

Net Neutrality

Net Neutrality, an issue for the FCC to vote on December 14th that is not covered currently by the main stream media, is a regulation that passed during the Obama-Administration granting all websites equality in steaming service.ⁱ San Diego's fast paced, data driven, entrepreneurial economy requires Internet equality, meaning that no website may be accessed in priority over another. Many people do not know that the Internet is censored in many countries today. For example, in China there is no Google or Facebook but instead the search engine Baidu and the social media site RenRen respectively.ⁱⁱ This is due to the internet regulations that the Chinese government puts on their own websites and people, restricting the free flow of information.ⁱⁱⁱ This seems like a scene from George Orwell's science fiction novel 1984, but I assure you this can be a dark San Diego reality if local citizens do not participate in their own democratic system, while the possibility of "collective guilt" is real due to the current political climate.

What is Net Neutrality? Think of the Internet as packets of data. If I wanted to stream a Netflix TV show, that is ten packets of data. If you wanted to click on a New York Times article, that is 2 packets of data. Currently Internet Service Providers (ISPs) are required to deliver all packets of data in the same speed no matter the website.^{iv} Reversing Net Neutrality means that Internet Service Providers (ISPs) will be able to determine how fast different websites are delivered to you.^v Supposedly ISPs will be able to allow visitation of all websites, but in fact the FCC has admitted that Internet Service Providers will be able to block websites in a recent White House Press Briefing.^{vi} As a UC San Diego Alumni, I believe in Freedom of The Press and the ability of the people to choose our content. Do you think that ISPs should have the ability to chose the websites that you visit?

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So what does Net Neutrality mean for San Diego? Representative Scott Peters has voiced strong opposition to the new FCC Net Neutrality rules proposed by Ajit Pai, claiming that “Protections announced would undermine the level playing field of internet content.”^{vii} Downloadable fast lanes, as determined by the individual ISPs and not the government or other regulatory authority, will be able to stream content quicker than their counterparts. Thus not only making the Internet unfair to sites chosen by ISPs but also giving the Providers the ability to show consumers what content they prefer, speeding up websites and advertising desired while slowing others they do not.^{viii} ISPs will face no barriers and everything from content creation to digital advertising will be owned by the Providers.^{ix} Qualcomm, like other companies such as Facebook, Google, Yahoo, and Windows, are asking the government to enforce Net Neutrality for the sake of customer experience, competitiveness, and freedom of choice.^x Congress has already passed the FCC reversal for Net Neutrality, and the donations received by the Senate and House of Representatives from ISPs such as Comcast, Verizon, and AT&T total over \$3 Million.^{xi} Now it is time for the People to Stand.

What can you do? Congress has already passed the deregulations for Net Neutrality, and now the FCC Board of Directors, which consists of only five people, will vote on December 14th.^{xii} If the vote passes, companies like Netflix and Reddit are prepared to take the FCC Ruling to the high courts.^{xiii} If you have less than five minutes and would like to make your voice heard - go to www.BattleForTheNet.com to text, write, or call your Congress representative or Attend a Net Neutrality Protest!^{xiv} The Internet is Completely Equal, do your part to ensure Internet Freedom is here to stay.

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ⁱ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Net_neutrality_in_the_United_States

ⁱⁱ <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2014/02/05/top-ten-internet-censors/5222385/>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/2015/02/24/net-neutrality-what-is-it-guide/23237737/>

^{iv} <http://searchnetworking.techtarget.com/definition/Net-neutrality>

^v https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Net_neutrality_in_the_United_States

^{vi} <https://www.theverge.com/2017/11/28/16710450/fcc-net-neutrality-fact-sheet-is-total-nonsense>

^{vii} <https://scottpeters.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/rep-peters-voices-strong-opposition-to-fcc-plan-for-total-repeal-of-net>

^{viii} <https://youtu.be/p90McT24Z6w>

^{ix} <https://techcrunch.com/2017/02/20/the-implications-of-the-end-of-net-neutrality/>

^x <https://www.extremetech.com/computing/195790-ibm-intel-qualcomm-join-dozens-of-tech-companies-to-argue-against-net-neutrality>

^{xi} <https://www.theverge.com/2017/3/29/15100620/congress-fcc-isp-web-browsing-privacy-fire-sale?platform=hootsuite>

^{xii} https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Net_neutrality_in_the_United_States

^{xiii} <http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/net-neutrality-supporters-prepare-to-take-fcc-ruling-to-the-courts/article/2642189>

^{xiv} <https://www.battleforthenet.com/>