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Russell Varnecky spent some of his Wednesday afternoon picking up a new digital



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Pennsylvania for Atlantic Broadband.

adaptor from Atlantic Broadband's office in Richland Township so he can continue watching certain channels after the company updates to digital. The 22-year-old from Johnstown's West End didn't expect problems. He already had set up the new equipment for his 89-year-old grandmother. "It was not hard to do," he said. "But I can understand that for some older people, it seemed like a big change."

The Quincy, Massachusetts-based cable company is migrating all its "value channels" (Nos. 23 to 75) in three waves of customers. It already has extended a deadline for the first wave of customers from Tuesday to Oct. 21 to allow more time for Johnstown-area customers to order and activate the equipment they need, according to a statement from Curt Kosko, vice president and general manager, northern

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Concessions not
enough for GOP
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Wolf says**

“Atlantic Broadband is committed to investing in our network to ensure we continue to deliver the best TV, Internet and phone services,” he said. “Occasionally, we need to upgrade the equipment in customers’ homes in order to provide an optimal experience. Recently we’ve reached out to customers potentially impacted by this upgrade with several letters communicating that they will need to update their equipment with a new digital receiver in order to access channels 23-75.”

Customers who already have a digital receiver or adapter on their televisions don’t have to make any change, he said. “Getting the new digital adapter(s) is easy as we offer customers the opportunity to order them online and Atlantic Broadband will ship at no charge within two to three business days,” he said.

Johnstown customers can pick up the new equipment at the Atlantic Broadband office in the East Hills Plaza in Richland Township at 1513 Scalp Ave., Suite 260. Each digital adapter is accompanied with “easy- to-use” instructions, Kosko said. Customers also can view a how-to video on Atlantic Broadband’s YouTube channel. Customers who need additional information are being encouraged to access them at atlanticbb.com/get-digital.

Varmecky said his first installation job went well. “They did try to make it as simple as possible,” he said. “It’s just that a lot of older people don’t like change. They might need someone to help them.” The other concern, he said, is that each television requires an adaptor, and there is a \$2 monthly charge per adaptor for more than two. Varmecky said he likes that, after being connected, the change allows for a single remote to control more than one television. – *Johnstown Tribune-Democrat*

Satellite provider Dish Network Corp. petitioned the Federal Communications Commission on Tuesday to deny the proposed merger between Charter Communications Inc. and Time Warner Cable Inc., citing the combined company’s market power in broadband and what it said was an ability to harm online video services.

In a statement, Dish said the merger “would be no better for the public interest” than the prior proposed deal between Comcast Corp. and Time Warner Cable that the companies abandoned after facing stiff resistance from regulators. Dish had joined other companies such as Netflix Inc. in drumming up opposition to that deal. Dish, which offers the \$20-a-month streaming service Sling TV, said the proposed Charter-TWC merger has the potential to “significantly damage competitive development of over-the-top video.” The satellite provider said that “almost two-thirds” of households in its footprint won’t have access to at least another alternative high-speed broadband provider.

Dish also said Charter would be in a position to hamper the service of online video providers, whose services compete with cable TV providers, by degrading their traffic at “choke points” on the Web. “There is no more friendly broadband provider to Sling than Charter,” said Charter spokesman Justin Venech in an emailed statement late Tuesday. “Charter’s slowest speed is 60 [megabits per second], we have no data caps, no contracts and modem fees.”

Charter has previously said that it believes its merger is in the public interest and has sought to distance itself from Comcast’s failed attempt to acquire TWC, noting that Charter’s new subscriber total will still be less than that of Comcast’s today if its deals get approved. Dish may find itself in a thinner crowd in the opposition ranks on this merger, however. While there are some companies raising alarms about Charter-TWC, the deal hasn’t attracted the same number of big-name enemies as the previous Comcast deal. Charter headed off opposition from the likes of Netflix Inc. and Cogent Communications Inc. by taking a favorable stance regarding Web traffic handoffs into Charter’s broadband network. Both those companies, which

opposed the Comcast deal, have since spoken out in favor of Charter's merger with TWC. – *Wall Street Journal*; [more in Washington Post](#)

Netflix Inc. reported disappointing U.S. subscriber growth for the third quarter, as net profit declined on higher costs for content and expansion. The streaming-video provider added 880,000 domestic subscribers, below the 1.15 million subscribers it projected in July and a slowdown from the addition of 980,000 customers in the year-earlier quarter. Overseas, the company signed up more users than it expected, adding 2.74 million subscribers compared with a forecast of 2.4 million.

Netflix attributed the downshift in the U.S., in part, to involuntary service cancellations tied to the company's inability to process payments from subscribers whose credit and debit cards were changed to chip-based technology. U.S. banks are replacing hundreds of millions of credit cards and debit cards with new plastic that has a computer chip as well as a traditional magnetic strip on the back. The chip adds security by creating a unique code for each transaction. The new cards usually have the same account numbers as the original cards, but Netflix said the changeover presented problems.

On a video chat for investors and analysts, Chief Financial Officer David Wells said "it's not consistently the case" that consumers keep the same account number. "For us as a recurring merchant, where we really want to reduce the friction of renewal...it just means there's more noise introduced into that," he said. "There may be other things going on here, but certainly the transition to the chip cards isn't helping." Shares of Netflix fell 3% in after-hours trading.

Netflix, based in Los Gatos, Calif., plans to complete its global rollout by the end of 2016, with service in South Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong and Taiwan slated to begin early in the year. As Netflix has expanded, however, costs and exposure to currency volatility have increased. Overall, Netflix's net income in the September quarter was cut in half to \$29.4 million, or 7 cents a share, from \$59.3 million, or 14 cents a share in the year-earlier period. Revenue rose 23% to \$1.74 billion. Analysts surveyed by Thomson Reuters had projected earnings of eight cents a share and revenue of \$1.75 billion.

International operations again weighed on profit, as the segment's third-quarter loss more than doubled to \$68 million. Netflix said it expects to "run around break-even" in 2016 and turn a profit after that when the international expansion is complete. Netflix has been confronting increased skepticism from some media companies about licensing their content to the company. Some TV executives fear viewing on Netflix may be accelerating cord-cutting and hurting TV ratings.

Several television companies have instead struck big library deals with Hulu, which is owned by media giants Walt Disney Co., 21st Century Fox and Comcast Corp., citing the smaller streaming service's more appealing terms for protecting the traditional television business. Netflix executives said media companies are becoming more cautious about licensing to streaming services generally, not just Netflix. Netflix Chief Executive Reed Hastings argued on the video interview that Hulu is "much more disruptive" to pay TV than Netflix, given that it now offers an ad-free viewing option for several broadcasters' shows the day after they air on TV. "Hulu is even more of a cord-cutter's dream than Netflix is," he said.

Netflix also emphasized that it is focusing more on developing its own programming. Its original productions include "Orange is the New Black", "Narcos"—a 10-episode series on Colombian cocaine king Pablo Escobar—and "Beasts of No Nation," the company's first feature film that will be released on Oct. 16 on Netflix and in select U.S. theaters. To help offset rising costs, Netflix has occasionally raised prices. Last week, it raised the price of its plan allowing two simultaneous streams to \$9.99 a

month in the U.S., Canada and Latin America, a \$1 increase, mirroring a similar increase in Europe over the summer. Including customers signed up free trials, Netflix had 69.17 million streaming members world-wide as of Sept. 30. – *Wall Street Journal*; [more in New York Times](#)



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