

Six Myths Debunked

Myth: Cord cutters have nothing to worry about.

Fact: Online video and innovation will suffer most.

Comcast doesn't want you getting your *Scandal* fix from Hulu or Amazon Prime so it'll do everything it can to keep you as a subscriber even if you watch all your TV online. That's what happens when your Internet company is also your cable company.

Myth: Comcast and Time Warner Cable don't compete anyway, so this deal doesn't change anything.

Fact: This is all about competition and market power.

The merger will bring us one giant company that controls marquee television and movie content, as well as the primary vehicles — a major television broadcast network, a major cable system operator and a major broadband Internet access provider — for distributing that content.

Myth: The Comcast merger is a boon for Net Neutrality.

Fact: Comcast has to obey the FCC's Open Internet Order but only until 2018.

First of all, Comcast has long exploited loopholes in these rules to favor its own services and harm competitors. Second, these protections come with a clear expiration date. In the end, the company's empty promises aren't any consolation given how the merger will erode our online rights over the long term.

Myth: Time Warner Cable will improve with Comcast's help.

Fact: Comcast is routinely at the bottom of customer-satisfaction lists.

If Comcast can't serve its existing communities well, how will expanding help? If anything Comcast will have even less incentive to provide good, reliable service.

Myth: There are plenty of sources for content and information.

Fact: Comcast already has too much control over content.

Because a bigger and badder Comcast would control both content and distribution on a grander scale, it would have both the incentive and the power to limit access to competing content on the distribution platforms it owns. It could also try to outright deny its competitors access to its content.

Myth: I don't subscribe to Comcast or Time Warner Cable, so this deal has no impact on me.

Fact: This deal isn't just about dollars. It's about democracy.

Comcast already wields a great deal of power in Washington: The company spent more than \$18 million on lobbying in 2013 alone. The merger would give Comcast an even better shot of ensuring that future communications policies favor its bottom line.