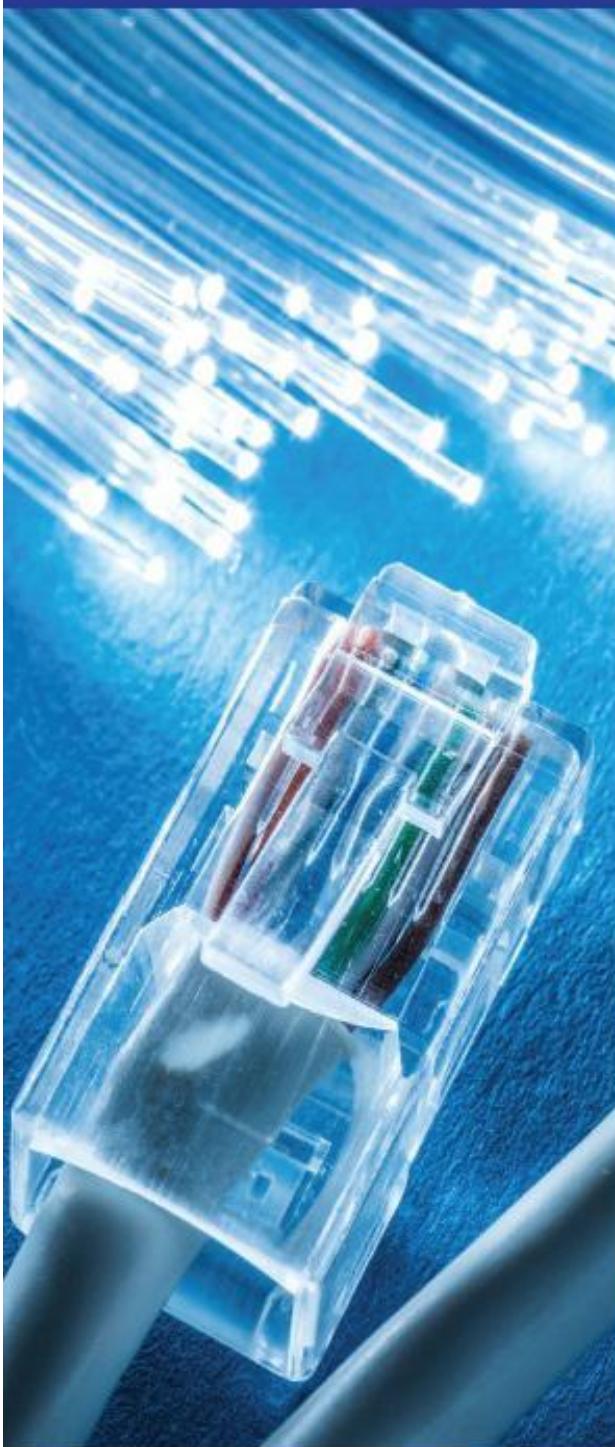


PA Townships **Value Relationship** with Cable Industry



The Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors salutes a longstanding working relationship with BCAP that has benefited millions of our commonwealth's citizens.

PSATS members have had successful partnerships with the commonwealth's cable companies for decades. The result has been a Pennsylvania-born technology that continues to provide entertainment, education, and communications services for generations of our state's citizens and businesses.

If there was ever a template for blending technology providers with local government, our 70-year-old working relationship with BCAP members is it.

PSATS looks forward to continuing and growing its partnership with broadband cable companies in the years ahead to deliver services to ALL Pennsylvanians!



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Pittsburgh Post-Gazette
Tweet from Rep. Lamb's brother

Comcast announced on Saturday that it will be extending free internet services with their Internet Essentials package which will be available to new and/or eligible customers. The offer was originally set to expire on June 30, however the company elected to extend it for another 60 days as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to rage on.

Comcast also plans to continue to waive the requirement for customers to be clear of past-due balances on their account in order to allow them to qualify for the extension. "For almost a decade, Comcast has been helping to level the playing field for families in need so they can benefit from all the Internet has to offer. So, we're happy to be able to extend this 60 days of free Internet service to new customers," said Dana Strong, President of Xfinity Consumer Services. "Now more than ever, connectivity has become a vital tool for families to access educational resources for students, important news and information about their community and the world, telehealth applications, or to stay in touch with family and friends."

The company hopes to help bridge the gap for students who are learning from home and don't have the same "digital equity" as their fellow alumni. Comcast's Internet Essentials initiative began in 2011 and has connected more than two million low-income families to the internet, according to a news release. This offer may come as welcome news as millions of students in the United States learned Friday that they are unlikely to return to classrooms full time in the fall because of cases surging throughout the states.

