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Alexicon *insider*

INFORMATION AND ADVOCACY FOR THE
RURAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

Regulatory Headlines

[FCC Proposes \\$200m in Fines](#)

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is proposing more than \$200 million in fines against the country's top mobile carriers after a lengthy investigation concluded T-Mobile, AT&T, Sprint and Verizon improperly sold access to their customers' precise location information.

[The Quest to Build Better Maps](#)

Independent actors are leading the way in fixing the widely-identified flaws with the Federal Communications Commission's Form 477 broadband mapping data, and they are using creative methods to do so.

[Senate Approves Huawei Bill](#)

The Senate unanimously approved legislation on Thursday that would ban the use of federal funds to purchase telecommunications equipment from companies deemed a national security threat, such as Chinese group Huawei.

[FCC Proposes RDOF Bidding Rules](#)

The FCC is seeking comment on bidding procedures for the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) auction, which will award funding for rural broadband. The first of two auction phases would have a budget of \$16 billion and is expected to start in October.

[SpaceX May Be Eyeing RDOF Support](#)

Is satellite broadband provider Space Exploration Technologies (SpaceX) considering a bid for rural broadband funding in the upcoming Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) auction? A recent meeting with representatives of the company and FCC staffers suggests the answer could be yes.

[Senators Urge ReConnect Funding](#)

A group of bipartisan senators is urging the Department of Agriculture (USDA) to open up its rural broadband funding program to more states suffering from a lack of Internet connectivity.



Market Watch

[Pew Report Looks at State Broadband Funding](#)

[Cincinnati Bell, Butler Electric Coop Deal](#)

[TDS Takes on Comcast and CenturyLink](#)

[Frontier Begins Selling Philo](#)



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Questions? Comments?
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Technology Trends

New and notable technology and services

Telecom Solar Project in Oregon

Clear Creek Communications of Redland, Ore. recently received a grant from the Portland General Electric (PGE) Renewable Development Fund and from the Energy Trust of Oregon to install two solar arrays that are expected to offset 25% of the telecom company's overall power requirement. The project also received a grant from the Oregon Public Utility Commission.

Google Announces \$10b in Investment

Google and Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai announced that Google will invest more than \$10 billion in offices and data centers across the United States in 2020. In a blog post, Pichai said the investments would primarily focus on 11 states. The list includes California, which is Google's home state, Colorado, Georgia, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New York, Oklahoma, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas and Washington. "These investments will create thousands of jobs, including roles within Google, construction jobs in data centers and renewable energy facilities..." Pichai said.

Humax Grows its RDK Device Lineup

Humax, a provider of video and broadband customer premises equipment (CPE), is expanding its portfolio of RDK-enabled devices for service operators. Reference Design Kit is a broadband, video and connected device technology standard with backing from major cable operators including Comcast, Charter and Liberty Global. In 2018, RDK Management said that use of the RDK software stack was up 62% over 2017, from 25 million pay TV set-tops and gateways to around 40 million.

CBRS Alliance Completes 5G Specs

With mid-band spectrum being such a focal point of 5G around the world, it's no wonder the CBRS Alliance is happy to report the completion of its 5G specifications for the 3.5 GHz Citizens Band Radio Services (CBRS) 3.5 GHz band here in the U.S. Last year, the alliance predicted it would conclude work on Release 3 in the fourth quarter. Like so many things associated with CBRS, that didn't quite happen on schedule, but the organization isn't dwelling on that, noting that the market for...

Turning Stolen Data into Cash

We're only two months into a new year and already hundreds of millions of personal records have been compromised, including 123 million employee and customer records from sporting retailer Decathlon and another 10.6 million records of former guests of MGM Resorts hotels. These announcements followed fuel and convenience chain Wawa's revelation that it was the victim of a nine-month-long breach of its payment card systems at 850 locations nationwide.



IN FOCUS **FCC Adopts CBRS Auction Procedures**

The FCC adopted a [Public Notice](#) containing the procedures for the auction of priority access licenses (PALs) for Citizens Broadband Radio Service (CBRS) spectrum. The auction will start on June 25 and covers PALs in the 3.5 GHz band (3550-3650 MHz), to be awarded at the county level. Advocates, including [Chairman Ajit Pai](#), have described the mid-band CBRS spectrum as key to the nationwide rollout of 5G and Internet of Things (IoT)-based services.

CBRS spectrum is governed by a three-tiered authorization framework: Incumbent access, Priority access, and General Authorized Access (GAA) users. Incumbent users include Department of Defense, federal aeronautical radionavigation, and non-federal grandfathered fixed satellite service. Incumbent users have the highest priority, followed, naturally, by the PALs.

The auction ([auction 105](#)) will address only PALs that will be awarded via an ascending clock auction. Each county will include 7 PALs (10 MHz each) and each bidder will be limited to 4 generic 10MHz spectrum blocks per county. The short form (pre-auction) application window will open on March 26, 2020 and will close on April 6 at 6 pm eastern.

There will be three types of bidding credits available prior to the auction, and one post-auction:

- Small Businesses (\$55m in annual revenues or less): 15% discount on winning bid

- Very Small Business (\$20m in annual revenues or less): 25% discount on winning bid
- Rural Service Provider (250k or less combined wireless, wireline, broadband and cable subscribers in predominantly rural areas): 15% discount on winning bid.

The small and very small business credits are capped at \$25m, and the rural service provider credit is capped at \$10m)

- A Tribal lands bidding credit can be applied for after the auction is complete, and is based on a formula contained in the FCC's rules (47 CFR §1.2110(f)(3)(iii))

Those interested in exploring the CBRS PALs being made available in Auction 105 should immediately begin due diligence, which at a minimum includes technical and marketplace factors such as likely tower sites and compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and the existence of current and future CBRS-capable equipment.



Alexicon at Work

Now that Form 477, HUBB, and CPNI filings are complete, Alexicon consultants can turn to updating projections, optional HCLS filings, and gearing up for the summer filing season.

Meetings and Conventions

Zach Cochran is attending the NECA Industry Meeting in Tampa, Florida on March 4 and 5.

Dion Nero is attending the Minnesota Telecom Alliance annual convention in Minneapolis on March 9-11.



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