

Death of Net Neutrality

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Abstract: This paper seems to bring about the cause and the possible effects of death of “net neutrality”. Internet is a vast space and always blooming. Many organizations have benefitted and even established with the help of Internet. Even Telecom companies have gained so much rating according to the quality of speed they provide effectively and efficiently and how the quality is being turned into consumer-friendly. Today almost all applications run on Internet and the whole of the population addicted to them. Many of these applications act as a medium of communication between people will become endangered if net neutrality is dead. The consumers, Internet Service Providers (ISPs), Government, Telecom companies are major players in the world of Internet and will be highly positively or negatively affected. Thus there is an urgent need to understand and raise the voice against net neutrality. Thus this paper is an attempt to bring forward the importance of net neutrality in the Internet world and how will it be beneficial for all the players involved over the globe. It will be very useful for creating awareness in consumers towards net neutrality, and will also regulate Telecom operators not to cheat over the consumers.

Keywords: Internet Service Providers, Facebook

I. INTRODUCTION

Today, “Net Neutrality” is a warming debate all over the globe. A debate which neither the Telecom companies are looking for the benefit of consumers nor the concept is being made clear to consumers and citizens. To start off with, let’s understand the meaning of Net Neutrality. Actually the term is “Internet Neutrality”.

As defined by various authors, a generalized concept states that the Telecom companies to earn a greater piece of profit want their consumers to pay different for different applications or different websites, thereby promoting the application (or website) and cheating the consumers thereby bringing doomsday for the “Net Neutrality”. According to Wikipedia, “the principle that Internet service providers should enable access to all content and applications regardless of the source, and without favouring or blocking particular products or websites.” According to techtarget.com, “Net neutrality is the principle that data packets on the Internet should be moved impartially, without regard to content, destination or source. Net neutrality is sometimes referred to as the “First Amendment of the Internet.”” According to pcmag.com, “(NETwork neutrality) A uniform playing field for Internet transport. Net neutrality is the absence of restrictions placed on the transmission of content by the major

ISPs that provide service to millions of homes and offices. It means all packets are delivered on a first-come, first-served basis regardless from where they originated. Net neutrality became an issue as ISPs began to carry more movie streaming and voice traffic from competitors that delivered the same services they offered.”

Today, users can create, access and use any content, service and application they choose, without discrimination, restriction or limitation imposed by those who run the infrastructure. Internet access providers enable us to communicate, browse the web or transfer files over the Internet, to make our own websites globally available and to use services such as email, social media or Internet telephony. Everybody, and in whatever role, and all organisations, of whatever size and style, is able to participate globally. Everybody is able to access services and to offer services. Let’s say you want to watch a video online: You connect to the Internet, open your browser and navigate to the video service of your choice. This is possible because the access provider does not seek to restrict your options.

Net neutrality means that Internet service providers (ISPs) should not block or discriminate against any applications or content that are provided over those networks. Just as a Telecom company shouldn't decide whom one can call and what one can say on that call, ISP shouldn't be concerned with the content one view or post online. With net neutrality, we got the freedom to access whatever we want to search on Google, and make contacts on social networking websites like Facebook, Twitter and countless other services.

As per a report published in Business Insider, “some internet service providers want to fundamentally alter the way the internet works and collect money from companies like Netflix and Facebook to guarantee their data can continue to reach users unimpeded. If you don't pay the amount charged, then they will slow your internet speed.” Thus without Net Neutrality, Telecom companies could differentiate over the Internet into fast and slow lanes. An ISP could slow down its competitors' content or block political opinions it disagreed with. ISPs could charge extra fees to the few content companies that could afford to pay for preferential treatment — providing everyone else to a slower pace of service. This would destroy the open Internet.

II. ONGOING DEBATE ACROSS THE WORLD “QUOTED”

According to NDTV, "ISPs have previously talked about charging extra for services like Skype that compete with its voice business. That's against the principle of net neutrality that asks for all traffic to be treated equally."

According to Airtel official website as on April 6, 2015," Airtel launches 'Airtel Zero': A win-win platform for customers and marketers

- Customers benefit: Customers enjoy free data access to a variety of mobile apps signed up with 'Airtel Zero'
- Compelling marketing tool for marketers: App providers pay for customers' data charges, thus giving customers toll-free access to their mobile application
- For startups to enterprises: An open marketing platform that empowers companies ranging from small businesses to large conglomerates with an equal opportunity to reach out to customers in India
- Spurs national agendas: Contributes to Government's focus on Digital Inclusion and 'Make in India'."

"I don't believe that restricting consumers' choice can ever be an appealing driver of more growth. I certainly don't believe that restricting access to the internet will attract many more innovative European internet companies. And I don't believe that restricted access to the internet is the right answer to a faster deployment of Next Generation Access Networks." - European Commission Vice President Viviane Reding, September 2008.

III. WHY RAISE VOICE AGAINST DEATH OF NET NEUTRALITY

This paper is totally dedicated to the importance of survival of Net Neutrality. Net Neutrality holds a significant place in life of every consumer today because every consumer globally has right to access information no matter how minute it is or how large it is. Every citizen today is equal in front of law. The Constitutions of each nation have mentioned the importance of right of liberty granted to citizens. This right can't be parted by Internet at least. The ISPs have no right to differentiate between the consumers to the services provided. Any startup relies on Internet traffic and no company how large or small, it is cannot rule over the Internet.

It is important to study about the advantages of Net Neutrality so as to make aware the consumers on the global stand about the rights granted to them and how can they fight for their rights, if violated. Internet, from origins, have been made as an open platform for all citizens and no company can change this fact just for the sake of growth in the market. Internet has been advantageous to both customers and marketers till date and should remain so for the time to come.

Internet has disrupted the world of business like no other technology has in recent decades. It has helped start-ups with hardly any capital and clout to still make a mark. So by rejecting

net neutrality, which will enable telcos to play the gatekeeper to a valuable resource, we will be shutting the door on the entrepreneurial aspirations of millions.

Death of Net Neutrality will stop the penetration and growth of new firms which can flourish to greater extents if given a chance. The impact will be adverse on the economy of the nations since only the bigger, established websites and applications will be available free and it's highly possible that the customers will not be ready to pay. Death of Net Neutrality will restrict the freedom of common "mango" people.

IV. HELPING NET NEUTRALITY TO PREVAIL

Net neutrality supporters insist that a free and open Internet, and a level playing field for companies large and small, is key to the growth and success of the Internet and to the emergence of new businesses like Facebook or Twitter or Amazon, or any other startup that relies on Internet traffic. And they worry that, if allowed, broadband providers would crush any new site or service that could threaten their existing or future businesses, potentially choking off services like Netflix to steer users to their own versions.

Some of the rules which can be implemented to help Net Neutrality prevail are:-

No blocking: If a consumer requests access to a website or a service, ISPs should not be permitted to block it, enabling every player "gets a fair shot at your business."

No throttling: ISPs should not intentionally slow down some content or speed up others based on the type of service or their preferences.

Increased transparency: The connection between consumers and ISPs is not the only place some sites might get special treatment. Hence, if necessary, TRAI and FCC should apply net neutrality rules to points of interconnection between the ISP and the rest of the Internet.

No paid prioritization: No service should be stuck in a "slow lane" because it does not pay a fee. Obama asked for an explicit ban on paid prioritization and any other restriction that has a similar effect.

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