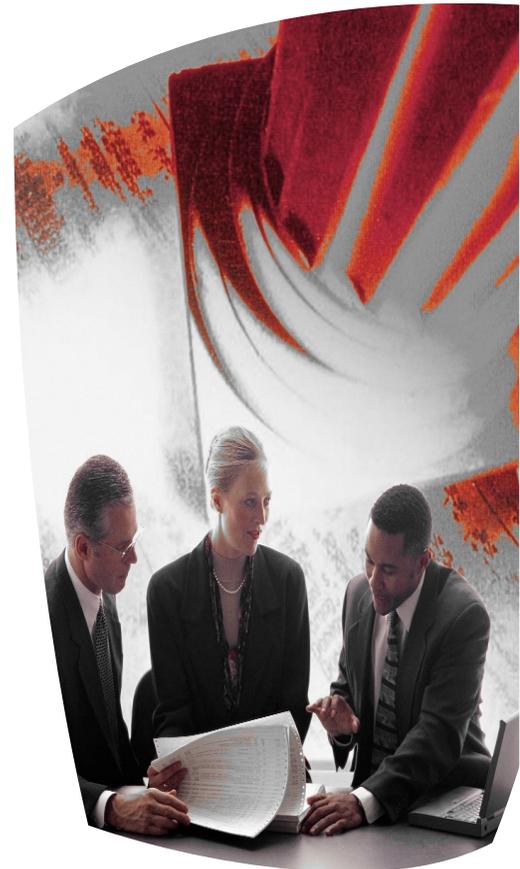
US Senator Ron Wyden has blasted US wireless carriers for continuing to sell their users’ location data after they promised to end the practice last June.

### Warner, Rubio Team Up on Tech Threats

Senators Marco Rubio and Mark Warner introduced a bill on Friday designed to guard against state-sponsored technology threats. The bill seeks to create a White House office, which would be called the Office of Critical Technologies, to coordinate efforts across government agencies by developing a unified strategy.

### T-Mobile/Sprint Merger Review Paused

The federal government funding lapse has claimed another victim, at least temporarily. The FCC has paused its review of the \$26 billion proposed merger between T-Mobile and Sprint for the second time in four months.



## Market Watch

[M&A in 2018—The Year of the Bad Deal?](#)

[States, Localities—Get Involved in Broadband](#)

[Broadband News: 10 Questions for 2019](#)

[TDS/Nexstar Retransmission Battle Rages](#)



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# Technology Trends

*New and notable technology and services*

## AT&T Bashed Over “Fake” 5G

A war of words has erupted in the wireless industry as Verizon and T-Mobile lash out against AT&T over its new marketing term "5G E," which suggests devices are connected to a 5G network. Executives from the two carriers have publicly criticized AT&T for marketing an upgrade to its existing 4G LTE network with a 5G moniker, when the service doesn't actually use the company's 5G network or comply with 5G standards.

## 5G, AI, Design, and Data Collide

CES 2019 will bring the traditional deluge of consumer electronics devices, but the business implications will be critical as everything becomes connected and the data generated by the hardware becomes the real asset. While CES traditionally revolves around consumer devices, most of them also will have business use cases. Here's a look at three emergent trends at CES 2019 that have business technology implications.

## Sprint Pairs IoT with 5G for Smart Cities

Sprint has announced at CES 2019 that Greenville, South Carolina, will see its first smart city build-out based on both its Curiosity Internet of Things (IoT) platform and mobile 5G network connectivity. As part of the project, Sprint will deploy Massive Multiple-Input Multiple-Output (Massive MIMO) technology as well as a dedicated IoT network and "micro-positioning" technology aimed at enabling connected vehicles, smart machines, and autonomous drones to operate and react in real time.

## National Security Center Launches Program

The National Counterintelligence and Security Center (NCSC) on Monday launched a program aimed at helping U.S. companies protect themselves from cyber attacks or other threats from foreign nation-state actors. The NCSC, housed within the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), is now sharing materials on how firms can guard themselves against threats to the supply chain...

## AI Blossoms Across Telecom

The artificial intelligence seeds that were sown this year will start to bear fruit in 2019. Whether it's networks, services, virtualization, or industrial applications, AI is crucial for solving complex problems while enabling new technologies. In order for AI to flourish, there first needs to be underlying machine learning and deeper analytics of data in place, which is well underway this year.



## IN FOCUS:

### Lifeline Form 555

**FCC Form 555**, which collects data annually on federal Lifeline program recertification efforts, is due to USAC, the FCC, and state commissions/Tribal governments by January 31. After the rolling recertification process was adopted and fully phased-in, Form 555 reporters list recertification results by month based on the Lifeline subscriber's anniversary date.

For carriers in the first two National Lifeline Verifier groups, there are specific issues to keep in mind. According to USAC:

- If you do business in the first launch states, put a "0" in blocks A-C (Form 555, blocks for eligible, de-enrolled and total subscribers to recertify) for subscribers living in CO, MS, MT, NM, UT, and WY.
- If you do business in the second group of launch states (HI, NH, ND, SD, Guam), you were responsible for recertification for any anniversary dates that fell within the 60 day window of October 15, 2018.

For more information, please see the USAC Form 555 webinar available here ([LINK](#)).

*National Verifier Note:* The next group of states to fall under the national verifier are MO, NC, PA, and TN. The soft launch for these states started on December 4. The full launch for Group 3 has yet to be announced.

## 2018 Tech Trends & Tribulations in 14 Charts

There's been a lot to keep track of this year. We've endured disasters both natural and manmade, political polarization and the relentless encroachment of big technology companies. Some might say 2018 was even crazier than 2017. Before we leave it behind, here's a look back at 2018's tech, tribulations and trends in charts.

This is the year Amazon stole the news cycle with its nationwide contest — or con — for a second headquarters. Cities around the country and in Canada prostrated themselves before the e-commerce giant, offering tax breaks and name changes in hopes of winning the HQ2 and the 50,000 jobs that come with it.

In November, over a year after the contest began, Amazon announced it would be splitting its new headquarters between Long Island City in New York and Crystal City, Northern Virginia — likely suspects all along. On social media — if not in real life — the decision upset people in the cities that didn't get an HQ2 as well as the cities that did. Negative sentiment about the decision far outweighed positive online, according to data from consumer insights company Crimson Hexagon.

## Alexicon at Work

### *Conferences*

Dion Nero will attend the Alaska Telephone Association's Winter Conference on the Big Island of Hawaii on January 27-30.

Doug Kitch and Chris Barron will attend NTCA's RTIME in New Orleans on February 3-6.

  
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