

Big Brother Doesn't Have to be the Government

Recent FCC regulatory changes have had a dangerous effect: the concentration of information in local markets in the hands of a few corporations. Increasingly, newspapers, radio, and television stations are all controlled by a few corporations or conglomerates. Selling the wireless bandwidth in the same markets would tend to re-create the same situation in the internet. Though Verizon, etc. may not have goals of brainwashing and political domination, they clearly have aims (price-setting, regulatory changes) that they could further with such monopolies. As the Sinclair corporation has demonstrated, ownership provides the opportunity to set an agenda, and ownership of multiple information media allows the owner to present his case to the exclusion of all others. In the end, the goals and values of giant corporations are not those of the American people, and they should never be given such broad control of the public airwaves.

To restore America's leadership in high speed Internet services, the FCC must ensure that the upcoming auction sets aside at least 30 MHz of spectrum for open and non-discriminatory Internet access. This will guarantee that new entrants have the opportunity to enter the market in competition with incumbent providers.

It would be a big mistake to hand over these airwaves to the very same phone and cable companies that dominate the wireline market. We need more competition and innovation, not more of the same. This new wireless spectrum must be open and neutral so that America can build a better Internet for everyone.