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VoIP Unblocked

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The FCC moved swiftly to prevent a rural telephone company's blocking its customers from using VoIP services provided by Vonage, sending a message that such actions would not be tolerated.

Madison River admitted that it was blocking subscribers to Vonage, a competing phone service. Vonage became aware of this action when its customers in certain communities, all served by the same telephone company, were unable to access their high-speed Internet connections to reach the Vonage services. Vonage filed a complaint with the FCC. Within days, the FCC issued a Letter of Inquiry to Madison River, requesting information to determine whether it was blocking ports used for VoIP applications. The FCC subsequently reached a Consent Decree with Madison River, under which the company would immediately cease blocking ports for VoIP services and make a "voluntary payment" in the amount of \$15,000 to the U.S. Treasury.