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NEWSLETTER MARCH 2015
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Net Neutrality (again)

Obamanet promises to fix an Internet that isn't broken

We've written about the so-called "Net Neutrality" issue five times in previous issues, as far back as August 2006. It has been derailed every time it's been proposed, in the courts and by Congresses led by both parties.

Yet it's back again, mentioned as a priority in President Obama's recent State of the Union address. Obliging, FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler is now leading the charge to impose new Net Neutrality regulation. "We've been talking about this for a long time," said AT&T CEO Randall Stephenson, an opponent of Net Neutrality. "It used to mean preserving a free and open Internet, but now it's changed to mean regulating the Internet."

The FCC's new plan is to simply reclassify broadband Internet as a "telecom service" (like telephones) rather than an "information service," thereby subjecting ISPs to government regulation and, of course, fees, taxes and surcharges that would in turn be added to customers' bills.

The FCC has already been sued twice – and lost twice – over previous Net Neutrality plans. Reclassification is a different strategy, according to the commission's current majority, to establish the authority needed to regulate broadband Internet service providers.

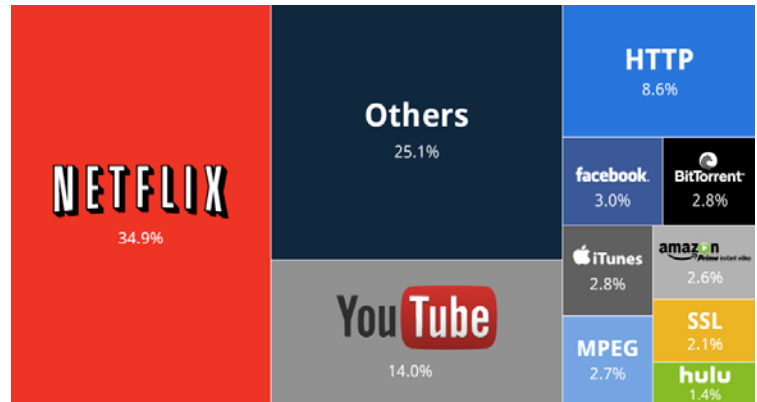
The issue is related to our previous discussions of Internet bandwidth hogs such as Netflix, YouTube and others – the "content providers" – as pitted against AT&T, Comcast, Verizon and others (including OACYS) – the ISPs or "service providers."

The basic problem is that Netflix (and the other content providers) want their substantial traffic to be shuttled across the Internet without buffering or other delays, and they don't want to be slowed by "lesser" traffic like browsing, online shopping, banking, email and so on. However, the major ISPs who carry the bulk of that traffic feel that priority treatment should be paid for as a premium service.

Netflix objects, and their lobbyists have managed to convince the FCC, and the Obama administration, that it is unfair to require payment for priority treatment, which they argue

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America's Internet Traffic Hogs



Source: statista.com

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Net Neutrality (again)

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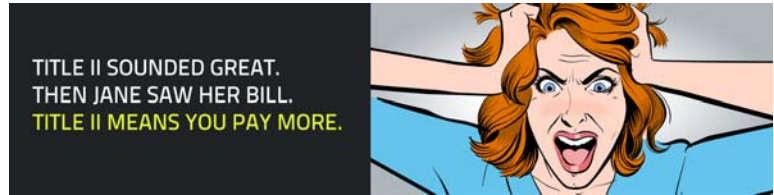
should be provided equally and “without discrimination” to all Internet traffic. This is the new definition of Net Neutrality.

This dispute is among the nation’s major Internet players, and OACYS will not be directly impacted no matter what happens next.

However, government control of the Internet – what some are already dubbing the “Obamanet” – would have indirect repercussions that would certainly affect OACYS and our customers. In addition to the likelihood of new fees, taxes and surcharges, government oversight and regulation always means increased rules, restrictions and paperwork – and reduced innovation.

In reality, Netflix and Verizon have already reached an agreement for traffic prioritization. This was the result of free market negotiation, not government oversight and regulation.

The five FCC commissioners will vote on Net Neutrality on February 26. As with the Obamacare vote in Congress, no review of the actual text will be allowed prior to the vote. The three Democrats on the commission (including Chairman



This is an ad of the National Cable & Telecommunications Association (NCTA), representing the ISP position on Net Neutrality. The FCC is proposing to reclassify ISPs as telecom services, under Title II of the 1934 Communications Act that regulated telephone companies as public utilities.

Wheeler) are believed to support the reclassification, while the two Republicans are known to oppose it. Whichever way the vote goes, the losing side will certainly appeal.

Note: This newsletter will be printed before the FCC vote on February 26. We will update our website and online newsletter after the results are known. For more information, search for recent comments by FCC Commissioner Ajit Pai.

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	Download	Upload			Installation	Equipment Deposit	
<i>(Note 1)</i>							
RESIDENTIAL							
Basic	1.5M	768K	20GB	5	100.00	Waived	49.95
Premium	3M	1.5M	40GB	10			79.95
<i>All Plans</i>							
BUSINESS							
Business	3.5M	3.5M	60GB	20			129.95
Professional	4.5M	4.5M	70GB	25			159.95
Corporate	6M	6M	90GB	30			199.95
Enterprise	8M	8M	120GB	40			249.95
MOUNTAINS							
<i>(Note 2)</i>							
Yokohl, Balch, Bear Creek							
Alpine, Pierpoint, Nelson	1.5M	768K	20GB	5			69.95

(1) Guidelines are the recommended bandwidth usage per month. There is no charge for excess usage, but prioritization may apply during periods of peak overall usage.

(2) Add \$10 monthly rural service fee to any Residential or Business plan.

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