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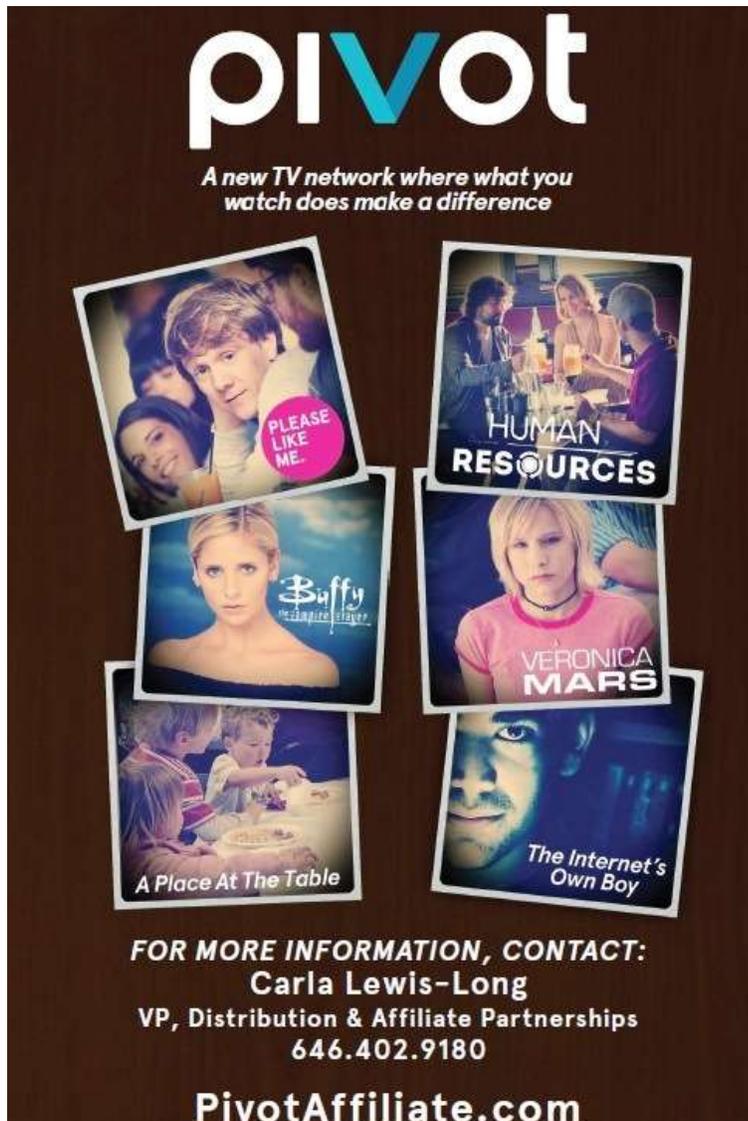
Comcast Corp.'s gain on college campuses may be Netflix Inc.'s loss.

A new Comcast streaming TV service for college campuses, formally launched Thursday in a handful of schools, holds the promise of reducing schools' bandwidth costs over time, college officials say. The service, which includes about 80 live channels and a robust on-demand library that can be streamed to tablets, phones and other devices, doesn't require

a physical set top box and is free for students with their room and board fees. Among schools participating are Lasell College in Massachusetts, University of New Hampshire, Bridgewater College in Virginia and the University of Delaware.

For schools struggling with rising bandwidth needs from students streaming video services like Netflix and YouTube, Comcast is pitching that its service has an added attraction. The service travels over Comcast's "managed" network in Internet protocol format—similar to cable video-on-demand or phone services. The traffic from those IP-based services travel on a special portion of Comcast's cable pipe that is separate from the more congested portion reserved for public Internet access.

As a result, the service, due to its managed



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nature, would be unlikely to experience the sputters and stops that can affect Web video streaming over the public Internet. More importantly colleges, which pay telecom providers for Internet bandwidth, would get a break on those costs because streaming the Comcast service won't count toward a college's Internet bandwidth capacity, a Comcast spokesman confirmed.

As a result, if students opt for the Comcast service over Netflix, colleges could see savings. One of the schools participating, Lasell College, estimates it could see a 15-20%

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decrease in bandwidth needs from students choosing to watch the new Comcast service instead of other Web video, which could lead to savings of \$3000-5000 a year on what the college is paying for bandwidth, according to Michelle Gaseau, a spokeswoman for Lasell.

