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Let's Play Monopoly

By Ronald C Smith

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LET'S PLAY MONOPOLY

Read an interesting story last week about a guy who loves to play monopoly. The `interesting' part was that he announces prior to the game that he always cheats in monopoly. Everyone has a good chuckle and the game gets underway.

Well of course you guessed it, when Joe wins the game cleaning everyone out of their money and Real Estate, they moan that Joe didn't play fair. Well, dah-h-h!

Now my daddy didn't raise a dummie, so I like to think that I would not have joined that game of monopoly. I attended Annapolis, had a 20-year career in the Navy, mostly in the Intelligence field, and am now retired.

So naturally when I read on the Internet that "for a \$5 monthly investment, you can have \$109,000 a year for life", I consider it another game of monopoly, and Joe/Owner has just admitted that he cheats.

Did this program get members? Oh, you bet they did. And they aren't the only game in town either.

I know that if I believe in miracles I can really "make \$1000 commission with each sale", "earn a 6 figure income in 90 days", "...join and do nothing". Another tells me I will be "left in the dust, or profit insanely"; the choice is mine.

Ads now are popped up and popped under - annoyingly in-your-face with earning projections that wouldn't pass a third grade math test.

The greater percent of these programs go to the cyber-graveyard before they ever pay a cent to their members. That's the sad truth. I have close friends as proof.

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But I had to wonder if there really, honestly could be a program whose numbers made sense, whose projections were based on realistic spread sheets, and whose members could count on the money never running out; ever!

It was a challenge that I couldn't resist. Admittedly my labor was not without flaws that constantly needed correcting. And many sleepless nights my head swam with numbers.

In finality, my results would not buy you a Jaguar, send you on a cruise, or allow you to fire your boss. The earnings would be modest at best.... but then so are dividends from any stock you might own: modest but dependable!

I think worse than losing your money on the Internet, is losing your hope. Don't depend on miracles, promises or guarantees - depend on your ability to do some simple math to see if an `opportunity' has

any chance of surviving long term.

If it looks like just another game of monopoly, pass on it.

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DirecTV and DISH Network Merger

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Let's Play Monopoly

It was in October 2001 that General Motors Hughes (Parent company of Direct TV) and EchoStar Communications Corp., trader of

agreed to a merger. The new company would have

improved the services for satellite TV clients by adding many

channels and local channels would

then be available to all

viewers.

However, the US Department of Justice blocked the merger.

Why did they do that?

The merger would create a monopoly position

When merged the new company would serve all of the United States without any competition. As we all know, competition spurs progress and a merger would basically result in less progress. At the present time about 25 to 35 million homes do not have access to cable TV services. Those people have the choice between 2

companies. The merger would reduce this to just 1 company,

which clearly is a monopoly position that is not allowed. Even in areas with cable TV the merger would result in just 2 providers, of which each has a monopoly on its own technology. Further, EchoStar claimed that the merger was needed to be able to compete against the cable TV Giants. However, satellite TV was growing very fast while cable TV was losing clients. Out of every 3 new cable/satellite TV clients, 2 would go for satellite TV.

EchoStars proposed self-regulation does not compensate for the basic monopoly issues

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EchoStar and Hughes promised local TV programming to all 210 TV markets. However, the day after this promise, EchoStar asked the Supreme Court to overturn a law that required local carriage. They said they had no intention to carry all channels with the new company. At the time, local channels were available in just 41 markets while the 2 companies together already had the technology available to provide local programming in all 210 markets. A competitive market is more likely to speed up these services than a self regulated monopoly.

A proposed national pricing plan that would guarantee that prices would be the same in both rural and urban areas was also not accepted as prices could be set too high.

The merger would create a monopoly position for broadband internet services

In areas that are not served by DSL or cable, the only alternative to broadband internet services is via satellite. The merger would create a monopoly for broadband internet services in these areas.

Over all it seemed that without any other satellite TV providers a merger of the 2 companies was not possible. The public's interest was just not served by a merger (or at least not enough).

Some markets just don't have much competition because of their nature. Satellites are expensive to build, put into orbit and operate. The fact that there are 2 providers and not just 1 is a blessing for the public and everyone can make a choice. Of course we at

believe that the choice is easy.

is our preferred choice.

Gary Davis is owner of

, has several years experience in the Satellite TV

Industry and has written several articles on satellite TV.

DirecTV and DISH Network Merger

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Hints for lovers



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