

As a retailer and consumer of EchoStar equipment, I am totally against the merger. I believe that if the merger goes through, within a short period of time Charlie will kill us retailers off 1 by 1 --- Just like DirecTV did.

The recent move by EchoStar to purchase DirecTV has created much debate within the DBS industry. Many retailers who are opposed to a merger stated many reasons for their concerns. Their primary concern is the elimination of competition within the DBS industry. The merger of the only two DBS providers would stifle product development and eliminate choice or options for consumers. Most affected would be rural consumers who do not have access to modern cable TV systems or even cable TV at all. These rural consumers would be subjected to the DBS service provided by one company.

For the last several years EchoStar has been increasing its own network of field installers. Consumers who call DISH Network for sales are not referred to local dealers; they are sold the system directly and DNSC performs the installation. DirecTV also has created an in-house service department by contracting directly with install providers. They too eliminated the need for local dealers.

If a merger is approved, it is strongly thought that EchoStar will slowly eliminate the independent retailer and installer, leaving consumers no choice of what to get or whom to get it from.

In our rural sales/service area a merger of DirecTV and EchoStar will leave many homes without access to any DBS TV, even though they can currently receive DirecTV. Our company used to install PrimeStar (which was bought out by DirecTV). When the switch-outs started, there were many PrimeStar customers who did not have a line of site to enable them to receive a DirecTV signal. The only choice they had was to switch to Dish Network. On the other side, we have also had prospective customers that did not have a line of site to receive a Dish Network signal. One advantage that DirecTV has over Dish Network is the elevation of their satellite, which is much higher (in this area the elevation of Dish Network is 34° compared to DirecTV's elevation of 45°). Eliminating this 11° difference would also eliminate any chance of receiving satellite television for many consumers.

I wonder why the local Network's for Burlington, Vermont, were added to DISH networks local station line up. Burlington Vermont is the 90th largest market in the country. When currently serving only 40 US markets, why skip to the 90th? Could it be that EchoStar is trying to influence Senator Patrick Leahy of Vermont? Is this an attempt to influence the chairperson of the judiciary committee to secure his support? We do not know, but it raises questions and concerns for us.

The final reason why I am opposed to a merger is simply that I do not trust EchoStar or Charlie Ergen. EchoStar has not been a good corporate citizen. EchoStar has developed a somewhat hostile relationship with many of us dealers over constantly changing business rules, charge backs, product shortages, commission manipulation and when questioned, vague or non existent explanations about these issues. EchoStar and Mr. Ergen have not conducted themselves in a manner that warrants handing them the entire DBS industry.

The benefits of this merger are easy to explain and understanding the consequences are more complex. I worry that those who do not take the time to study the potential negative impacts this merger would have, will be left asking themselves; WHY? After the merger and after it is too late.

The American public needs to be told the entire issue and not just the marketing hype of EchoStar's campaign to push this merger through congressional hearings and final approval of the FCC. This merger affects everyone in the country by reducing choice.

My biggest problem with Dish is the business rules and chargebacks, but a merger certainly won't help. Charlie IS all about the mighty dollar... he could give a rats butt about consumers or retailers.

There are a lot more questions that Echostar needs to be asked before the merger should even be considered. He needs to make some promises and guarantees that he will keep. The creation of DNSC (Dish Network Service Center) has caused a major decrease in work for this area... and the merger won't help that either. Yes, we will probably get some work for switch-outs, but most of the work will be kept inside E*.

We need to keep the competition. If the merger goes through, the only work that current DBS installers will get, will be the \$10 an hour install jobs.

I know that E*doesn't care very much about the small retailers now, and they will care even less if the merger goes through.

Will this merger guarantee me more sales? **NO, most likely less. Contrary topopular belief, they currently keep all telephone sales for themselves.**

Will this merger guarantee current installers more installations? **NO, they will keep them within E*.**

Will this merger guarantee that I will still be an E* retailer 5 years from now? **NO, not if they do anything like DirecTV did.**

Will this merger guarantee that retailers will receive all charge-back monies when the customer re-connects? **NO, they don't do it now... so they won't do it then. We bring the customer to them; the customer gets disconnected for various reasons. Then the customer reconnects (sometimes, within 24 hours) the retailer gets nothing back, but E* still has that customer. EchoStar is out no monies for these customers, but us retailers are negative \$200 plus equipment per customer.**

Will this merger guarantee that E* will not "steal" customers from retailers, after a customer was denied a promotion? **NO, they do it now... they will continue. Retailers try to sign up a customer for an EchoStar promotion, they get denied. Shortly there afterwards, EchoStar approves them and they become a customer of E* directly. Thereby eliminating the retailer.**

Will this merger guarantee customer satisfaction? **NO, EchoStar is well known for not working with the customer. Many of the reps are very rude and talk down to the customer. Ask how many customers have been charged for Pay-Per-View that they never ordered.**

This merger needs to talk more about what's going to happen to the retailers (not just the major chains) as well as the consumers.

If this merger is approved, it will show that everyone can be bought if the price is right!

I don't know....but that's just my opinion!