



- ▶ DATA SHOWS 60MBPS MEDIAN SPEED
- ▶ FCC MOVES TOWARD JUNE CBRS AUCTION
- ▶ PAI PROPOSES \$950M FOR PUERTO RICO
- ▶ FCC TO AUTHORIZE MORE CAF II WINNERS
- ▶ FORMER FCC CHAIRMAN ON 5G SECURITY ...1

○ ISSUE 9 | ○ VOL 9-6 | ○ 2019

- ▶ NEX-TECH TO EXPAND CARRIER DIVISION OFFERINGS
- ▶ ALTICE MOBILE EXPECTS TO BE IN THE BLACK
- ▶ GLOBAL OTT REVENUES TO DOUBLE
- ▶ BROADCAST, CABLE STILL TOP STREAMING CONTENT ...1

- ▶ U.S. NEEDS PRIVACY LAW
- ▶ U.S. NOT READY TO REGULATE INTERNET
- ▶ BIG TECH FACES ANTITRUST PROBE
- ▶ BROADBAND EXPANSION CAN SAVE LIVES
- ▶ 5G DATA CALL MADE USING DSS ...2

# Alexicon *insider*

INFORMATION AND ADVOCACY FOR THE  
RURAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

## Regulatory Headlines

### Data Shows 60 Mbps Median Speed

The median U.S. internet speed was 60 Mbps downstream and 5 Mbps upstream as of December 31, 2017, according to a report released this month from the FCC. More than two-thirds of internet customers (69%) subscribe to service at speeds of at least 25 Mbps, including 37.5% who subscribe to service at speeds of at least 100 Mbps, the commission said.

### FCC Moves Toward June CBRS Auction

The wireless industry now has a proposed date for when the licensed portion of the 3.5 GHz Citizens Broadband Radio Services (CBRS) band goes up for auction: June 25, 2020. FCC Chairman Ajit Pai announced in a blog post on Wednesday that the full commission will vote at its September 26 meeting to seek comment on draft procedures for an auction of the 70 MHz of spectrum that will be licensed.

### Pai Proposes \$950M For Puerto Rico

While Hurricane Dorian is front and center in the news, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chair Ajit Pai is proposing additional funding for broadband in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands after hurricanes blew through those islands two years ago.

### FCC To Authorize More CAF II Winners

The FCC said that it is ready to authorize funding for six more Connect America CAF II auction winners. The “ready to authorize” designation indicates that the FCC has reviewed and approved a winner’s application to deploy broadband in high-cost areas for which the entity won funding.

### Former FCC Chairman on 5G Security

Former Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Tom Wheeler stressed the need to zero in on protecting 5G wireless networks from cyber threats in a new paper published Tuesday by the Brookings Institution.



## Market Watch

[Nex-Tech To Expand Carrier Division Offerings](#)

[Altice Mobile Expects to be in the Black](#)

[Global OTT Revenues to Double](#)

[Broadcast, Cable Still Top Streaming Content](#)



Alexicon

Questions? Comments?  
Contact Chris Barron

[cbarron@alexicon.net](mailto:cbarron@alexicon.net)

# Technology Trends

*New and notable technology and services*

## U.S. Not Ready to Regulate Internet

The federal government has levied a record-setting fine against a giant internet platform for abusing its users' privacy. Critics say the government hasn't done nearly enough. Yes, that was also the takeaway in July, when the US laid out a \$5 billion penalty against Facebook. It's also today's news: Google's YouTube has agreed to pay \$170 million in fines to settle Federal Trade Commission charges that it illegally harvested children's personal data, which it used to serve them personalized ads.

## Big Tech Faces Antitrust Probe

A bipartisan group of state attorneys general will announce on Monday an investigation into large tech companies, like Facebook and Google, for potential violations of antitrust law, Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton announced on Friday. Being probed are Facebook (FB.O), Alphabet's Google (GOOGL.O), Apple (AAPL.O) and Amazon (AMZN.O) for potential violations of antitrust law.

