

Net Neutrality:



SAVEOURNET.ca

Protecting your Internet's level playing field



OpenMedia.ca works at the national, regional and local levels to support a diverse public service-oriented media system through public education and civic engagement. Visit www.OpenMedia.ca



When we log onto the Internet, we take a lot for granted. We assume that we'll be able to access any Web site we want, whenever we want, and at the fastest speed.

Whether it's a corporate or mom- and-pop site, we assume that we can access and use any service at any time such as watching online videos, listening to podcasts, and using Skype or instant messaging.

What makes all these assumptions possible is Net Neutrality, the fundamental principle that has made the Internet an amazing environment for free speech, democratic participation and economic innovation. Put simply, Net Neutrality means no discrimination. It prevents Internet providers from speeding up or slowing down Web content based on its source, ownership or destination.

Net Neutrality has been part of the Internet since its inception – but now it's in jeopardy.

Because of the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission's (CRTC) hands off approach, Internet Service Providers now claim the right to "manage" Internet content and applications.

The biggest cable and telephone companies want to decide which Web sites, services and applications go fast or slow. Content providers who won't (or can't) pay a toll will see their sites slowed to a crawl.

While big sites ride in the fast lane on the information superhighway, the rest of us will be left behind on a winding dirt road.

The choice we face now is whether we can choose the content and services we want, or whether the broadband barons will decide for us. If the public does not speak up now, **the CRTC could cave to a well-funded corporate lobbying campaign.**

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How does the threat to Net Neutrality affect you?

Entrepreneurs will be muscled out of the marketplace by big corporations that pay Internet providers for dominant placement on the Web. Startup companies left with inferior Internet service will be unable to compete.

Political groups could be slowed by a handful of dominant Internet providers who ask them to pay protection money for their Web sites to work.

Independent Media Markers' costs to post video and audio clips may skyrocket silencing independent and citizen journalists and limiting the range of debate about important current events.

The threat to an open Internet isn't just speculation. Big Telecom is already "throttling" online traffic.

1. During the Telus strike in 2005, the corporation blocked access to a website run by striking Telus employees called "Voices for Change" (and at least 766 other websites)
2. Bell and Rogers have openly admitted degrading use of peer-to-peer file sharing applications, which are used by many independent filmmakers and citizens. In 2008, some Internet users who tried to download CBC's The Next Greatest Prime Minister on peer-to-peer applications were told it would take hours to do so.
3. In 2007 Rogers forced web users to read notices cropped over websites. The messages carried Rogers' name and logo and appear in the body of Web pages in place of original content.

The consequences of a world without Net Neutrality would be devastating.

Innovation would be stifled, competition limited, and access to information restricted. Consumer choice would be sacrificed to the interests of a few corporate executives.

The free and open Internet brings with it the revolutionary possibility that any Internet site could have the reach of a TV or radio station. The loss of Net Neutrality would end this unparalleled opportunity for freedom of expression.

Campaign for Democratic Media started a powerful coalition to save Net Neutrality in Canada.

The SaveOurNet.ca Coalition is an alliance of public interest organizations, small businesses, bloggers, and concerned citizens urging policy makers to put Net Neutrality into action.

Prominent groups like the Council of Canadians, National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE), Raincity Studios, Public Interest Advocacy Centre, Canadian Media Guild, DemocracyWatch, Adbusters Media Foundation, and the Canadian Federation of Students have teamed up to defend our open Internet.

With Net Neutrality...



Without Net Neutrality...



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