

Net neutrality allows companies, no matter their size or income level, to send their data through the underground cables, cell towers, or satellite dishes. All data has to go through these venues. If these companies are allowed to charge for all that data, it would hamper the growth of the technology industry in the United States, one of the few industries in which the United States is equal to or ahead of other countries.

How would it hamper it? Some companies have been built around using data, whether for statistical analysis, remote storage (the cloud), streamed movies, or just communication between people. The growth of the internet has exploded, and with it the amount of data that is produced from using it. I am a graduate student in the computer sciences, and I study and work with such data. It has allowed new venues of research that would be far more difficult and expensive if these data companies did not exist. To now allow cable, cell, and satellite companies to charge the data companies for providing these services is like charging them an extra, possibly very high, tax to exist. And it is not the government benefiting from the tax. Only a few companies are benefiting from it, and far more are suffering. They suffer because if they do not provide their service fast enough, people will instead look for someone who can. There are many statistics and studies that have proven, unfortunately, that many people are impatient when it comes to the internet.

Allowing any company to be faster than any other will promote most of the profit of the internet being in the hands of those that can afford that faster service.

Any company that has a web page that does anything important for their business, not just the data ones, will suffer if their web site is slower. This includes any site where you buy things online, any site you download something from, any site that has a large amount of information on it. That is quite a lot of the internet nowadays.

And in order to give people what they want, each one will probably have to pay the cable, cell, and satellite companies something so that they will not lose customers to the faster sites. As most business in the United States is based on competition, without net neutrality they will have to pay more just to compete.

And even if all these companies pay for faster service, does that mean they will really get it? Let me tell you my experience. My family only has two possible internet-providing companies: one cable-based, and one satellite, which is much slower. Of course, we chose the faster one. Out of curiosity, we used various programs available through software and the web to measure our upload and download speeds at multiple different times during the day, and found it almost never hit the speeds specified in the service we were paying for. The only times it did were times that very few people would be on the internet, like early morning or late at night. Though we complained to the company, they told us there was nothing they could do, as internet speed was based on demand.

Having studied how the internet works, I know that internet speed does indeed depend on how many people are using the physical cable, satellite, or cell tower, which is very hard to predict for every single one of these that the data passes through. So if these cable, cell, or satellite companies are allowed to charge other companies for a faster speed that they cannot even guarantee, depending on how many consumers are using the physical internet-transmitting mediums the data passes through, there is a good chance that the "faster" speed companies will not get much benefit from their investment, especially during times of the day where internet use is high.

In short, net neutrality is vital to encouraging business growth in the United States, for big companies as well as small. Without it, a few companies will profit hugely from a phenomenon that they cannot even reliably control. The profit will be large because of the very nature of business in the United States - competition.

For the companies that just have web-based services as a supplement to their main ones, the competition is less, but as internet usage grows, so will the need for competition. To those companies whose whole profit is from the internet, however, the competition is now. They either pay the price to compete, or their profits decline. Do we really want to force them to make that choice, for a service that even the cable, cell, and satellite companies cannot fully control?