Press Release

Will the DirecTV/Dish Merger Draw Biden Administration Ire?

PAULINA ENCK | SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

Today, DirecTV agreed to purchase rival satellite television company Dish, a deal that would combine the two largest direct broadcast satellite companies in the United States. In a new insight, Director of Technology and Innovation Policy Jeffrey Westling walks through the deal's specifics, considers the likelihood of drawing antitrust scrutiny, and reviews the merger's potential procompetitive benefits.

Key points:

- The merger presents a useful case study on how far the Biden Administration is willing to go to target concentration in markets.
- The transaction could draw regulatory scrutiny due to concerns with concentration in the satellite television market, especially considering the Federal Communications Commission will review the transaction under its broad public interest standard rather than the narrower Clayton Act's focus on harm to competition.
- Despite concerns about concentration, the deal would likely provide significant procompetitive benefits to the home television market, which has seen a drastic shift in recent years with consumers increasingly "cutting the cord," as well as to broadband markets by relieving the debt burdens on Dish's wireless broadband business.

Read the analysis