

December 18, 2020

- ▶ **LAWMAKERS STRESS BROADBAND EXPANSION**
- ▶ **HOW BIDEN FCC COULD FIX THE INTERNET**
- ▶ **1Q2021 USF CONTRIBUTION FACTOR**
- ▶ **SENATE CONFIRMS SIMINGTON TO FCC**
- ▶ **C-BAND AUCTION TOPS \$10 BILLION**
- ▶ **FCC CONSIDERS CHINA TELECOM BAN** ...1
- ▶ **NTCA MEMBERS SEE GAINS IN GIGABIT SERVICES**
- ▶ **THE NEED TO FIX AMERICA'S INTERNET**
- ▶ **ONEWEB LAUNCHES 36 SATELLITES**
- ▶ **COVID FUELS STRONG BROADBAND GROWTH** ...1
- ▶ **MICROSOFT UNLEASHES "DEATH STAR"**
- ▶ **RANSOMWARE ATTACKS UP, INSURERS SCALE BACK**
- ▶ **3M USERS INSTALLED MALICIOUS EXTENSIONS**
- ▶ **NEXTGEN TV OVER CABLE TEST**
- ▶ **TECH FIRMS PROMOTE KEY LAW** ...2

Alexicon *insider*

INFORMATION AND ADVOCACY FOR THE
RURAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

Regulatory Headlines

[Lawmakers Stress Broadband Expansion](#)

Lawmakers and former federal officials said on Wednesday that universal broadband access is essential to boosting the American economy during and after the coronavirus pandemic.

[How Biden FCC Could Fix the Internet](#)

When Joe Biden is inaugurated as president on January 20, he stands to oversee a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) that could do remarkable things. Among other things, the new FCC could bridge the digital divide, ensuring all Americans have access to the internet.

[1Q2021 USF Contribution Factor](#)

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC or Commission) has announced that the proposed universal service contributor factor for the first quarter of 2021 will be 31.8 percent. The Commission projects that collected end-user revenues will amount to about \$10 billion in the first quarter of 2021

[Senate Confirms Simington to FCC](#)

In a party line vote, the US Senate voted to approve Nathan Simington as the next FCC commissioner. Simington's confirmation comes in light of Commissioner Michael O'Rielly's imminent departure from the Commission after the President withdrew his nomination of O'Rielly for another term.

[C-Band Auction Tops \\$10 Billion](#)

Only seven days into the FCC's C-Band auction, bidding topped \$10 billion as of the last round Tuesday (Dec. 15). The total gross proceeds after round 20 of the auction, which launched Dec. 8, were \$10,504,473,550, up more than a billion dollars from \$9,566,525,750 in round 19.

[FCC Considers China Telecom Ban](#)

The FCC has started to consider whether to ban China Telecom (Americas) Corporation from providing domestic interstate and international telecommunications services within the United States.



Market Watch

[NTCA Members See Gains in Gigabit Services](#)

[The Need to Fix America's Internet](#)

[OneWeb Launches 36 Satellites](#)

[COVID Fuels Strong Broadband Growth](#)




Alexicon

Questions? Comments?
Contact Chris Barron
cbarron@alexicon.net

Technology Trends

New and notable technology and services

Ransomware Attacks Up, Insurers Scale Back

Ransomware attacks increased in terms of both severity and costs this year, forcing insurers to become more selective and even scale back on the cover they offer against cyber crimes, a report from a leading insurer showed. The total costs of ransom payments doubled year-on-year through the first six months of 2020, according to the report from Lloyd's of London insurer Beazley Plc that called such attacks the biggest threat facing businesses.

3m Users Installed Malicious Extensions

More than three million internet users are believed to have installed 15 Chrome, and 13 Edge extensions that contain malicious code, security firm Avast said. The 28 extensions contained code that could perform several malicious operations. Avast said it found code to: redirect user traffic to ads, redirect user traffic to phishing sites collect personal data, such as birth dates, email addresses, and active devices collect browsing history download further malware onto a user's device.

