

As a former subscriber to Comcast's broadband internet service, and a current subscriber to their cable television service, I am aware that the methodology used by Comcast to distribute internet service to its customers. Customers are part of what is called a "node", which involves sharing access to the internet. The more people on a node, and the more files they are downloading, the slower the service is for everyone.

When I signed up for Comcast's internet service, I was advised that excessive use of bandwidth could result in my service being curtailed, or even cancelled. Provided that the guidelines for when use of bandwidth becomes excessive are clear and unambiguous, and are applied fairly and evenhandedly, I have no problem with that.

However, Comcast's blatant and deceptive blocking of peer-to-peer communications involving specific methodologies, such as Bit Torrent, is exactly the problem millions of Americans have warned would occur without Net Neutrality protections.

The FCC must take serious and immediate action to put an abrupt end to this harmful practice and prevent other Internet service providers from following Comcast's example of discriminating against the free flow of online information.

The Internet is a vital engine for economic growth, civic participation and free speech. We simply can't allow corporate gatekeepers to smother these democratic communications by discriminating against new technologies, secretly interfering with Internet traffic and stifling innovation.

Even before we had Comcast service, we had MediaOne, and the argument at that time was whether or not MediaOne should permit other internet service providers, such as Earthlink, to use its network to provide alternative service. Many people argued that since MediaOne "built" the pipe, they owned it, and could do with it what they will.

If you look at photographs of cities circa the early 1900's, you will see a forest of telephone poles and wires. That was the situation before the government permitted the creation of a regulated monopoly on telephone service. I understand that companies that build the infrastructure deserve a fair return on their investment. But it doesn't make sense to build miles and miles of overlapping fiber optic and other cables, economically or esthetically. Comcast, Verizon, and others have built (or purchased) a pipeline. The speed with which information flows through that pipeline can and is regulated. I pay a higher price for faster overall service.

But the content of what flows through that pipeline should not be under their control. In other venues, they want to be treated as common carriers. I think they should be. But that means that they cannot monitor and edit the content that they carry, unless it originates with them. Net Neutrality is an

important basic principle that should be maintained.