

I have been a satellite broadcast subscriber for 5 years. In that time, I have been lucky enough to have a considerable expansion of service offerings with very minimal increase in costs.

I am lucky enough to live in a market currently serviced by my satellite provider (DishNetwork) and look forward new features such as expanded High Definition (HS) services as well as interactive TV services.

While I am luck to live in a location where local service is supported, I have friends and family that are not. I do not believe that they have any possibility to get local services provided to them without the merger going forward. The people of whom I am reffering are from Nothern Minnesota, and have no cable OR reasonable quality off-air services available.

While technology will undoubtedly move forward and leverage some benifit to the consumer, the prospect of either company converting to 8PSK to leverage higher data rates and be able to leverage their existing bandwidth for currently unserved areas would at best be done well into the future (6-10 years).

This merger will create a cosolidation which does merrit scrutiny, but from every angle I have reviewed thus far I can see no other appopriate alternative than to let EchoStar and DirectTV merge.

If this merger is not approved, the existing companies will be forced to merge with content providers in the future and therefore further put the squeeze on the consumer when even larger and more entrenched organizations battle each other and leave the consumer out in the cold.