



Broadband Breakfast to Convene '250 Years of American Independence and 150 Years of American Telecommunications'

Online event at 12 Noon ET on Oct. 1, supplements 35-lesson online course about 150 Years of Telecommunications, and what it says about broadband and AI

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, September 22, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Broadband Breakfast to Convene "[250 Years of American Independence](#) and 150 Years of American Telecommunications"

Two panels, on innovation and competition, online from Washington on October 1.

Broadband Breakfast will host "250 Years of American Independence and 150 Years of American Telecommunications," a half-day online conference, on Thursday, Oct. 1 from 12 Noon ET to about 3 p.m. ET.

The event will kick off with a keynote address by Senator Deb Fischer, Republican of Nebraska.

Register at <https://broadbandbreakfast.com/telecom150>

The October 1 date sits at the intersection of two anniversaries. The nation marks 250 years of independence this year, and Alexander Graham Bell patented the telephone in March 1876, 150 years ago. Broadband Breakfast has spent the year working through these anniversaries, first in a three-part online series, then in a [35-lesson online course](#).

This half-day conference in a single online session is built around the two forces that recur across the 150 Years of American Telecommunications: Innovation and competition.

Panel 1: Innovation

The first panel takes up how earlier regulatory bargains shaped the technologies that followed them, and how to protect the permissionless innovation that produced the modern internet while accounting for the risks each new tool introduces. The question is what 150 years of precedent suggests about governing what comes next.

Former Federal Communications Chairman under President Barack Obama Tom Wheeler, now a

visiting fellow at the Brookings Institution, will join the first panel.

Wheeler chaired the FCC from November 2013 to January 2017, and led the agency's adoption of net neutrality rules, consumer privacy protections and stronger cybersecurity policy. Previous to his government service, he ran the National Cable Television Association from 1979 to 1984 and the Cellular Telecommunications & Internet Association from 1992 to 2004. He is the only person inducted into both the Cable Television Hall of Fame and the Wireless Hall of Fame.

Panel 2: Competition

The second panel brings that history to bear on current fights over broadband deployment, spectrum access and the infrastructure being built to power artificial intelligence. It asks whether the present buildout is opening the market to new entrants or consolidating it in fewer hands, and what a century and a half of competition policy suggests about the answer.

Confirmed panelists for the Competition panel include:

Eli Noam, Director, Columbia Institute for Tele-Information

Gigi Sohn, Executive Director, American Association for Public Broadband; Former Counselor to the Chairman, Federal Communications Commission

Jonathan Nuechterlein, Distinguished Scholar, George Washington University Competition Law Center

Additional panelists for both sessions will be announced.

The road to October 1

The conference grew out of a [three-part Broadband Breakfast Live Online](#) series this summer, each session covering a distinct 50-year arc.

The first session, "1876-1926: The Telephone and the Transatlantic Cable," ran from Bell's patent through the rise of AT&T and the first transcontinental telephone line in 1914.

The second, "1927-1976: Broadcasting, Cable and the Creation of the Media," opened with the Federal Radio Commission in 1927 and traced the Communications Act of 1934, the postwar television boom and the cable systems that began challenging the broadcast networks.

The third, "1977-2026: Computing, the Internet and Artificial Intelligence," began with the breakup of Ma Bell and ran through ARPANET, the Telecommunications Act of 1996, the net neutrality fights and the arrival of large language models.

How to attend

An online seat is \$150 and includes three months of Breakfast Club access – through Dec. 31,

2026. By becoming a Breakfast Club Member, you'll also be able to access the complete course, "150 Years of American Telecommunications" at no additional charge.

Section A of the course, or Lesson 0 through Lesson 4, are available to free members of the Broadband Breakfast Community. Sections B through Section F of the course – 31 lessons from Lesson 5 through Lesson 31 – are the ones reserved for Breakfast Club Members.

About Broadband Breakfast

Broadband Breakfast is the leading media company advocating for higher-capacity internet everywhere through topical, timely and intelligent coverage. The company's annual BEAD Implementation Summit and Digital Infrastructure Investment event champions a robust 21st century information economy.

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