

I'm in support of the merger between Echostar and DirectTV. I'm currently a subscriber to DirectTV and have also been a subscriber to Echostar. I believe that merging the two companies will consolidate the satellite resources available so that the resulting merged company will be able to offer more programming, satellite internet, and HDTV content. Without combining resources, it would be difficult for either company to adequately compete against the cable industry.

Some people believe that this merger would hurt rural customers. I am a rural customer and I don't believe that this would happen since the prices given all satellite customers are set at a nationwide standard. Also, they can give me services like internet that I could not get elsewhere. Finally, I'd like to say that already today cable companies operate as a monopoly in many cities and if it weren't for satellite TV, we wouldn't have any other choice.

Perhaps there should be some restrictions set forth in the merger agreement to ensure that there are no ill effects of the merger. The FCC could require that a nationwide pricing policy was guaranteed. Also, it would be beneficial if the merged company develop/manufacture its receivers from multiple sources like DirectTV does today (e.g., Sony, RCA, Huges, Phillips, etc). Right now most of the recievers developed/manufactured for Echostar (Dish) are made by Echostar. I would rather we have the choice of multiple sources for these satellite receivers to ensure competition in the equipment and technology. Perhaps this could be made a condition of the merger as well.

In summary I believe that the merger would be beneficial to consumers and with proper safeguards no ill effects will happen as well.