What role children play in the COVID-19 pandemic is the hot-button question of the summer as states debate what the best practice is for returning children to school without putting them in danger of further spreading the virus. The Trump administration says the science "is very clear," but many doctors who specialize in pediatrics and infectious diseases say much of the evidence is inconclusive.

Several studies suggest, but don't prove, that children are less likely to become infected than adults and more likely to have only mild symptoms. While the majority of children who tested positive for the virus do not become critically ill, they did suffer other ailments associated with catching the novel coronavirus such as blood clots, organ damage and multi-inflammatory syndrome, according to the CDC. "There are still a lot of unanswered questions. That is the biggest challenge," said Dr. Sonja Rasmussen, a pediatrics professor at the University of Florida and former scientist at the U.S. Centers of Disease Control and Prevention. – **WTXF-TV, Philadelphia**

Argumentation and reason are timeless, but propaganda never ages well. This is certainly the case when it comes to the battle fought a few years ago over the now-repealed Title II regulations for what is commonly known as net neutrality. One of Joe Biden's campaign working groups has endorsed a return to the heavy internet regulation that was briefly attempted during the Obama era. So, it is worth going back to look at the hysterical, unhinged, and utterly false predictions that came thick and fast in 2017, when Title II net neutrality was abolished in favor of the old, lightly regulated system that has characterized the internet for nearly all of its history.

In 2015, the Obama Federal Communications Commission imposed upon the internet the rules that had been developed to regulate landline telephones in 1934. If that sounds a bit incongruous or anachronistic, it's because it always was. Prior to this rule, the internet had grown and thrived for more than 20 years under the oversight of the Federal Trade Commission as a lightly

[spurs back-and-forth between congressman's campaign, Parnell](#)

regulated “information service.” It developed with all the freedom and functionality that consumers enjoy today. The era of websites and blogs and e-commerce moved forward into social media, streaming, and the internet of things. There was never any indication that the internet was broken, but the do-gooders came to fix it anyway.

When the Trump administration moved to undo their handiwork in 2017, a coalition of hysterical, shrieking activists convinced large segments of the population to panic. Their rhetoric was reminiscent of Y2K. And it was lost on most of them, including some of the most computer-savvy tech YouTubers, that the argument for Title II regulation was being driven by a handful of powerful corporations such as Netflix, Google, and Amazon seeking a free ride on networks paid for and maintained by others.

The activists loudly claimed that service providers would react to the repeal of Title II by raising prices and slowing down service. One of the dumbest claims of all came from the American Civil Liberties Union, which told people they may soon be unable to order Domino's online because Pizza Hut could just pay their internet service provider to prevent it. Did that actually happen? Of course not. Even if service providers are evil, they're not stupid. ISPs are now luring customers with cheap, unlimited 5G data plans that are faster than ever. Thanks to advances in technology, cable and fiber companies must now compete with cheap cellphone plans that allow for practically unlimited tethering and free subscriptions to Hulu, Amazon, and other streaming services.

The truth is that internet providers would be shooting themselves in the head were they ever to throttle traffic or violate net neutrality in a way that actually harmed consumers — which is why it has never really happened. It is telling that, whenever the scaremongers try to illustrate that the threat is real, they either have to explain why it's bad that you have unlimited data to watch Hulu on your phone or else they describe obscure, ancient incidents that are highly unlikely to recur.

For example, yes, there was an incident in 2007 when Verizon briefly blocked a pro-abortion group from using its text message service to spam supporters. The decision, born of a dumb corporate policy of avoiding controversial topics, was reversed almost instantly once it became clear that it was backfiring, forcing the company into an abortion controversy. So much for net neutrality — problem solved. What's more, if service providers were to start throttling certain services in the way the fearmongers suggest, Congress could pass a new law that actually made sense for the internet, not for Ma Bell in the Depression Era.

