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Cable giant Comcast Corp. has agreed to acquire Icontrol Networks Inc. in a deal for the company's Internet of Things technology. Financial terms of the deal weren't disclosed.



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Icontrol Networks, which is based in Austin, Texas, has raised \$93.5 million from venture-capital backers including Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers, Intel Capital and Comcast Ventures, according to Dow Jones VentureSource. The Icontrol Converge software platform has been the system behind Comcast's Xfinity Home system for touch-screen panels and works with servers in the background. The software enables communication and management for home sensors as well as cameras and thermostats. Separately, Alarm.com said on Thursday it has agreed to acquire the other elements of Icontrol's business.

Icontrol, founded in 2003, supports connected home security and does business with a

number of Xfinity Home's competitors, including COX Homelife and Time Warner Cable IntelligentHome. Comcast will continue to support and grow Icontrol's wholesale business, said Daniel Herscovici, senior vice president and general manager of Xfinity Home at Comcast.

The acquisition makes Comcast a player in the market for security infrastructure serving the growing network of connected consumer devices. "We are the glue that powers and enables all those devices to talk to each other," Mr. Herscovici said. The exit for Icontrol's investors highlights further corporate interest in the nascent Internet-of-Things security sector. Cisco Systems acquired Internet of Things security system Jasper Technologies

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['What I continue to be focused on is a](#)

[balanced budget':](#)

[Gov. Tom Wolf](#)

for \$1.4 billion in March.

Under the deal, Comcast will take on about 75 to 100 of Icontrol's employees, including its engineering team, Mr. Herscovici said. Comcast declined to say whether this would include Icontrol Chief Executive Robert Hagerty. Mr. Herscovici declined to disclose the deal's financial terms, saying only that the acquisition price was "not material" given Comcast's market capitalization of more than \$150 billion. He declined to say whether Comcast had purchased a majority of Icontrol's assets.

The home security company Alarm.com, based in Tysons, Va., will purchase Icontrol's other business elements, including its Canadian subsidiary Piper and a product called Connect, which powers ADT Corp.'s home security system Pulse. Alarm.com paid \$140 million in cash and debt for its share of the company, according to a press release. Comcast first invested in Icontrol in 2009 through its venture capital arm. – *Wall Street Journal*

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Facebook Inc. will train employees to identify and check their political leanings, the company's latest step to quell concerns over the treatment of conservative viewpoints on the social network.

Chief Operating Officer Sheryl Sandberg told a Washington, D.C., audience Wednesday that Facebook plans to add a section on "political bias," to its class on "managing bias." All Facebook executives and many employees have taken the class, which focuses on identifying and neutralizing racial, age, gender and other types of bias, Ms. Sandberg said during a discussion at the American Enterprise Institute.

The move follows a maelstrom touched off by [a report last month from the tech blog Gizmodo](#) that said curators of Facebook's "trending topics" feature suppressed news about conservative events and from conservative sources. The feature is found to the right of Facebook's news feed on personal computers and can be found on the mobile app by tapping the search bar.

The report prompted Facebook to conduct an internal investigation, in which it said it found no evidence of "systemic political bias." Even so, Facebook said it would revamp how the feature works to minimize the effect of individual bias.

The company also invited 16 top conservatives, including AEI President Arthur Brooks, to its Menlo Park, Calif. headquarters to discuss the issue with Chief Executive Mark Zuckerberg. Wednesday, Ms. Sandberg reiterated that Facebook wants to be a platform for an open exchange of ideas. She noted that presumptive Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump has more Facebook fans than presumptive Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton and Sen. Bernie Sanders combined.

"It is a political time and we're proud of the role we play in elections, not just here but around the world," Ms. Sandberg said in her onstage discussion with Mr. Brooks. "The vision of Facebook was to enable individuals to connect, but to connect not just to their friends and family, but also to the people who are representing them and who they want to represent them." – *Wall Street Journal*

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Our state capital runs on protocols. For instance, powerful people in Harrisburg don't dial their own calls. That's what staffers are for. Traditions like that can trip up a hands-on governor.

The Department of General Services last Friday issued this advisory to government agencies: "Please advise your switchboard that if they receive a call for anyone in your department, claiming to be Tom Wolf they should not hang up on him. It may very well be the governor - he likes to place his own telephone calls."

As if Wolf, a Democrat trying to sew up a state budget with the Republican-controlled

General Assembly by next week, didn't have enough to deal with. One well-placed source told Clout that Wolf, trying to call the secretary of the Department of Community and Economic Development last week, was hung up on by a receptionist who didn't believe she was on the line with the governor.

Wait, it gets better.

Wolf also ran into problems calling a state legislator - a Democrat, no less! - when the person answering the phone said "bulls-" and hung up on him. Speaking of Harrisburg politicians, anyone notice that Thaddeus Kirkland is still one of them?

To recap: Kirkland, first elected to his state representative seat in 1992, was elected mayor of Chester in November. He submitted a letter of resignation from his state position Dec. 8. But then he rescinded that resignation. In a two-sentence letter Dec. 28 to House Speaker Mike Turzai (R., Allegheny), Kirkland said that he would continue to be a state representative "until further notice." Kirkland's press secretary said then that he would stay on to continue working on the 2015-16 state budget.

House Democratic spokesman Bill Patton said in January that state law allows mayors to simultaneously serve in the Assembly. He said Kirkland, who is also Chester's director of public affairs, had planned to accept the \$85,000-a-year legislative salary but would not double-dip by collecting the \$41,000 mayoral salary. But that 2015-16 budget standoff ended in March. So you can imagine our surprise Thursday morning when we saw Kirkland quoted in [news stories](#) about a gambling bill.

Turns out he never left. And he ain't leaving for a while. "I will remain on the job until November," Kirkland texted us Thursday when we asked. Well, you know what they say about ol' Thaddeus: You can take the man out of Harrisburg, but you can't take the Harr - oh, wait, that's not right. You actually *can't* take the man out of Harrisburg. Someone remind us to check in with Kirkland around Thanksgiving. – *Philadelphia Daily News*



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