

AT&T - TCI

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If I were a commissioner, I would first carefully review the FCC filings and the pro and con arguments before a final decision or vote. The major ^{tasks} would be no antitrust violations or market dominance problem. They don't seem to apply in this case.

I would place the burden of proof on those that would oppose this merger because there is great communications synergy between AT&T and TCI and practically no overlapping or duplication of facilities. AT&T and TCI provide complimentary services.

First, I believe that "big" is not automatically bad, in fact, "big" can serve the public very well. Big business can use its efficiency and economy of scale to provide efficient advanced services at more reasonable competitive prices to the public.

AT&T with relatively little debt is fortunate in that they can self-finance the merger without going to the financial market or venture capitalists.

TCI gets a much needed infusion of cash to upgrade its services, AT&T and TCI then will be able to provide a much desired one stop shopping for the consumer of long distance service, local high speed voice and data transmission, high speed Internet access and competitive entry into the local phone market.

This merger will allow a long distance provider to get into a local market which should spur competition in the local market.

It allows AT&T to bypass the local bottleneck and have a line directly in the homes. It opens up a huge local market immediately in keeping with the intention of the 1996 Communications Act.

It finally gives AT&T an established loop into the home from the second largest cable industry in the nation. It provides local loop competition just like congress intended.

Also, both AT&T and TCI have established positive name brand identification and considerable customer loyalty.

It is significant and fortunate, too, that Leo Hindery will head the new AT&T domestic consumer business. Mr. Hindery has demonstrated his commitment to customer service and diversity and is a great visionary in advance technology.

Overall, AT&T will be able to increase the value of their own assets, upgrade facilities and provide new improved broadband services to the public.