

Unlock the Box: Consumer Video Choice Coalition Launched to Protect Consumer's Video Device Options

Coalition to Advocate for More Video Networks to be Made Available to Third-Party Devices, Ensuring Competition and Innovation for Consumers

WASHINGTON, DC – July 1, 2015 – Leading technology organizations, consumer advocate organizations, and innovative video device companies today announced the formation of an advocacy coalition to push for video device competition. Members of the Consumer Video Choice Coalition include CCIA, COMPTTEL, Public Knowledge, Writers Guild of America, West, Ceton, Google, Hauppauge, SiliconDust, TiVo Inc., and VIZIO.

“The market is driving video consumers to go over-the-top, break the bundle and now unlock the box,” said Chip Pickering, CEO of COMPTTEL. “A more robust marketplace for set-top boxes and other video navigation devices is vital to ensuring that consumers, device manufacturers and content providers can receive maximize benefits from the rapid changes occurring in how consumers are viewing content.”

The new Coalition will demonstrate to policymakers at the FCC and on Capitol Hill that there is broad support to promote competition and innovation by making video networks more available to third-party devices.

Network operators are more focused than ever on preserving their control of set-top devices to direct consumers' access to video content – particularly content affiliated with or favored by the network operators. As with network neutrality, this broad-based coalition will foster an environment for the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to give consumers the same rights they have when using other communications networks, and to end network operators' stranglehold over devices.

“Lack of choice and competition for alternative set top box and other video delivery devices is costing consumers and holding back innovation,” Pickering said. “Unlocking the box will free consumers, content creators and builders by opening new platforms and new markets.”

The Coalition will provide substantive input to the FCC, including the Downloadable Security Technical Advisory Committee (“DSTAC”), convened by the FCC pursuant to the Reauthorization of the Satellite Television Extension and Localism Act Reauthorization (STELAR), PL 113-200, and future video competition proceedings.

Members of the Coalition submitted a letter to the DSTAC in May of 2015 urging the FCC “to ensure that the DSTAC process results in solutions that enable robust competition among retail and operator-leased navigation devices used to access video programming offered by Multichannel Video Program Distributors (MVPDs.)”

https://www.publicknowledge.org/assets/uploads/documents/Coalition_DSTAC_Letter_05-11-15_F.pdf