Do you thrive in a fast-paced collaborative environment? Are you self-motivated or a creative independent worker? If so, you may be a great fit for one of the many customer service or technical support positions now available in the Johnstown region.

Atlantic Broadband employs more than 200 people at its Johnstown location on Southmont Boulevard, and is currently looking to fill several call-center positions. "Due to the nature of call centers, customer demands and acquisition growth – it presents the need to hire, and to continuously hire, for customer care and our advanced support positions," said Courtney Long, Atlantic Broadband's vice president of Customer Care.

Atlantic Broadband's Johnstown call center is one of two locations across the large company that remains open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. "We're providing customer-care support for all Atlantic Broadband customers from Maine to Florida, which is pretty powerful if you think about it in terms of what is going in this particular facility for Atlantic Broadband," Long said.

Due to the need for new employees, Atlantic Broadband holds new hire classes up to four or five times a year, Long said. The training classes run between seven to eights weeks long. "We're really looking for people who are upbeat, happy and have good attitudes," Long said. "We believe that we can teach the technology aspect and all of the applications and systems that are required to do the job. "When you find the wow-factor of a potential candidate that has a great attitude and genuinely loves to help other people and has that service spirit – we can teach everything else."

Long said a lot of those same attributes are a prerequisite to filling the company's technical support positions. However, additional knowledge and experience are required. "We are looking for potential candidates that have some educational requirements related to computer science or certifications, because the advanced technical support positions are really troubleshooting specific Internet and/or phone related issues," she said. "So the demands of that job are just a little different."

With the company's increasing need for customer care and technical support specialists, Long said Atlantic Broadband is always on the pursuit to fill its call-center positions. "We're always on a constant recruiting search," she said.

The customer care vice president said her company has never had severe challenges in finding candidates for open positions at its Johnstown location. "We have found that if people want to work, then we can find the candidates," Long said. "If anything, we're typically overflowing with people who apply to work at Atlantic Broadband and we don't have enough positions for everyone. "We have never had any challenges in filling any open positions that we had for customer care or advanced support," she said. "We've always been very fortunate to find really good talent. – ***Johnstown Tribune-Democrat***

Pennsylvania's legislature? Show them you're paying attention and vote

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The Justice Department has struck a temporary agreement with California officials not to move forward with a lawsuit challenging the state's new net neutrality law, delaying a pivotal legal battle over the future of the Internet.

Under the proposed deal struck Friday between federal and state officials, and with telecom industry advocates, the Justice Department will postpone its litigation against California until a separate case directly involving the Federal Communications Commission runs its course, according to court filings. The agreement must be approved by a judge. As part of the deal, California officials have agreed not to enforce their new rules on broadband providers when the state law – viewed by many as the nation's toughest – officially takes effect on Jan. 1.

Signed by Gov. Jerry Brown last month, the law prohibits companies such as AT&T and Comcast from blocking or slowing down online content, and makes it illegal for them to demand special fees from websites and apps. The accord highlights the complexity of the legal tussle surrounding net neutrality, as well as the sky-high stakes tied to a case brought by consumer advocates and digital rights groups in Washington appealing the FCC's decision last year to rescind its own net neutrality rules.

That case confronts some of the same issues as the one now facing California, such as whether the FCC's new, lighter approach to net neutrality takes precedence over state laws. A ruling on that front by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit could have major ramifications for the Justice Department's California suit. Attorney General Jeff Sessions has alleged that California's law violates the constitution by circumventing the FCC's deregulatory order. But if the D.C. Circuit rejects the FCC's 2017 rule change under agency chairman Ajit Pai, it could open new questions about how far telecom regulators may go in preempting states such as California. – ***Washington Post***

Netflix, the streaming-video juggernaut, is growing with astonishing speed. And if you ignore the fact that it borrows billions to finance that growth, the company is a classic success story. Its ability to expand its global audience is truly impressive. The **latest numbers** show that Netflix gained more than six million paid subscribers around the world in the three months through September. That's about 66,000 more paid subscribers every day, bringing its total to more than 130 million.

Netflix's extraordinary growth has disrupted the media landscape and entranced the stock market. As my colleague, **Edmund Lee**, has written, Netflix's challenge has helped to motivate, if not entirely provoke, a series of mergers, acquisitions and realignments among giant companies. Disney and Fox, AT&T and Time Warner, Comcast, Amazon, Apple, Google and more: All have had to respond, many by increasing their own spending on TV and video.

Wall Street has embraced Netflix as one of the so-called Faangs — short for Facebook, Amazon, Apple, Netflix and Google (which trades as Alphabet). The technology titans propelled investors to enormous profits for much of this year. With Netflix's resounding success in forging — and, so far, dominating — the global market for streaming video, it may seem churlish to harbor any misgivings.

