

Net neutrality is a necessary step to ensuring access to all media by all people. If we start allowing companies to throttle whatever they want because their lawyers have more money to spend than yours and they WILL find loopholes, then we will start seeing decent internet access become a privilege. It needs to be treated as a right in today's society because we are moving ever closer to total dependency on the electronic infrastructure. You can't get anything done in today's world without the internet. Classifying internet backbones/providers as utilities is only bad for investors, who have no interest in the common good. The fact that Forbes is against Net Neutrality should be the only indicator you need to show that it will benefit the consumer. Making the infrastructure available to all will encourage competition by allowing more entrepreneurs to create a Service Provider to compete with the monopolies we have now. Make no mistake; they are monopolies, though there are a few companies out there trying to make the world a better place by making internet available despite the cost/benefits most are only out to make money. If you let ISPs charge for something people need access to they will not stop with only premium services, it will trickle down to throttling people's access to banking sites, bill paying, public aid sites; whatever they can charge for they will. No ISP has ever given us a reason to believe that if we do not FORCE them to do the right thing that they will. They take any and every opportunity to squeeze the consumers, other startups/competition, and service providers for every cent they can.

As far as cell phone data goes, I feel the same as above except that voice and messaging should have priority over all other data content because that could be someone's lifeline. Public services should take precedent over someone watching youtube or something on their phones.

Companies cannot be allowed to determine what we get by how much a company pays them to get it to us. We are not the United States of China, we should not act like it. Classify ISPs as utilities for the public good and spirit of competition; ban ANY form of Fast lanes that do not run in their own dedicated bandwidth space outside of the speeds people pay for; and send a message to the American people that you care more about them than cable companies that line the pockets of politicians.

Thank you.

Christopher T. Startz

PC Technician and 13year Army veteran.

In addition to my own comments I have included another that I found very poignant from a petition that I missed my chance to join. Please read below.

Net Neutrality is vital to the Internet. It has allowed for the growth of progressive movements around the world and has allowed the public to connect as equals. Dismantling

Net Neutrality has the potential to destroy this progress in communications and it could very easily go so far as to create a class system on the Internet.

As education is a human right the Internet has been one of the most important tools available for my generation (I'm 29) to learn about the world and find new perspectives. While new perspectives might still be found even with a loss of Net Neutrality, when these new perspectives are given the unfair precondition of fundraising it severely limits educational opportunities.

Ending Net Neutrality could make education and information inaccessible; similar to how student debt interest rates can make traditional education and information inaccessible. The difference though is where getting rid of student interest rates would require legislation from a defunct Congress, restoring Net Neutrality would only require the FCC to change a classification. This does not require legislation; it just requires the FCC to do its job.

Dare I say it; ending Net Neutrality has a similar theme to closing down all the libraries world wide and replacing them with for-profit bookstores.

Libraries contain resources which are classless and paid for by public tax dollars (likely donations as well). For-profit bookstores, while usually offering affordable books do also require one to be able to afford a purchase. Now imagine this price tag for books is instead a fee to ensure Comcast, Verizon, or AT&T wont throttle or block internet traffic to a site where a person simply wants to express themselves (as they are guaranteed the right to do so under the First Amendment).

One such example of this is expression is blogging. One of the benefits to independent blogging is its affordability and accessibility. Furthermore, the readers of such blogging sites appreciate said affordability and accessibility as well. What happens if Comcast, Verizon or AT&T decide they don't like particular content and want to throttle a signal when they don't get their desired fee? The blogger, as well as the blogger's audience, has just been subjected to very unfair treatment when all people want to do is engage in conversation.

The loss of Net Neutrality would seem to be the final blow in a general corporate takeover of the channels of information. The first great blow was to diversity in telecommunications when President Reagan overturned the Fairness Doctrine. When he did so it became legal for news channels to present only one side of an issue with no counter-argument for comparison. One result of this has become an extremely biased media and a high percentage of Climate Change deniers in both the United States and Congress.

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 was another serious blow to Democracy as it took away monopoly restrictions and allowed for media corporations to expand their influence, buying competitor media entities, for greater profits; and less competition. Less competition leads to less Democracy. When you have less Democracy, and less opportunity for smaller media entities to grow, the nation takes a serious blow as far as its potential for information dissemination and social growth.

The Internet was the last great tool for diversity, communication, Democracy and discussion. Net Neutrality was something that actually made the overturn of the Fairness Doctrine and the Telecommunications Act of 1996, manageable. We finally had another medium for free, fair and open exchange. If it's even necessary to mention; the Internet's neutrality allowed the world to become more connected and it helped the global, as well as national, economy as well.

With no requirement for balanced content in media; with the permitted monopolistic growth of media corporations; and with an internet now controlled by those same monopolistic media corporations who can now freely discriminate against particular content... Well, there's only one way to put this:

Mass indoctrination of the mass communications... It's the end of Democracy.