

There is no free market without competition. There is no free press without a multitude of delivery channels. If the FCC is true to its role as the guardian of American ideals of free market and freedom of the press, no to mention the protection of American consumers, it cannot allow one or two companies to control a commanding share of a vital industry such as cable. Since the cable infrastructure is already in place, and economies of scale have already taken place, how could consolidation possibly benefit us? It's clearly hurtful.

The cost of "basic plus" cable has gone up rapidly in Albuquerque, probably mostly due to the acquisition of Jones Intercable by Comcast. From \$28.22 in 1997, the monthly cost has gone up to \$49.10 in 2005, a 74% increase with no real improvements in service. Initially satellite television was more expensive than cable. Satellite prices kept stable, but Comcast Cable saw the situation as an opportunity to increase prices for their customers until both mediums became equally expensive.

Comcast produced and aired one-sided political ads during the last presidential campaign. And for several years they advertised their own services without letting Qwest Internet or the satellite providers advertise on their medium, effectively thwarting competition. It seems that unless under threat of prosecution, they are likely to continue promoting or censoring content to suit their purposes. Their behavior should not be rewarded with yet a bigger share of the captive US cable market.