Yet Netflix poses a difficult problem for investors. All of those movies and TV shows are expensive, and in order to fuel its explosive expansion, the company has been spending faster than it has been taking in cash — and expects to keep doing so for years. Netflix has built its business on a mountain of junk-rated debt.

Despite this, the Wall Street consensus is bullish. The company predicts that within a few years, costs will start to grow more slowly than revenues. In a **conference call** this month, David Wells, the company's chief financial officer, projected "material improvements" in 2020. "We still think it's going to be a few years toward break-even," he said. Wall Street has largely accepted that forecast, expecting that at some point, Netflix won't need to borrow to pay its bills, and profits will grow.

Not everyone is persuaded, however. "Netflix's fundamental business model seems unsustainable," said Aswath Damodaran, a New York University finance professor, who has examined the company's numbers closely. "I don't see how it is going to work out." With increased competition looming in streaming video, he said, Netflix must keep spending enormous sums on content and marketing. If it cuts spending, he said, it is likely to lose much of its precious audience. "Sure, the company is growing rapidly now," he said. "It has an amazing number of new movies and TV shows. For a consumer, that's great. But for an investor, it's a different story: The more Netflix grows, the more its costs grow and the more money it burns. I'm not sure how it's ever going to turn that around."

Professor Damodaran posted a valuation model for Netflix on **his blog**, as an instruction tool. His **model** is based on a straightforward, well-established method — the **discounted cash flow** approach used by investment analysts around the world. At my request, he plugged the company's latest numbers into that model to figure out what Netflix's shares appear to be really worth. The results were startling.
The company's shares, in his estimation, are worth buying as a serious investment only at about $177. But Netflix has been trading around $310 a share lately, after surpassing $400 earlier this year. In a nutshell, the problem is the disparity between money in and money out — and Professor Damodaran's presumption that Netflix's costs must remain high, if it is to keep growing.

Netflix's cash-flow statement indicates that in the 12 months through September, it spent $11.7 billion on new content. But its income statement indicates that total revenues were $14.9 billion, leaving it only about $3.2 billion to pay for marketing and the rest of its operations. That wasn't enough to run the business, so the company has borrowed money.

On Monday, Netflix **announced** that it intended to borrow more, by selling $2 billion worth of bonds, which rating agencies **say** is below investment-grade. That comes on top of $8.3 billion in speculative-grade debt already on its balance sheet. The borrowing is likely to continue to grow as long as the company burns cash faster than its millions of subscribers send in money. Professor Damodaran is not the only Netflix skeptic. In a note to investors on Oct. 17, Michael Nathanson, a senior analyst with MoffettNathanson, said that the

company's stock price was baffling, and he estimated that a more realistic level was about $210.

In a similar vein, Michael Pachter, managing director of equity research for Wedbush Securities and a longtime critic, said he expected Netflix to continue to have difficulty matching costs and cash flow, given increasing competition in streaming video — and the likely loss of movies and TV shows controlled by its competitors. Disney and Time Warner (which owns HBO) are revamping their offerings. And Hulu (owned collectively by Disney and Comcast), Apple, Amazon and Google (which owns YouTube) are now all serious adversaries, he said. In his estimation, Netflix stock is worth only about $150 a share.

If Netflix were to fall anywhere near that level — losing a gut-wrenching half of its market value — its corporate competitors would presumably be powering ahead with their own streaming offerings. Yet it would not be surprising if some of them — the recently merged AT&T-Time Warner entity, for example — wondered whether their own marriages made much sense without Netflix's unbidden influence. How worried should the stock market be about Netflix? It has shrugged off such concerns most of this year: From Jan. 1 through July 9, Netflix's shares returned a staggering 118 percent.

Since July 9, however, tech stocks have fallen and Netflix has been pummeled. Despite brief surges, its share price has dropped more than 25 percent since that peak. Netflix executives say they are building their business for the long run. Last year, Reed Hastings, co-founder and chief executive of the company, said traditional competition didn't worry him. Netflix was so compelling, he said, that its main adversary was sleep. "You get a show or a movie you're really dying to watch, and you end up staying up late at night, so we actually compete with sleep," he said. "And we're winning!"

In the latest earnings call, he said that deep-pocketed companies, like Disney, AT&T and Google, were real competitors. "Someday there will have to be competition for wallet share; we're not naïve about that," he said. "But it seems very far off from everything we've seen." Netflix, he said, needs to continue to be "focusing on our fundamentals" — supplying viewers with compelling entertainment and delivering it in innovative ways. But that will cost the company a lot of money. For consumers, that may not be a problem at all. Netflix has already made video entertainment far more abundant and diverse than it was just a few years ago, and as other companies join the fray, the cornucopia of choices is likely to become even deeper. But does that make Netflix a great stock? You may want to look closely at the numbers. – ***New York Times***