

Comcast + NBC = **Bad Deal for the Public**

A Comcast takeover of NBC would result in a single company controlling premier TV and movie content, as well as access to the outlets and platforms the public uses to watch that content – namely, cable systems, broadcast stations and the Internet. After the merger, Comcast could raise prices for consumers, limit the number of independent and local voices, withhold programming from competitors, and crush competition from emerging online video outlets by starving them of content.

Comcast + NBC

Higher Prices for Consumers: Comcast already raises its rates every year for its cable subscribers, and prices will only rise further after the merger. Rates for all cable customers nationwide could skyrocket because Comcast will have the opportunity and incentive to charge its competitors more for NBC programs and force competitors to pay for less desirable Comcast cable channels in order to get NBC programming — those added costs will mean bigger bills for all cable subscribers.

After its takeover of NBC, Comcast would control one in every five television viewing hours.

Fewer Programming Choices for Consumers: If Comcast owns NBC, it will have the incentive to favor NBC shows over other programming. This could be particularly harmful to local and independent voices and programs and make it even harder to find alternatives on the cable dial. Content would be less local, less independent, and less accountable to communities.

Comcast already owns cable networks that would otherwise compete with NBC cable networks — after the merger, many popular channels on the cable menu would be controlled by one company and would no longer compete against one another for viewers. Instead, expect to see more re-purposed, re-packaged content on all Comcast-controlled channels, and less new original programming.

NBC has exclusive rights to the Olympic games. Post-merger, Comcast could restrict online access to video footage of the Olympics to Comcast customers.

Lost Jobs: Comcast is the poster child for an anti-union company, and has a long history of violating workers' rights. Additionally, history shows that layoffs consistently accompany these types of mergers. As companies try to upsize their profits, they tend to downsize their workforce.

Increased Power to Stifle Competitors Both On- and Offline: Post-merger, Comcast will have the power to charge competitors more for its desirable NBC content and bundle less desirable Comcast cable channels to secure more favorable placement. Additionally, Comcast can exercise the retransmission consent rights of newly acquired NBC broadcast stations to charge competing video providers more money to access local NBC content. Comcast would also have an incentive to withhold content and starve competing online video services that could provide an alternative to cable TV.

Comcast's So-Called "Public Interest" Commitments Do Not Change This Equation

In announcing its takeover of NBC, Comcast offered a nine-point public interest commitment plan. But these commitments aren't worth the paper they're written on. They don't provide the public with any greater value or benefit in services. None of the measures in the company's nine-point plan would address concerns about higher cable and broadband rates for consumers or the concentration of power in one company across multiple media markets. Many of Comcast's promises are vague and unenforceable. In fact, Comcast has not pledged to do anything beyond what it is already doing, is likely to do anyway, or is bound to do by current law.

Too Much Control in Too Few Hands

Comcast is the country's largest cable provider and largest Internet service provider. It serves customers in 39 states and the District of Columbia and reaches close to 24 million homes in the United States that subscribe to cable – that's nearly one in four homes that subscribe to cable. NBC owns movie studios, broadcast networks, cable networks, a huge stake in the online video service, Hulu, as well as 27 local broadcast stations that reach nearly one-third of U.S. households. The NBC owned and operated (O&Os) broadcast stations alone (not counting affiliates) reach nearly 30 percent of U.S. households.

What's at Stake?

NBCU Properties

Broadcast Properties

- 27 broadcast television stations (many of them NBC and Telemundo affiliates)

Cable Network Properties

- Bravo
- CNBC
- MSNBC
- NBC Sports
- Oxygen
- Syfy Channel
- USA Network
- Weather Channel
- Chiller
- Sleuth
- Universal HD

Other Content Properties

- NBC Television Network
- Universal Media Studios
- Universal Cable Productions
- Universal Pictures
- Focus Features
- Universal Studios Home Video
- NBC Sports & Olympics
- Hulu.com
- iVillage

Other Properties

- Universal Parks and Resorts

Comcast Properties

Comcast Cable Franchises

- 39 states and the District of Columbia
- 23.9 million cable customers
- 15.3 million high-speed Internet customers
- 7.0 million voice customers

Cable Network Properties

- Golf Channel
- Style Network
- Versus
- E! Entertainment Television, Inc.
- G4 Media, Inc.
- FearNet

Local Sports Media Properties

- Comcast SportsNet Bay Area
- Comcast SportsNet California
- Comcast SportsNet Chicago
- Comcast SportsNet Mid-Atlantic
- Comcast SportsNet New England
- Comcast SportsNet Northwest
- Comcast SportsNet Philadelphia
- Mountain West Sports Network

Other Media Properties

- MGM Pictures (partial ownership)
- United Artists Corporation (partial ownership)
- Fancast
- Fandango
- thePLATFORM
- Plaxo