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Verizon Anti-blocking Statement

Verizon subscribes to the High-Tech Broadband Coalition's Connectivity Principles, which are similar to former FCC Chairman Powell's "Four Freedoms," both of which can be summarized as follows:

- End-users should receive meaningful information regarding their broadband service plan;
- End-users should be able to access their choice of legal content within the parameters of their service plans;
- End-users should be able to attach any device they choose to their broadband connection at their premises, so long as they operate within the parameters of their service plans and do not harm the provider's network; and
- End-users should be able to run applications of their choice, within the parameters of their service plans, so long as they do not harm the provider's network.

Further, Verizon believes that the industry can develop market-based mechanisms for effectuating the principles outlined above. Along those lines, Verizon supports the following corollaries:

- Network providers should be able to offer their customers vertically-integrated broadband access and applications;
- Network providers should be able to offer proprietary services to their customers;
- Network providers should be allowed to offer managed networks to their customers; and
- Network providers should be allowed to offer managed services to their customers.

Without knowing the details of what happened in the Madison River/Vonage case, it is very possible that a cable modem or DSL service provider may be overly zealous in blocking a range of ports in order to better protect its customers from spyware and viruses. If the blocked range happened to include ports used for VoIP, that provider's customers would lose the ability to place or receive VoIP calls. This is exactly the kind of scenario that could be easily handled by the involved companies through application of the High-Tech Broadband Coalition's Connectivity Principles -- merely exposing the port blocking to the light of day may be enough to cause the offending party to open up the affected ports. This is the beauty of the market-based Internet -- bad acts and actors get discovered swiftly and solutions get developed nearly as quickly.

Questions or comments should be directed to:

C. Link Hoewing
VP, Issue Management and Technology Policy
Verizon
1300 I Street, NW
Suite 400W
Washington, DC 20005
202-515-2422

Michael W. McKeehan
Director, Internet & Technology Policy
Verizon
1300 I Street, NW
Suite 400W
Washington, DC
202-515-2422