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Alexicon *insider*

INFORMATION AND ADVOCACY FOR THE
RURAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

Regulatory Headlines

Court Upholds FCC on Net Neutrality

A federal appeals court on Tuesday delivered a mixed ruling for net neutrality supporters and opponents alike, allowing the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) 2017 repeal to stand but striking down a key provision blocking states from implementing their own open internet rules.

FCC Pushes 5G Forward with Auction

The US Federal Communications Commission is moving forward on its plans to auction off a key sliver of midband spectrum licenses for 5G service. The agency voted unanimously Thursday to seek comment on bidding rules for the auction, which is set to start June 25.

Report on RDOF Impact and COLR

Telecom service providers once were essentially guaranteed a monopoly in exchange for being required to provide service to everyone in their territories, but today, even though telcos no longer have a monopoly, they are still subject to COLR and other requirements.

FCC Needs To Do More on Security

Democratic FCC commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel suggests the FCC is stuck in a bit of "digital age paralysis" when it comes to promoting cybersecurity. In a speech at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Friday (Sept. 27), Rosenworcel said that the FCC could and should do more to insure cybersecurity.

FCC Alleges Sprint Lifeline Violation

The FCC says that it "has learned" that Sprint claimed monthly subsidies for serving subscribers to the Lifeline program that are not using the service.

FCC Announces NLV Soft Launch

The FCC's Wireline Competition Bureau (WCB) issued a Public Notice announcing that the National Lifeline Eligibility Verifier (National Verifier) will soft launch in Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, and Washington, starting October 11, 2019.



Market Watch

[Partnership Targets Rural Broadband](#)

[What Would Make You Cancel Video Service?](#)

[Bundle Transparency Lacking in U.S.](#)

[Comporium Migrates to DAA](#)



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Questions? Comments?
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Technology Trends

New and notable technology and services

5G Benefits Are Coming

There are so many promises about how faster 5G data will transform our lives, it sometimes feels mythical. Though lightning-fast download speeds are slowly coming to more carriers and phones, the prospects of self-driving cars talking to each other, remote surgery and 5G replacing your home Wi-Fi feel like the stuff of a still-distant future. But at last, we're finally starting to see a light at the end of the tunnel.

Spotlight on Cybersecurity Awareness

Cybersecurity should be a concern for all businesses -- large and small. Cybersecurity also should be a concern for consumers, government agencies, and basically anyone who relies on the Internet in our increasingly connected world. To cite two high-profile examples of mass cybercrime, some 3 billion Yahoo accounts were hacked in 2016, and 412 million Friendfinder accounts were compromised in 2017, according to cybersecurity research firm Varonis.

"10G" to be Center Stage at Cable Expo

The cable industry's 10G initiative will be front and center at this week's SCTE-ISBE Cable-Tec Expo in New Orleans. Somewhat to the consternation of the telco industry, 10G was announced in January at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. While some in the telco industry thought the name was an attempt to steal some of the shine from 5G deployments, SCTE-ISBE CEO and President said 10G was foundational to the cable industry's future.

Golf Tees-Up Tech Revolution

Golf might be perceived as a gentle pastime by many, but the sport is going through its own quiet digital transformation. Michael Cole, CTO for the European Tour, which stages and supports 49 professional golf tournaments across 29 countries, has a vision of the intelligent golf course of the future, combining connectivity, big data and cloud computing alongside trials of new technology.

Privacy Rules Unlikely in 2019

A U.S. online privacy bill is not likely to come before Congress this year, three sources said, as lawmakers disagree over issues like whether the bill should preempt state rules, forcing companies to deal with much stricter legislation in California that goes into effect on Jan. 1.



IN FOCUS FCC Addresses Access Arbitrage

On September 27, the FCC released a [Report and Order](#) that revises some of the rules concerning how access stimulation and arbitrage is treated. When the draft order was released, there was significant advocacy activity about a provision that would expand the definition of "access stimulation" to potentially include rural LECs that are not engaging in any purposeful activities to artificially increase terminating access traffic.

At issue in the draft order was an expansion of the "access stimulation" definition to include RLECs with terminating to originating traffic ratios, measured on an IXC-by-IXC basis, of at least 6:1. Previously, the definition included a two tier test: (1) the involved LEC had to have a revenue sharing agreement, and (2) either (a) a T/O ratio of at least 3:1 in a calendar month or (b) had more than 100% increase in interstate MOU compared to the same month in the previous year. Several parties, including [NTCA](#) and [WTA](#), correctly pointed out problems with a blanket 6:1 T/O ratio, and the FCC apparently heard and acted upon the input.

In the *Report and Order* released last week, the FCC kept the blanket 6:1 T/O ratio definition for CLECs, but changed the definition for RLECs to "an interstate terminating-to-originating traffic ratio of at least 10:1 in a three calendar month period and has 500,000 minutes or more of interstate terminating minutes-of-use per month in an end office in the same three calendar month period." For any carrier fitting the new definitions of access stimulation, the LEC will bear the financial responsibility for the terminating traffic by essentially paying for all transport and termi-

nation of such traffic: "we adopt rules requiring an access-stimulating LEC to designate in the Local Exchange Routing Guide (LERG) or by contract the route through which an IXC can reach the LEC's end office or functional equivalent and to bear financial responsibility for all interstate and intrastate tandem switching and transport charges for terminating traffic to its own end office(s) or functional equivalent whether terminated directly or indirectly."

According to data contained in the *Report and Order*, the new rules will likely affect only a "handful" of rural areas, including 21 CLECs and potentially some centralized equal access providers (CEA). For example, AT&T observed that "twice as many minutes were being routed per month to Redfield, South Dakota (pop. ~2,300) as is routed to all of Verizon's facilities in New York City."

This is a good example of how paying attention and focused advocacy efforts can pay dividends every once in a while. Another example is potentially contained in the FCC's upcoming broadband performance measurement decision that will be addressed in October (more on that in a separate Special Bulletin).



Alexicon at Work

Doug Kitch and Zach Cochran will be attending the Arizona-New Mexico Telecommunications Fall Conference in Phoenix on October 7-9. Both gentlemen will also be providing presentations on current topics of interest.

Rob Strait and Dion Nero will be attending the Mid America Telecom Showcase and Seminar (MATSS) in Kansas City on October 14-16.



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