

Please block the merger of America Online (AOL) and Time Warner.

In my dealings with both companies, I have found that they both charge high rates for poor service. Most recently, I signed up for Time Warner's Road Runner Internet service. Since its installation less than one month ago, it has been unavailable eight to ten times. Heavy rains were a factor one of those times, but the rest were not weather-related since Houston has been spared the ice storms that have occurred in northern Texas.

I have no other choice for cable modem service and as such I am an unhappy customer with no options. It should be obvious that broadband Internet service opens up possibilities for consumers and businesses that were simply unfeasible while using phone modems. This technology will revolutionize how we use the Internet and it is the responsibility of the FCC to ensure that its development is not stymied by a single monopolistic competitor. Allowing this merger will create an 800-pound gorilla (and a vertical combination) that will be able to choke off competition in this new industry. This would create a situation that would be much like AT&T before the break-up. The AT&T break-up was great for consumers since competition drove prices lower and service higher. And contrary to what one may have predicted, the value of the broken-up pieces of AT&T are worth far more than the unified company ever was.

The Time Warner Road Runner service is so unreliable at this point that I will have to maintain my old phone modem account for several months (at least!) until I am comfortable that they can provide uninterrupted service.

Such a company should not be rewarded with my government's blessing on an anti-competitive merger. Thank you.

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