

VoIP Gets More Duck-Like: FCC Extends Discontinuance of Service Rules to Interconnected VoIP Providers

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In a move that surprised almost no one, the FCC extended its discontinuance of service rules to providers of interconnected VoIP services. When this latest action becomes effective, interconnected VoIP providers will be required to give customers advance notice of plans to discontinue service and will have to file for FCC approval of such actions. FCC approval is automatic 30 days after the Commission issues public notice, unless it issues an order denying the discontinuance within that time. Curiously, although the Vonage order preempts state regulation of interconnected VoIP entry or exit, the discontinuance rules require interconnected VoIP providers to notify the relevant state commissions in addition to the FCC.

More broadly, as it has before, the FCC refused to classify interconnected VoIP service as either a telecommunications service or an information service. So, while we still don't know what it is, exactly, interconnected VoIP has yet another of the obligations traditionally associated with POTS service.

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