

In order to determine whether to classify the internet as a telecommunication service, we must first define the word telecommunication. Fortunately, Merriam-Webster has done this for us.

tele·com·mu·ni·ca·tion

noun

\,te-li-kə-,myü-nə-'kā-shən\

1: communication at a distance

2: technology that deals with telecommunication —usually used in plural

For our purposes, we are going to examine the first definition of telecommunication.

When we, the people, order goods from companies such as Amazon, Overstock, and eBay, we are communicating to these vendors that we prefer to shop with them rather than choose other options available. We are telling them that we want the products that they offer. We support the decisions they have made to become part of our existing and ever expanding marketplace.

When we, the people, utilize social media such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter, we are telling the world our thoughts, reactions, and feelings about issues that impact us the most. This **occurs** much in the same manner that a phone call does with two exceptions: 1) **we** get to tell as many people as we want at the same time, and 2) **we** read **other's** posts instead of hearing the spoken word. This is the very core of telecommunication.

The internet, defined by how it is used, is a telecommunication service. Shopping over the internet can be like going to your local Wal-Mart or finding that little mom and pop store around the corner. Connecting over the internet can put you in touch with relatives that live a long distance away or offer the opportunity to meet someone new.

In closing, let me pose a few questions. Would you pay an admission fee just for the privilege to shop at certain stores? Would you let your phone company tell you what numbers you can or cannot dial? If you answered “no” to **either** of the questions, you already support net neutrality. Control over our choices must not be given to those who benefit most by dictating which choices we are allowed to make.

If you hear nothing else I have to say, hear this: ***If control of the internet is given to the Internet Service Providers, you are giving them the opportunity to monopolize what data is sent and received over the internet, thereby inhibiting competition by nature.***