Several of the schools say that students won't see fee increases as a result of the service. At least two said that was because the service won't cost much more than what they were previously paying for cable. So while Netflix will still cost students at least \$7.99 a month, Comcast's streaming TV will be available at no additional cost. (Caveat: we all know students who still use their parents' Netflix logins and passwords. The cost likely won't be a factor for them.)

Netflix has raised plenty of concerns already about Comcast's clout in the Internet. It is opposing Comcast's proposed \$45 billion merger with Time Warner Cable Inc., citing the resulting power the cable giant will have over the broadband marketplace. Netflix Chief Executive Reed Hastings has sharply criticized Comcast and other big Internet service providers' demands for payments for "interconnection" deals that directly link Netflix's servers to their networks and improve video delivery. Comcast has responded that Netflix's complaints are overblown and that such paid interconnection deals are commonplace.

But if Comcast is able to get a foot in the door of colleges by giving them a way to reduce their bandwidth costs while also grabbing hold of younger viewers, Netflix might have more to be worried about. A Netflix spokeswoman declined to comment. – *Wall Street Journal*; [more in Philadelphia Business Journal](#)

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Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter has organized a diverse national group of 51 mayors who support Comcast Corp.'s proposed \$45 billion acquisition of Time Warner Cable Inc., saying the deal would lead to significant economic benefits in the communities, including jobs. The letter was sent to the Federal Communications Commission, and Nutter released a statement on it through his press office Thursday afternoon.

Support from its hometown mayor could be a political boost in Washington for Comcast's efforts to acquire Time Warner Cable. The deal faces tough regulatory scrutiny. Critics have said the government should place conditions on the deal or oppose it because Comcast's market power in the TV and Internet businesses would be of unrivaled scale if it joined with Time Warner Cable, the nation's second-largest cable-TV company. The deadline for public comments to the FCC over the proposed merger is Monday. Almost 10,000 new comments were received Thursday, bringing the total to almost 52,000.

As the deadline approaches, the deal's sharpest critics and biggest supporters are expected to file their comments. Among the critics could be nonprofit advocacy organizations and content providers such as Netflix and Dish Network. Mayors outside the region who joined Nutter include those in Orlando; Columbia, S.C.; Stafford, Texas; Attleboro, Mass.; Denver; and Anaheim, Calif.

In Pennsylvania, the mayors of Bensalem, Media, Lancaster, and York support the deal, according to the Nutter letter. The New Jersey mayors of Camden, Bridgeton, Lambertville, and Trenton also signed on. Absent were the mayors of New York City and Los Angeles, two cities that could be most affected by a Comcast/Time Warner Cable merger. Both of those TV markets are served by Time Warner Cable. Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti this week asked the FCC to extend the deadline for the public comment period. "I proudly and enthusiastically support this business transaction because Comcast has always been a great corporate citizen in Philadelphia and I thank my fellow mayors for joining me," Nutter said in his statement. "The merger of Time Warner Cable and Comcast will lead to improved services and increased investment in existing Comcast markets."

When asked whether Comcast had requested the letter of support, Nutter's spokesman,

Mark McDonald, said, "I have no idea." He said that Nutter phoned and e-mailed mayors he knew through the years. "The call went out widely and what came back came back," McDonald said. Nutter "was pretty pleased with the chief executives from towns all over the country participating." Comcast officials referred questions regarding the letter to Nutter's office. – *Philadelphia Inquirer*

The Republican Party of Pennsylvania has filed an election complaint with the Department of State, accusing Democratic gubernatorial nominee Tom Wolf and his political action committees of violating the Pennsylvania Election Code. The complaint filed by GOP leadership Wednesday alleges the pro-Wolf political action committee Campaign for a Fresh Start didn't list its affiliation with Wolf in its registration documents, that Wolf failed to list his affiliation with Fresh Start, and that Wolf's campaign has been "shifting the principal role of the Tom Wolf for Governor Committee to raise and disburse funds for his campaign to Campaign for a Fresh Start, an entity he created and authorized to take over those activities."

Wolf supporters said the complaint is an attempt to distract from recent controversies in the administration of Republican nominee Gov. Tom Corbett. "The complaint...amounts to nothing more than a political press release signed by party officials," said Wolf spokesman Jeff Sheridan. "Their complaint made no sense and said nothing. It does not stand on its merits." Fresh Start spokesman Mike Mikus said the complaint "would be laughable if it wasn't an attempt by Tom Corbett to use the state Department of Elections – which is run by one of his political employees – to silence his opponents about the real scandals within his administration." – *pennlive.com*



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