



SEARCH DETROIT

SPONSORED BY:

HOME LOCAL NATION/WORLD SPORTS ENTERTAINMENT AUTOS/BUSINESS LIFE TRAVEL OPINION OBITUARIES EXTRAS

Death notices

Comment, blog & share photos
Log in | Become a member

POWERED BY YOU AND **Detroit Free Press**

MIKE WENDLAND

Comcast pays stand-ins to keep protesters out of FCC hearing

BY MIKE WENDLAND • FREE PRESS TECHNOLOGY COLUMNIST • FEBRUARY 29, 2008

[Read Comments\(17\)](#) [Recommend \(25\)](#) [Print this page](#) [E-mail this article](#)

SHARE THIS ARTICLE: [Del.icio.us](#) [Facebook](#) [Digg](#) [Reddit](#) [Newsvine](#) [What's this?](#)

In today's Digital Feed, we look at how Comcast is being accused of heavy handed free speech-stifling tactics, Google has one-upped Microsoft on a Web site building tool and PayPal is dissing Apple's Safari Web browser.

Here's the video, with the script info below:



Comcast is being called to task by a lot of online activists over some pretty heavy-handed behavior the other day at an FCC hearing called on net neutrality to look into complaints that the cable giant was booting off consumers who it thought did too much online music downloading or file sharing with services like BitTorrent.

It happened Monday in Massachusetts. To apparently make sure the audience wasn't filled with protesters, Comcast now admits to hiring a bunch of guys to stand in line and take up all the spectator seats when the doors opened. That kept Comcast critics from an outfit known as SaveTheInternet.com from getting into the hearing room.

Accompanying this post is a picture the organization snapped of the seat warmers who fell asleep during the hearing.

So many people are steamed over this that you can bet the FCC is said to be planning another hearing so the critics can attend.



savetheinternet.com

Sleeping seat holders at FCC hearing

RELATED NEWS FROM THE WEB

- [Detroit, MI](#)
- [Microsoft](#)
- [Marketing](#)
- [iPhone](#)
- [Detroit Metro](#)
- [Discuss Detroit Metro](#)
- [Powered by Topix.net](#)

More Staff Blogs headlines

- [Apple's Time Capsule can save your digital life](#) (7)
- [Enough with the snow already!](#) (11)
- [Follow the money? You can't count this high](#) (7)
- [Oh, my! I'm one of you now](#)

MOST POPULAR

MOST E-MAILED

- Ex-Wolverine Boren blasts U-M program: 'Family values have eroded' under Rodriguez
- Brown firing set off alarms for city
- American Axle chief: Jobs can be moved outside U.S.
- Scandal leads to snub of Detroit
- The Wild One: What should be made of Dontrelle Willis' rough spring?
- ESPN2 mock draft: I have Lions taking Harvey at No. 15
- Metro Detroit takes lead on U.S. population loss rankings
- Under new system, Lions QB Jon Kitna will have more options, pressure
- Returning Wing Darren McCarty will play on Friday; Homer has more tests on sore groin
- Seles, Jillette booted off of 'Dancing with the Stars'

Comcast's strong-armed, and some say ruthless, tactics have already resulted in a class action on behalf of Washington, D.C.-area high-speed Internet customers, who say the company promised open access to the Internet but actually limits those who are high users.

The New York Attorney General has demanded Comcast records as part of an investigation that Comcast intentionally interfered with the Internet traffic of video competitors. Comcast has a growing public relations disaster on its hands as word of the tactics spreads.

In other tech news... you just know Google has to be gloating today.

A week before Microsoft and its SharePoint online collaboration tools were to roll out a big marketing push, Google released a free service called "Sites" which does pretty much the same thing. But for no cost at all. Microsoft's Sharepoint costs.... so much the company is on track to clear \$1 billion on it this year.

Google's idea is to let teachers, small business owners and the like set up free Google-hosted Web pages for online collaboration, a company Intranet ... team and project management.

Finally today, Apple got a big slap in the face Thursday from Pay Pal, which took the unusual step of advising users of Apple's Safari Web browser to stay away from accessing PayPal because Safari is not secure.

Michael Barrett , PayPal's chief information security officer, says Apple is "lagging behind what they need to do, to protect their customers."

Use IE, Firefox or Opera on PayPal to avoid the security risks, says PayPal.

Safari is the bundled browser that comes with Mac computers and the iPhone.

No word yet from Apple about this.

In your voice

[READ REACTIONS TO THIS STORY](#)



jimfoz wrote:

The easiest option from cable and satellite is to spend \$30 or so on a rabbit ears antenna (I splurged and bought the amplified version). Up here, in the boondocks near Saginaw, I still pick up ABC, CBS, NBC, PBS, FOX and CW which is much more TV than I watch.

3/3/2008 9:56:20 AM

[Recommend](#)

[Report Abuse](#)



dbain wrote:

If you don't like Comcast....pressure your local administration to also license WOW to service cable, phone, and internet. I switched to WOW and have never looked back. Much better service, up time, and best of all---THE BIG TEN NETWORK--great coverage of all big ten events. Now my problem is prying myself away from BTN to get my other projects completed!!

2/29/2008 9:41:27 PM

[Recommend](#)

[Report Abuse](#)



floridamifan wrote:

COMUNISTCAST

2/29/2008 8:41:46 PM

[Recommend \(1\)](#)

[Report Abuse](#)



adoug123 wrote: