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September 28, 2015

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New Coalition Launches to Enhance the Consumer Wireless Experience & Encourage Mobile Innovation

EVOLVE will educate consumers and policymakers on the benefits of unlicensed spectrum and new technologies for unlicensed spectrum

(WASHINGTON, DC) – In an effort to constantly meet and exceed the rapidly growing needs of consumers, a mix of mobile and technology companies and associations announced today the formation of a coalition named EVOLVE. Through a series of speaking engagements, dialogue with policymakers, and consumer education, EVOLVE will promote the consumer benefits of unlicensed spectrum and new technologies for unlicensed spectrum like LTE-Unlicensed (LTE-U) and Licensed Assisted Access (LAA). LTE-U and LAA are new technologies that will substantially increase data speeds and improve coverage for millions of Americans. The founding members include Competitive Carriers Association, CTIA – The Wireless Association, Alcatel-Lucent, AT&T, Qualcomm Incorporated, T-Mobile, and Verizon. The EVOLVE coalition believes regulators should reject calls to preemptively interfere with new technologies like LTE-U and LAA that enhance utilization of unlicensed spectrum.

Different from licensed airwaves auctioned by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and exclusively held by wireless providers, unlicensed spectrum is open to anyone using any technology to experiment, research and innovate. Unlicensed spectrum is used for everything from baby monitors and garage door openers to Wi-Fi networks, Bluetooth, and soon, LTE-U and LAA.

Like all American consumers, EVOLVE members support Wi-Fi and understand the important role it plays in meeting consumers' broadband demands. LTE-U and LAA were designed from the ground-up to operate cooperatively with Wi-Fi and other signals. In fact, when tested together, Wi-Fi performed the same or even better with LTE-U than Wi-Fi does alone.

In promotional materials, including [a new website](#), EVOLVE touts the successes of the FCC in overseeing licensed spectrum auctions, as well as the immense consumer benefits of unlicensed spectrum. According to Telecom Advisory Services, LLC, the economic value of unlicensed spectrum is over \$228 billion per year in the United States. Direct sales of technologies, services, and applications dependent on unlicensed spectrum – including baby monitors, wireless headsets and keyboards, walkie-talkies, and a host of medical imaging and communication systems, to name a few – results in a Gross Domestic Product of \$6.7 billion per year.

EVOLVE's member companies have coalesced in support of seven principles:

1. Innovation in unlicensed spectrum will continue to fuel the continually evolving high-tech industry and empower consumers with even more choices in products and services.
2. The FCC has designated that unlicensed spectrum is available for everyone – using any technology – and continues to be crucial to the evolution and growth of mobile communications. It is important for all participants in the unlicensed space, both existing and new entrants, to coexist and play well together.

3. “Permission-less innovation” means that new technologies should be encouraged to leverage unlicensed spectrum to drive a competitive mobile marketplace that provides for ubiquitous connectivity in the burgeoning Internet of Things market.
4. Wi-Fi is a critical component of wireless networks and provides important connectivity for consumers. New technologies using unlicensed spectrum need to work cooperatively with Wi-Fi today, tomorrow and into the future. Likewise, current-generation technologies must accommodate new innovative technologies that also operate in unlicensed spectrum.
5. Together, the unlicensed policy framework and permission-less innovation are a resounding success, producing a continuously evolving stream of new technologies, devices, apps, products and services.
6. Consumers depend on unlicensed spectrum for a variety of uses – Bluetooth, Wi-Fi, telematics, consumer electronics, and manufacturing – and benefit when new innovations in the unlicensed space improve and enhance their rapidly increasing digital demands.
7. The best way to address spectrum congestion is a strategy of abundance and sound policy. Unlicensed spectrum is one of several important components to meeting consumers’ demand in broadband, both mobile and fixed. The federal government must continue to make additional spectrum available for unlicensed use.

Representatives from EVOLVE’s member companies will hold a press call at 9:30 am EDT today, which members of the media can join by dialing (800) 230-1093 (if asked for a conference ID, reference EVOLVE).

“Americans need better broadband, and they need it now,” said Dean Brenner, Senior Vice President of Government Affairs, Qualcomm Incorporated. “That is because the Internet is entering a new phase of growth, in which so many more devices are connected and share rich data, making it necessary to increase mobile broadband capacity by 1,000 times. We applaud and join EVOLVE in its commitment to permission-less wireless innovation and the decades-long public policy that has made unlicensed spectrum so successful. We are working tirelessly to develop and proliferate, as rapidly as possible, far more efficient wireless technologies – LTE and Wi-Fi coexisting together – to bring consumers the best possible mobile broadband experience. Policymakers should embrace this approach.”

“Like American consumers, EVOLVE members support Wi-Fi and understand the important role it plays in meeting consumer demand for mobile,” said Steven K. Berry, President and CEO, Competitive Carriers Association. “New technologies and innovations, like LTE-U and LAA, can help all carriers – rural, regional, and nationwide – meet ever-increasing demands for mobile connectivity. EVOLVE and its members are working together to preserve unlicensed spectrum as an open platform, including all spectrum blocks for mobile innovation for the benefit consumers.”

Kathleen Grillo, Senior Vice President of Federal Regulatory and Legal Affairs, Verizon, stresses that openness and cooperation will be essential to ultimately serve consumers. “We look forward to continuing an open dialogue, sharing information and answering questions across the mobile community,” she said. “We know that by working together, the U.S. will remain a global technology leader for decades to come.”

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EVOLVE is a coalition of mobile and technology companies and associations working together to promote the consumer benefits of innovations in unlicensed spectrum. For more information, visit EVOLVEmobile.org.