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Alexicon *insider*

INFORMATION AND ADVOCACY FOR THE
RURAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

Regulatory Headlines

USTelecom and Broadband Locations

As the FCC gets set to address inadequacies with the way broadband availability data is collected from service providers, USTelecom is warning that those efforts are only part of the solution to broadband mapping problems. To know which U.S. homes and businesses do not have broadband available to them, we also need to know the exact geographic coordinates of those homes and businesses.

FTC, Congress Crackdown on Robocalls

The U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and 25 state and local agencies on Tuesday unveiled a crackdown on robocalls as a congressional panel approved a bill that would take new steps to reduce the unwanted calls.

ReConnect Receives 53 Applications

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development received 53 applications requesting more than \$635 million in loan-grant combination funding in the first round of the USDA ReConnect Pilot Program, the USDA announced this week.

Pai vs Meteorologists

Meteorologists and other experts are urging the Federal Communications Commission to drop a spectrum-sharing plan that they say could interfere with transmissions of weather-satellite imagery. The dispute is over the 1675-1680MHz frequencies and is separate from the other FCC/weather controversy we've been covering, which involves the 24GHz band and has pitted the FCC against NASA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the US Navy.

11 New National Verifier States

The FCC's Wireline Competition Bureau (WTB) has released a Public Notice announcing that it will conduct a soft launch of its National Lifeline Eligibility Verifier (National Verifier) on Tuesday, June 25, 2019 in the states of Arizona, Connecticut, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, Nevada, New York, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia.



Market Watch

[Sacred Wind/Microsoft Tackle Digital Divide](#)

[Dish Launches MDU Streaming TV, WiFi](#)

[Rural Carriers Looking to Replace Huawei](#)

[Southern Linc Seeks ok for CBRS Experiments](#)



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Questions? Comments?
Contact Chris Barron

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Technology Trends

New and notable technology and services

YouTube TV Review—Cable Replacement

We're four years into the existence of live TV streaming as an option for cable TV cord cutters, and it feels like we're entering the awkward teen phase. While the technology is generally more stable now than ever, the pricing model is still working itself out. Most services are constantly ratcheting up their prices, including YouTube TV's recent jump from \$40 to \$50 per month.

The Cost of an Ad-Free Internet

Two senators from both sides of the aisle, Mark Warner (D-VA) and Josh Hawley (R-MO), pitched a bill Monday that would require companies like Facebook, Google, and Amazon to disclose how much your data is worth. That made us think about how much of the internet — and the products and content we consume on it — are paid for by advertising, which advertisers will pay more for if it's backed by data that tells them who they're reaching.

When it Makes Sense to Pay the Ransom

Yet another city is deciding to pay ransomware gangs to get their IT infrastructure back and you can almost feel the consternation among officials. That consternation may also be good business. Today's security threats have expanded in scope and seriousness. There can now be millions -- or even billions -- of dollars at risk when information security isn't handled properly. Simply put, it can make good sense to pay ransomware. In a recent research report, Forrester Research argued that paying ransomware should be viewed as a viable option and evaluated like any other business decision.

How to Tell if ISP is Throttling Speed

There have been recent trends for Slow Food (as opposed to fast food or just not savoring your meal) and Slow Travel is proving popular. But no one likes slower internet, especially if you are paying for high-speed, broadband internet service.

VZ 5G in Denver, Providence

Verizon's 5G service is switching on today in Denver, Colorado, and it will be available in Providence, Rhode Island, starting on July 1st. If you live in those cities, the carrier says that you'll see typical download speeds of 450 Mbps, with peak speeds hitting 1.5 Gbps. Verizon plans to charge customers an extra \$10 per month for 5G service, but it's currently waiving that added fee.



IN FOCUS

FCC July Open Meeting Agenda Items

The FCC will take up several important items at its July 10, 2019 open meeting—two relating to 5G-capable spectrum, an NPRM addressing connected care services, and another NPRM relating to improving competitive broadband access to multiple tenant environments (among others).

Educational Broadband Service (EBS) Spectrum. The FCC sought comment on ways to “transform” the EBS portion of the 2.5 GHz spectrum band back in May 2018, stating large portions of this spectrum lie fallow and could be repurposed for various 5G and IoT uses. In the draft [order](#), the FCC appears poised to release portions of the spectrum, loosen the regulatory requirements on its use, and after establishing some “priority” windows, auctioning the spectrum off on a competitive bidding basis (much of the spectrum is located in rural areas). Rural Tribal nations would get first crack at the spectrum (prior to the auction), and counties would be the geographic area over which the spectrum would be available.

Upper Microwave Flexible Use Service (UMFUS) Auction. The FCC will vote on a [Public Notice](#) that would establish Auction 103 for the purposes of the incentive auction for UMFUS licenses in the Upper 37 GHz, 39 GHz, and 47 GHz spectrum ranges. According to the FCC, this spectrum can promote the development of 5G wireless, IoT, and other advanced spectrum-based services. As of now, bidding in Auction 103 is set to commence on December 10, 2019.

Promoting Telehealth for Low-Income Consumers. Also on the July Open Meeting agenda is an [NPRM](#) that proposes to establish a 3

year, \$100 million pilot to be funded by the USF. The pilot's purpose would be to help health care providers “defray the costs of broadband service to enable low-income patients and veterans to access telehealth services.”

Improving Competitive Broadband Access to Multiple Tenant Environments. According to the FCC's [fact sheet](#) “An important part of closing the digital divide is promoting high-speed broadband access for the millions of Americans who live and work in apartments, condominiums, and office buildings— which the Commission calls “multiple tenant environments” or MTEs. To provide service to tenants, communications service providers must have access to the building. But when service providers know that they would have to share the communications facilities that they deploy with their competitors, they are less likely to invest in deployment in the first place. For decades, Congress and the Commission have encouraged facilities-based competition by broadly promoting access to customers and infrastructure—including MTEs and their occupants—while sharply limiting to only narrow circumstances any mandatory sharing requirements that reduce incentives to invest. Following these principles, this Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Declaratory Ruling would take steps to promote facilities-based broadband deployment and greater consumer choice for Americans living and working in MTEs.”



Alexicon at Work

Doug Kitch will attend the Pennsylvania Telephone Association Annual Convention on July 8 – 10 in Hershey, PA, and will then head over to the Phoenix, AZ area on July 11 for an NTTA meeting.

Alexicon's offices will be closed on July 4 in observance of the 4th of July holiday.



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