

**REGULATIONS IN THE MIDDLE  
EAST: WHAT'S THE PRIORITY-  
*WHAT HAS THE U.S. DONE ON KEY  
ISSUES?***

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# I. CONVERGENCE

- In the USA, the FCC has addressed Convergence through a dual policy of:
  - (1) Encouraging and Fostering Providers of Converging Services (Voice/Video/Broadband Internet “Triple Play”) through relaxed regulation
- . . . *While also*
  - (2) Decreasing Regulation of Incumbent Network Providers (AT&T, Verizon, Qwest and Other “ILECs”) to Put Them on a “Level Playing Field” With Their Foremost Facilities-Based “Triple Play” Competitors— Cable TV Operators



# I. CONVERGENCE (cont'd)

- At the Same Time, the FCC has refused to step in to help less facilities-based “CLEC” competitors, who want to maintain “open access” and “net neutrality” obligations on ILECs.
  - Broadband: Refusal to regulate ILEC “wireline Internet broadband access service” to allow nondiscriminatory access to independent ISPs. (Recent “Time Warner” court decision upholding FCC deregulation of ILECs).
  - Telecom Services: Increasing “Forbearance” from traditional common carrier interconnection regulations on ILECs.



## II. LIBERALISATION

- U.S. Tradition of Private Ownership
- 1970s-1980s: Break-up of AT&T Bell System Monopoly
- 1990s: Introduction of Local Competition to Bell Companies (“CLECs”)
- Now: Emphasis on Facilities-Based “Intermodal” Competition
- Less FCC Support for “less-than-fully-facilities-based competitors;” less regulation of ILECs



# III. WiMAX

- FCC has encouraged development of WiMAX, but taking a “wait and see” attitude regarding the technology
- Considers WiMAX as just one of several promising “Advanced Wireless Services” (AWS)
- Slow pace of spectrum allocations for AWS; conflicts with spectrum needs for public safety/emergency/homeland security purposes
- FCC watching WiMAX industry developments (e.g., Sprint-Nextel, trials)



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