NextGen TV Over Cable Test

The NextGen TV standard is set to undergo a test on its ability to transmit the ATSC 3.0-powered standard over limited cable infrastructure in Portland, Ore., the Phoenix Model Market has announced. The Phoenix Model Market Partners are working with Comcast in Portland to see how to deliver NextGen TV to Comcast's infrastructure, which Phoenix Model Market believes could provide the industry a real-world technical example of how to transmit ATSC 3.0 over hybrid fiber-coaxial infrastructure.

Tech Firms Promote Key Internet Law

Several technology companies including Snap Inc, Pinterest, Dropbox and eBay announced a coalition on Tuesday that would advocate the benefits of Section 230, a decades-old law protecting internet firms. Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act protects tech companies from liability over content posted by users, and has been under attack from U.S. President Donald Trump and Republican lawmakers.

Microsoft Unleashes "Death Star"

Now witness the firepower of this fully armed and operational Battle Station.
— Emperor Palpatine, Return of the Jedi

This week Microsoft took a series of dramatic steps against the recent SolarWinds supply chain attack. In the size, speed and scope of its actions, Microsoft has reminded the world that it can still muster firepower like no one else as a nearly-overwhelming force for good.



IN FOCUS FCC Adopts "Rip and Replace" Program

The FCC this week continued its implementation of federal laws addressing communications supply chain security, such as the Secure Networks Act (SNA), by adopting more detailed remove and replacement requirements for equipment and services sold by firms deemed a national security threat, and adopting a reimbursement program, albeit one without any funding as of yet. This latest decision follows other FCC actions that named Huawei and ZTE as national security threats to the communications supply chain and prohibited the use of USF support to purchase or obtain any equipment or services produced or provided by a covered company posing a national security threat to the integrity of communications networks or the communications supply chain.

The newest decision addresses four main issues: (1) the remove and replacement requirement, (2) the SNA-mandated "covered list" of equipment and services to be generated by the FCC, (3) the bar on federal subsidies for items on the covered list, and (4) the reimbursement program. As of now, these rules apply only to Huawei and ZTE equipment and services, although the FCC, via an established process, can add more companies to the list in the future (see article above on China Telecom).

The **remove and replacement** requirement is only operative once a reimbursement program, including actual funding, is in place. However, all ETCs must remove covered equipment irrespective of whether the company receives any money from the reimbursement program.

The FCC is to publish a **covered equipment list** on its website. This

"covered" list is contained in FCC rule 54.10, and basically encompasses all the equipment that must actually be removed and replaced. This should happen fairly quickly since, in large part, the affected equipment is known.

The reimbursement program, yet to be funded by congress, is open to all providers with fewer than 2 million advanced service (broadband) subscribers. The program will operate in three stages: (1) initial application with cost estimates, (2) allocations, and (3) disbursements. Rolling filings, complete with documentation, will be required in the disbursements stage

According to the SNA, equipment purchased after 8/14/18 is not eligible for reimbursement. The FCC states this date applies to the initial covered list (which has yet to be developed), and when the covered list is updated, any equipment purchased up to 60 days after will be eligible.

Reasonable cost standard will be used, and includes "soft costs" such as legal and engineering. Reasonable costs incurred prior to the reimbursement program being established may be eligible. In other words, if you started now in removing, disposing, and replacing suspect equipment, you may be able to claim those costs for reimbursement.

Reminders

- ⇒ **988 Suicide Prevention Hotline.** Mandatory 10-digit dialing transition has started for certain area codes containing 988 NXXs. See the 8/19/20 *Special Bulletin*, 8/20/20 email distribution of the NANPA transition schedule, and 11/18/20 email distribution of NANPA's latest guidance.
- ⇒ Providers that block robocalls are required to establish a **single point of contact** for resolving unintended or inadvertent blocking.
- ⇒ **Reassigned numbers database** recordkeeping requirements for small providers begin 1/27/2021. (See 8/10/20 *Special Bulletin*)
- ⇒ **8YY Access Charge Reform**—All current intra-state originating access charge rate elements for toll free/8YY calls were frozen as of 11/27/2020.



Questions? Comments?
Contact Chris Barron
cbarron@alexicon.net