## Broadband Expansion Can Save Lives

Telemedicine can help save lives, and improving broadband internet access makes telemedicine work better, an anesthesiologist said in testimony submitted at a legislative hearing Tuesday. The comments submitted by Pennsylvania Medical Society President Dr. Danae Powers were for the second of four hearings to be held statewide on increasing access to high-speed broadband internet service.

## 5G Data Call Made Using DSS

Ericsson says it made the world's first 5G data call using dynamic spectrum sharing. The call was made on a 3GPP Frequency Division Duplex (FDD) low band using commercial hardware and Ericsson Radio System software. The data call was set up in August at Ericsson's lab in Ottawa, Canada using an Ericsson macro radio that supported both 4G and 5G.

## U.S. Needs Privacy Law

On Wednesday, the Federal Trade Commission settled an investigation into the Google-owned video platform YouTube, resulting in the largest fine ever weighed on a tech company for violating children's privacy law. But the \$170 million in penalties and new restrictions over children's data, critics argue, do little to incentivize the company to change its behavior.



## IN FOCUS

### Rural Telehealth Report and Order

The FCC adopted some sweeping changes to the Rural Healthcare Program in August designed to simplify the rules, better target funding to rural areas, and put in place safeguards against waste, fraud, and abuse. The decision makes changes to both the Telecom Program and the more recent Healthcare Connect Program, as well as to various administrative policies. We will issue a detailed Special Bulletin in the near future, but here are some of the more pertinent details.

The main issues addressed in the "Promoting Telehealth in Rural America" Report and Order are (1) Improving transparency, predictability, and efficiency for the Telecom program; (2) Prioritizing RHC program funding for rural and medically underserved areas; (3) Increasing rural participation in the RHC consortia program; (4) Increasing effectiveness of competitive bidding; (5) Improving RHC program administration; and (6) Improving the application process and program administration.

One important change made is in essence transferring the responsibility for determining the urban (paid by the provider) and rural (paid to the service provider) rates from the health care provider/applicant to USAC. This new USAC responsibility includes defining what constitutes a similar service, the geographic contours pertaining to the rate determinations (includes a "rurality" metric), and ensuring reasonably comparable rural and urban rates. USAC will also eventually generate a public data base of the key items for health care and service providers to consider when applying for program benefits.

Also new is the prioritization of support when the RHC program budget has been exceeded. The existing proration rule will be replaced with a prioritization method that takes into account the rurality of the health care provider's area and a measure of how badly the area is medically underserved. Once the \$150m Telecom program cap has been hit, the overall RHC program overage will first be prioritized and then prorated.

Also being revised and harmonized are the RHC program competitive bidding rules. Currently, the Telecom program is not subject to the "fair and open" competitive bidding rules the FCC adopted for the Health Care Connect program. Going forward, the Telecom program will also be subject to these rules, which include ensuring bidders and service providers must have access to the same information and potential bidders cannot assist health care providers with applications and/or bid evaluations.

*There are a number of other rule and administrative changes that we will cover in the future Special Bulletin. For now, it appears that USAC will have substantial new responsibility and authority for the RHC program, to be added to its already full list of USF tasks that it sometimes struggles to accomplish.*



## Alexicon at Work

Dion Nero and Zach Cochran will attend the WTA Fall Meeting in Monterey, CA on September 8-11. Mr. Cochran will be giving a presentation titled "How to Use a Map to Get Lost" on September 10 at 2:15 (tentative day and time—check with the final agenda so you don't miss Zach's wry take on the current state of broadband mapping).

Doug Kitch will accompany the National Tribal Telecommunications Association on its D.C. Fly-in September 16-19.



**Alexicon**

Questions? Comments?  
Contact Chris Barron  
[cbarron@alexicon.net](mailto:cbarron@alexicon.net)