A lot of people said a lot of dumb things back when Title II internet regulation was being repealed. They cried out that the sky was falling, and it wasn't. Under normal circumstances, they would be apologizing now, explaining that they were wrong to spread hysterical propaganda about a subject they knew much less about than they let on. They would acknowledge that the repeal of Title II internet regulation hasn't hurt anyone — to the contrary, it has made possible immense investments in the internet that are improving its performance and utility. Biden, who is about as tech-savvy as you'd expect, now wants to restore the harmful and restrictive Title II regulation of the internet. It's a terrible idea that will hinder the expansion of tomorrow's better, faster internet. The Title II version of net neutrality is simply the wrong way. It is a solution in search of a problem that never was and never will be. —

Washington Examiner editorial

Walt Disney Co. has dramatically slashed its advertising spending on Facebook Inc., according to people familiar with the situation, the latest setback for the tech giant as it faces a boycott from companies upset with its handling of hate speech and divisive content. Disney was Facebook's top U.S. advertiser for the first six months of 2020, research firm Pathmatics Inc.

estimates. It joins hundreds of other companies that have paused spending, including Unilever PLC, Starbucks Corp., Ford Motor Co., Verizon Communication Inc. and many small marketers.

Civil-rights groups including the Anti-Defamation League and NAACP [called on advertisers to pull ad spending](#) for July, arguing Facebook hasn't made enough progress enforcing its policies on hate speech and misinformation. Some brands paused spending for longer stretches; the time frame for Disney's pullback wasn't clear. Unlike many other companies, Disney didn't make a public announcement that it was cutting back on Facebook, but instead shifted advertising plans quietly. The entertainment giant, which is concerned about Facebook's enforcement of its policies surrounding objectionable content, has paused advertising of its streaming-video service Disney+, the people familiar with the situation said. Disney has promoted the service heavily this year and it makes up a substantial portion of the company's spending on marketing.

In the first half of this year, Disney spent an estimated \$210 million on Facebook ads for Disney+ in the U.S., according to Pathmatics. Disney was the biggest ad spender during that period. Last year, it was the No. 2 Facebook advertiser in the U.S., behind Home Depot Inc. Disney also paused spending on Facebook-owned Instagram for its sister streaming service Hulu, a person familiar with matter said. Hulu spent \$16 million on Instagram from April 15 to June 30, Pathmatics said.

Other divisions of Disney are also re-examining their advertising on Facebook. Ads for ABC and Disney-owned cable networks such as Freeform have all but vanished from the site. While there are fewer shows to market during the summer, a person familiar with the matter said, it is unlikely that ads will return when new episodes need to be promoted, unless the social platform polices itself better. It couldn't be determined how much Disney businesses are spending on Facebook. Disney representatives had no comment. "We know we have more work to do," Facebook said in a statement, adding that it would work with civil-rights groups, a leading ad trade group and other experts "to develop even more tools, technology and policies to continue this fight."

Facebook has said it invests billions of dollars to keep its platforms safe and has banned 250 white-supremacist organizations from Facebook and Instagram. It also has said artificial intelligence helps it find nearly 90% of hate speech before anyone flags it. Earlier this month, the company said it would start [labeling political speech that violates its rules and take other measures](#) to prevent voter suppression and protect minorities from abuse. Facebook has around \$70 billion in annual advertising revenue, generated from over eight million advertisers. It would take a sustained boycott from its biggest advertisers to put [a significant dent in the company financially](#).

Some marketers are reducing ad spending broadly because of financial pressures caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Many brands prefer not to cut Facebook ad spending, because they regard it as an especially effective marketing vehicle. While Disney has been aggressively marketing Disney+ during the pandemic, it has had less reason to market other areas of its business, such as its theme parks, which have been closed until recently. Disney's movie studio, which is typically a heavy ad spender, has been [forced to delay the release of new movies](#) because of theater closures.

Marketers are demanding that Facebook find ways to keep their ads away from objectionable content. The company, which has been meeting with advertisers and agencies, said late last month that [it planned to evaluate](#) the rules publishers and creators must follow if they wanted to make money from their Facebook content through ads. It will also assess the tools it gives brands to ensure their ads don't appear near inappropriate content. The audits will be handled by industry measurement watchdog Media Rating Council.

Civil-rights groups met virtually with Facebook executives on July 7 and [came away from the Zoom call](#) feeling the tech company wasn't taking sufficient

steps to address their concerns. Stop Hate for Profit, the name of the coalition behind the boycott effort, has laid out 10 steps that it wants Facebook to take, such as adopting “common-sense changes” to its policies to reduce hate on its platforms and remove content that could inspire people to commit violence.

In a statement following the meeting, Facebook said, “We will be judged by our actions, not by our words, and are grateful to these groups and many others for their continued engagement.” Facebook executives, including Carolyn Everson, vice president of its Global Business Group, previously told advertisers that the company wouldn’t change its policies based on revenue pressure. – *Wall Street Journal*



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