

The United States of AT&T Doesn't Sound Right!

Net Neutrality is essential to free speech, equal opportunity and economic innovation in America. Since the FCC removed this basic protection in 2005, the top executives of phone and cable companies have stated their intention to become the Internet's gatekeepers and to discriminate against Web sites that don't pay their added tolls.

This fundamental change would end the open Internet as we know it. It would damage my ability to connect with others, share information and participate in our 21st century democracy and economy. The FCC must ensure that broadband providers do not block, interfere with or discriminate against any lawful Internet traffic based on its ownership, source or destination.

The internet is the one free medium of information and communication left to not only the American people but the world in general. People in oppressed countries such as China or North Korea have the possibilities to squeeze out information and truth to the rest of the world that their government would alter or with hold. These people put their lives on the line and use the only means they can to break out to the rest of the world. But these countries, especially China, make gates to try and block what can be said against their government and practices. China is famed for it's "Great Firewall" that keeps the truth oppressed and held hostage as well as its people's freedoms.

The internet allows families to get in touch with one another when they move apart from one another. But it's also a meeting ground for when tragedy strikes; the internet is the new "Missing/Lost" post of the 21st century. People can post on personal sites or public domains information about someone they're trying to get a hold of. They can get help from people of the community to locate a missing child or know the hospital their child was taken after a terrorist attack so they can be by their side. Talk with their family fighting in Iraq with a webcam and messenger so they know that they're alright.

The internet is capable of so much, we've yet to even make great use of possibilities because it's still a fledgling public technology and just now a single generation has grown up with web access as commonplace. But allowing the telecommunications companies control over what flows through the fiber optic lines based on just money won't just stagnate its development. It'll probably kill any and all use the internet had for personal expression and information exchange for the sake of profit.

Sites would have to force people to pay to make use of their services in order to pay the unjust fees for allowing people to just visit at what speeds they dictate; assuming of course people would be allowed there at all. It's known that corporations don't mind censorship but promote it. They can easily block access to sites that they feel are threats or just don't like. If a country such as China wanted some particular information blocked, such as poisonous toothpaste, they could pay the big internet providers blood money in order to find and rub out such information. Companies are about

making money and they have no problem at all doing business with countries that aren't particularly friends with the United States.

Allowing entities that are only concerned with the bottom line to control what can and can't be shown only leads to the overall stunting of use to technology. We lost radio to big companies shouldering aside the common people and throwing out big bucks for exclusive rights. Everybody complains about there being nothing on television, and that too is in control of only large companies. Can you imagine the internet being like the radio or television? Full of ads you're forced to watch, the only thing that's on is what they think would make a good show? Youtube has become a phenomenon of entertainment and expression, but it could just turn into one big television channel that your programming is dictated by someone else.

Already spyware is a huge problem that is infection millions of people. Spyware is used to control people's browsing and force them into doing what the site wants. It's also used to collect personal information and is a known privacy problem. If sites had to fight and claw at one another for viewers to make money to stay on, can you imagine the malicious software that might come from those willing to do dirty practices?

Keep my internet free! Keep my voice relevant and heard! Allow me to access news and information how I want to and when I want! I'd hate to hear in the future someone saying "There's nothing on the internet this time of day."