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Bethlehem, Pennsylvania-based Service Electric Cable TV has partnered with TiVo to bring the technology company's whole-home video solution to its 125,000 pay-TV customers.

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TiVo said it has now partnered with 18 tier 2 cable companies in the U.S., including the National Cable

Television Cooperative, which represents more than 800 small operators. TiVo's whole-home offering includes the TiVo UX running on Arris Series 6 Gateways and associated clients. "This allows us to instantly bring our video service to a level we weren't at before with flexibility to expand into things like IP distribution," said Chris Kelly, assistant manager of engineering and customer premises equipment for Service Electric.

Kelly specifically pointed out the integration of online video services like Netflix and YouTube into TiVo's operating system, allowing customers to access their favorite digital programming services, as well as cable service assets like VOD, without changing video source inputs. "On our own, negotiating [those integration deals] would be impossible," he said. Kelly added that the ability to integrate

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multiscreen services is another key value add. “TiVo is a familiar name to our customers,” he said. “We expect our number of whole-home customers to expand exponentially.”

For his part, Jim Denney, TiVo's VP of product management and strategy, said the merger with Rovi Corp. has further solidified the company's position in the U.S. tier 2 cable market. “The cable business has actually become more important to the combined company,” he said. “The company now has a combined portfolio of things like search and recognition, and metadata, that it can bring to bear in the space. We can now power a whole cross-section of entertainment experiences.” – **Fierce Cable**

The FCC's 2015 pole attachment order was **upheld in a ruling yesterday** by the Eighth Circuit Court, providing a potential win for competitive and incumbent providers expanding their fiber networks. In 2015, a group of electric utilities, including Ameren Corporation, American Electric Power Service, CenterPoint Energy Houston Electric, and Virginia Electric and Power Company petitioned to review a November 2015 order of the FCC governing the rates that utility companies may charge telecommunications providers for attaching their wired facilities to utility-owned poles. The FCC, which was joined by intervenors Incompas, National Cable & Telecommunications Association, Level 3 Communications, and USTelecom, opposed the petition.

In delivering its decision, the court found that the November 2015 Order provided a “reasonable interpretation of the ambiguity” in Section 224 of the Pole Attachments Act. “The FCC sought to eliminate the disparity between the Cable and Telecom Rates in order to avoid subjecting cable providers offering broadband service to the higher Telecom Rate, and to avoid rate disparity between states whose pole attachment rates are regulated by the FCC and those states that had elected to regulate pole attachment rates using the Cable Rate even for telecommunications providers,” the Court wrote. “Finding that the April 2011 Order's presumptions of five attachers in urban areas and three attachers in non-urban areas were inadequate to achieve these goals, the FCC adopted the multiple cost allocators set forth in the November 2015 Order.”

The court added that this “approach represents a “reasonable policy” choice, and thus we defer to the FCC's interpretation.” Incompas, an industry advocate for competitive service providers, applauded the court's decision as a way to enhance broadband expansion timelines. “Pole attachment pricing and delays have held back the deployment of broadband networks by new companies seeking to provide better service, faster speeds and lower prices,” said Chip Pickering, CEO of Incompas, in a statement. “Pole attachment reform represents one of the key building blocks for promoting the continued deployment of competitive broadband services across the nation, and we applaud today's court decision.”

Pickering also reiterated the organization's case for a one-touch make ready (OTMR) process that allows more flexibility in how new entrants can get access to existing utility poles. “We now hope the FCC takes the next, necessary step in spurring broadband deployment by allowing new attachers the option to invoke a one-touch, make ready process for pole attachments, which will provide more affordable, timely and efficient construction of competitive networks,” Pickering said.

Under the regulator's 2015 order, the FCC granted a joint petition made by members of the cable and telecom industry to harmonize the attachment rate cost model for pole attachments, which would be at or near the cable rate formula level. At that time, the FCC was joined by the House Communications Subcommittee, which was developing a legislative package and Federal Spectrum Incentive Act to accelerate broadband deployment. An element of the lawmakers proposal includes a provision to expand broadband providers' access to pole attachments. – **Fierce Telecom**

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission on Tuesday announced that central Pennsylvania residents and businesses served by the 717 area code should prepare for the upcoming switch to mandatory 10-digit dialing for all local calls. Starting Aug. 26, callers in the 717 area who attempt to make calls using only a seven-digit number will reach a recorded announcement instructing them to hang up and redial using the area code plus the seven-digit number, a news release stated.

The switch to 10-digit dialing is required for the activation of a new “overlay” area code, which will serve the entire 16-county region included in the 717 service area. That new area code – “223” – is being put into service because the remaining supply of available 717 telephone numbers is close to exhaustion. “To begin preparing for 10-digit dialing in the 717 area code, start looking at the devices you have by making sure they include all the area codes you need, including 717,” said Chairman Gladys M. Brown. “Also check devices like medical alert systems, alarm systems, and any other

systems that automatically make calls, to be sure they are set up for 10-digit dialing – and in the future, when you start adding new numbers, be sure you include the area code.”

Devices to check include mobile phones, landline phones & tablets and fax machines that can save/store phone numbers. Also: Life-safety & medical alert systems; alarm/security systems and security gates; call-forwarding settings & voicemail services; Internet dial-up systems; automatic dialing equipment & software; speed-dialers; ankle monitors; any other device that can save, store and automatically dial phone numbers. If you have questions about the compatibility of or programming of a device, contact your equipment or service provider.

Since the spring, telephone carriers across the region have been providing their customers with educational materials about the upcoming dialing changes – encouraging them to begin voluntarily using 10-digit dialing for calls within the 717/223 service area and also checking the telephone numbers stored on their phones or other devices to ensure that they include the full 10-digit number. According to Neustar, Inc., the neutral third party area code relief planner for Pennsylvania, the dialing plan for the 717/223 area code is as follows: Local & Toll calls from the 717/223 area to other numbers inside the 717/223 area: Dial 10-digits (717 or 223 + XXX-XXXX); Local & Toll Calls from the 717/223 area to numbers in another area code: Dial 1 + 10-Digits (1 + XXX-XXX-XXXX); Operator Services (Credit card, collect, third party): Dial 0 + 10-digit (0 + XXX-XXX-XXXX).

The Commission’s Order approving the overlay plan specifies that any new numbers for the 223 overlay area code shall not be released until Sept. 26, 2017, and that requests for numbers in the 717 area code will continue to be honored as long as resources are available. The overlay area code relief option was supported by the majority of individuals who submitted written comments or testified at PUC hearings, along with the telecommunications industry. Overlay area codes have now been approved for most of Pennsylvania and are in use across much of the country. – *Lebanon Daily News*

