

Proposal Against Net Neutrality

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Net neutrality is an extensively discussed concept that dictates how internet traffic is controlled and throttled. Simply said, net neutrality states that all internet traffic is equal and will not be prioritized, regardless of the content or the traffic reason. Many questions and concerns arise from this idea, some in support of net neutrality and some against it; with both sides having strong reasons for their opinions. Within this proposal I will discuss, as an internet service provider (ISP), our position on this topic; the reasons for this position and why net neutrality is harmful and destructive to the internet.

We will begin by delving into some general concepts of net neutrality, stating reasons for, or against each idea; starting with tiered services. Tiered service refers to the strategy of providing varying services based on price paid per service. Our company supports this sale strategy, which in turn, means we are in favor of a non-neutral system. We see the underlying principles of tiered services in just about every market.

Our services are analogous of the gasoline industry, which has higher monetized fees for increasing quality, as we offer faster internet plans at higher prices. Those who argue for net neutrality say our customers deserve to have equal access to the internet, without one having increased services over another. This is illogical, and would harm our customers if implemented.

Here's why. We provide a base plan that offers affordable internet to lower-income customers, allowing as many people access to the internet as possible. For those who demand faster internet speeds, we offer just that, faster internet speeds at a higher price. This does not harm or decrease the service provided to consumers at a lower cost; it only adds increasing benefits to those who opt for a premium service. The dilemma is that most people do not need more than our base minimum speed of 40mbs, but some do, for example, individuals who upload videos, content streamers, and businesses. If we were to remove our tiered system, the new price and speed for our service would naturally fall towards the middle of the spectrum. Therefore, decreasing the potential number of consumers, resulting in less access to the internet. This is not only bad for our business, but more importantly, it is bad for our consumers.

A major concern people for net neutrality have, is that without it, communications networks can restrict and control content seen by consumers. Unfortunately, these concerns are not looked at objectively. They are arguing for content providers and consumers, disregarding the service providers' statements. Claiming that without net neutrality ISPs will control accessible content, which may be based on the content itself, or a company associated with it. This is true, however, when one of our customers decides to use our service, we are giving them access to our private networks. We have the privilege to control protocols sent over our network and possibly restrict harmful sites. If we can identify and categorize dangerous websites and activity, we have the potential to protect not only our clients, but also our own network from attacks or damage, which could ultimately result in down time, loss of reliability and credibility, and possibly even temporary loss of internet for many. Net neutrality would not allow us to ban terrorist sites, illegal activity, and other nefarious activity through our networks. Even though it would be

nearly impossible to prevent all bad traffic, any effort to reduce this activity should be respected and supported.

Are there rules mandating net neutrality, or are there rules against it? Currently, no laws are enforcing net neutrality, legally it is not required, however, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is pushing for net neutrality to be mandated, claiming it fits the Communications Act of 1934, which “gave the agency very broad regulatory authority over pre-Internet telephone companies.” The danger here is that the FCC will then be able to regulate prices for services, as well as, enforcing net neutrality to any extent they see fit. If the FCC is given this control, they have the potential to abuse the position. Because they are a government agency, it is likely they will restrict specific illegal activity. Again, resulting in a non-neutral world; except with more chaos and potential corruption. Still attempting in 2010, the FCC reformed to a set of rules with the goal of creating a neutral world. However, their efforts were unsuccessful and resulted in a fresh start in 2014, after legal issues with a prominent service provider.

Net neutrality will remain a controversial subject. Depending on who is asked, it might be the best idea in our world or the death of internet as we know it. As an ISP, we strongly feel that a neutral internet should not exist. Why must we be held to abnormal standards while just about every other market on Earth doesn't follow these operational ideas? It is illogical and a form of special pleading. The overall view of net neutrality has a positive effect and benefits our customers and clients. In addition to the practical benefits, we are potentially making the internet

a safer place. This should not be taken lightly. At this point, there are no regulations or laws that mandate and enforce net neutrality. While the FCC continues to push for a neutral world, we will stand our ground and provide a range of services with the goal of making the internet as accessible and affordable as possible.

Bibliography

Baase, S., & Henry, T. (2018). A gift of fire: social, legal, and ethical issues for computing technology. NY, NY: Pearson.

<https://www.savetheinternet.com/net-neutrality-what-you-need-know-now>

<https://www.eff.org/issues/net-neutrality>

Talking Points

- ISPs and service providers are strongly against net neutrality
- Private networks have the right to do as they will with traffic through their network
- Potential to restrict dangerous sites and nefarious activity
- For varying price points for different levels of service priority
- This follows suit with just about every market in the world
- With a base package, increased packages will only benefit those – not take away from anyone
- Currently, there are no laws mandating and enforcing net neutrality
- FCC is actively working to mandate net neutrality with the last reform in 2014