CCA, CTIA Shake, Move Forward on 2014 Shows

Andrew Berg

The Competitive Carriers Association (CCA), formerly the Rural Carriers Association (RCA), and CTIA today announced that their organizations have reached an agreement of cooperation to ease the friction created by the two organizations' overlapping conferences scheduled for September 2014.

Thursday's announcement addresses a conflict that arose when CTIA announced it had scheduled its forthcoming "Super Mobility Show" to debut September 9-11 at the Las Vegas Sands Expo and Convention Center. That fell directly atop the CCA's show, which had been previously scheduled for September 8-10 2014 at the Cosmopolitan hotel in Las Vegas.

In a statement today, the CCA pitched the conflicting dates as an opportunity for conference attendees to get two different perspectives on the industry.

"This ground-breaking cooperative effort between CCA and CTIA will bring together the two shows and provide attendees with distinct experiences to illustrate the breadth and diversity of the rapidly-growing mobile marketplace," the CCA said.

According to the CCA, both shows will offer dual-access passes for attendees to attend both CCA and CTIA show floors and keynote sessions. Credentialed journalists may attend both CCA and CTIA shows and have access to the press room, exhibit floor, keynote sessions, educational sessions.

Complimentary shuttle service on September 8 and September 9 between the Cosmopolitan and Sands Expo will also be available.

Steve Largent, president and CEO of CTIA, said the announcement is yet another "proof point for why anyone who is in the wireless industry must attend Super Mobility Week."

When CTIA announced its 2014 Super Mobility Show, which combines its Spring Wireless Conference and Fall MobileCon show, the reaction was mixed for its overlap with CCA's previously planned show.

Eric Graham, senior vice president of strategic relations at C Spire, which is a member of the CCA, said in a statement in early January when the show was announced that it was "either an incredible coincidence that CTIA scheduled an event 20 months from now on top of CCA's Annual Convention, or it is CTIA finally

admitting, like its two largest members, that it cannot beat its competition on the merits."

Graham went on to call the wireless industry "duopoly-dominated," saying that CTIA's timing for its 2014 show was "rooted in the same mentality that drove C Spire to leave that organization three years ago."

"Now that CTIA has adopted AT&T and Verizon’s tactics, everyone should accept that the three are actually one in the same, despite whatever small carrier window-dressing they dream up to present to the public,” Graham said.

Rob Mesirow, vice president and show director for CTIA, said that due to the size of the CTIA show there were few venues that could accommodate the event. He said the association chose its 2014 dates by working with its members, exhibitors and the Las Vegas Sands Expo Convention Center.

"This date was coordinated very carefully with our partners, which we will be announcing over the next few weeks and months," Mesirow said, in response to Graham's comments.

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