

# FOSS AND AN OPEN INTERNET

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# WHO AM I?

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LET'S TALK ABOUT NET NEUTRALITY

# WHAT IS THIS *NET NEUTRALITY*?

- You have the same access to information as everyone else
- You have the same voice as everyone else
- The whole Internet is delivered to you at the speed you paid for, without paid prioritization, blocking, or “fast lanes”

# A NOTE ON PRIORITIZATION

- Prioritizing *traffic types* (not *content* or *providers*) within reason is needed to keep the Internet running
- The recently repealed regulations defined FCC-managed high-priority tiers for critical data
  - And mentioned some specifics of what might go into that tier
  - Without regulation, non-critical services could buy into the priority tier

## BUT ESPECIALLY...

- It's about who freedom of speech applies to online
  - ISPs have actually argued in court that blocking and prioritizing content is their right because they have free speech rights too

IT'S NOT JUST A NERDY TOPIC

# GOOD INTERNET BUILDS HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

- And not just online
  - Improves property values
  - Attracts businesses and entrepreneurship
    - Therefore more jobs and opportunities
  - Better access to education

# WHY IS NET NEUTRALITY AN ISSUE?

- Telecoms are getting bigger
  - They keep buying each other
- The Internet isn't as decentralized or competitive as it used to be
  - We're risking access to the Internet becoming centralized by huge companies
  - Most of the country has only one to two home broadband options
  - Most of the cell network is owned by only a couple companies

# HISTORY RHYMES

- Western Union was once a telecom
  - They owned and controlled the U.S. telegraph network
- Western Union and the Associated Press controlled long distance news
  - Nobody had thought of net neutrality or neutrality in news yet
  - They manipulated the 1876 election by being selective about what news went where

# HISTORY RHYMES

- MA Bell had near total control over the U.S. telephone network
- They didn't allow any equipment you didn't buy from them on the network
- They didn't like change
  - Yes, Bell Labs was cool
  - But, they didn't allow anything to “disrupt” the telephone

# IT DOESN'T TAKE MUCH

- Slowing down page loads by 250ms (the blink of an eye) drives people away
- Fast lanes can make some data seem “second-class”
  - A problem, when that data has to do with politics or news
- Data caps and zero rating change what we do online
  - But data isn't actually that scarce, and ISPs admit that

## AND THAT'S SCARY!

- A lot of our communication, business, entertainment, etc uses the Internet
- Telecoms control Internet access, and there's very little competition to keep them from doing crazy things

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR FOSS?

# FOSS IS AWESOME

- As of 2015, 78% of companies reported that they used free and open source software
- FOSS gives you the right to know what your software does under the hood
  - This makes you powerful. It's hard to hide backdoors, trackers, etc when everything is out in the open

# TL;DR FOSS IS A BIG DEAL

- But, it doesn't have the political or monetary power a big company does, in many cases
  - Many projects are run by volunteers and funded by donations and grants
  - RedHat, Mozilla, the Apache Foundation can only adopt so many projects

# WHAT IF FOSS BECOMES SECOND CLASS?

- It's harder to contribute
  - It's part of a more expensive Internet package
  - Access is more difficult
- Or, maybe it's not FOSS that's harder to access
  - Maybe, it's the documentation or reference materials

# WHAT IF FOSS BECOMES SECOND CLASS?

- Why would a company or individual use FOSS if it's harder to get to?
- FOSS could be more expensive than the proprietary option due to extra tolls

AND THAT ALL SUCKS

WHAT CAN WE DO?

# EDUCATE PEOPLE

- Many people don't understand what net neutrality is
  - ...or, they think it's a government scheme to take over the Internet

# PUSH FOR NET NEUTRALITY

- Talk to anyone who will listen
- Talk to your representatives
  - You can fax them with ResistBot by texting 50409
  - Make them know you support net neutrality with strong Title II protections
- Make noise! The fight is just beginning!

# GO LOCAL

- Municipal networks provide less expensive, often better service
  - They're run locally, so they understand local needs
  - They can be built without tax dollars or tax efficiently
- We actually have infrastructure for one here in Monroe County, though access is restricted

# GO MESH

- They're often FOSS, and you can contribute
  - PittMesh
  - Commotion
  - TOR (though this is more subject to ISP foolery)
- Large scale mesh networks can get around large telecoms, and make more competition
- They're more resilient

# DONATE TO THE CAUSE

- The EFF, FreePress, Fight For the Future are all pushing for net neutrality

# CHECK IF YOU WERE USED AGAINST NET NEUTRALITY

- Identities of people, alive and deceased, were used to comment on the FCC net neutrality proposal without their consent.
  - Check if your identity was used:  
[ag.ny.gov/fakecomments](http://ag.ny.gov/fakecomments)
  - If it was, report it to the New York Attorney General: [ag.ny.gov/fakecomments-form](http://ag.ny.gov/fakecomments-form)

# TELECOMS ARE SCARED

- When municipal networks appear, they lower prices and boost their speeds
- They're pushing for regulations that prevent municipal networks and state-based net neutrality laws
  - D.C. had the first 100 gigabit municipal network, but telecoms managed to get it restricted to nonprofits

WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO THE INTERNET

[thenaterhood.com/causes/net-neutrality](http://thenaterhood.com/causes/net-neutrality)

[book.thenaterhood.com](http://book.thenaterhood.com)