

Net Neutrality benefits consumers by enabling free competition among creators of independent content and innovative services. The Internet is the most level playing field for publishing/distributing news, information and entertainment in the history of humankind. Sites like Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, Skype and Twitter -- which have revolutionized the way people communicate -- all began as little startups that likely never would have existed if they'd had to pay a "toll" to connect with end users (on top of the costs they already bear for storage, servers, connectivity and distribution -- and the price each user pays an ISP for Internet access). As it stands, sites that stream a lot of content have to pay CDNs to cache and deliver it to the end user without getting bogged down by net congestion.

Those of us who are aligned with the tech startup community and independent content producers could argue that there are lots of other inherent advantages to helping out the little guy, creating new jobs at startups, etc. -- but those are from the point of view of Silicon Valley and Hollywood as what others would call "special interest groups." Although the lobbying war is being fought between powerful telcos on one side and powerful media companies on the other (with tech companies like Google becoming increasingly involved as well), for the most part, as a matter of public policy, net neutrality is unambiguously pro-consumer.

I am deeply disappointed that the FCC is in the pockets of Comcast, Verizon and the like -- instead of understanding how important free and equal communication is.