

I am currently a subscriber of Dish Network TV in Mercer County, NJ.

The service is terrific - much better than what I was receiving from Comcast Cable in all but one respect. I have even convinced friends and family members to get it as well. The one area that is lacking is of course local network coverage. My complaint however may not be what you are used to hearing about. Every cable system in Mercer County and many in southern Middlesex, Somerset and Hunterdon as well transmit the signals of both New York and Philadelphia local channels. They do this because FCC rules require them to carry signals based not on zip codes but on distance from transmitters. Satellite providers on the other hand transmit local channels based on zip codes. This means that because I live in Mercer County I get Philadelphia locals. I DON'T GIVE A HOOT ABOUT PHILADELPHIA. I WANT NEW YORK. Why can my neighbors get NY locals over cable but I can't via satellite? In any event, I firmly believe that the merger will be good for the overall television industry. It is the only way to get better locals coverage across the nation and will, I think, ultimately provide better and cheaper service to rural communities. Satellite companies have the same overhead for rural customers as urban customers. Cable companies don't. Cable companies are the ones who will refuse to serve rural communities or do so only at exorbitant prices. Satellite can be provided for the same price to rural communities as to the rest of the country. What they need is bandwidth for more local channels and the merger is the way to provide that bandwidth.