



FCC to Protect Net Neutrality **Internet Providers Unable to Favor Paying Businesses**

The Federal Communications Commission ([FCC](#)) recently [adopted rules](#) to protect the concept of an "Open Internet," commonly known as "Net Neutrality." Net Neutrality is important to businesses because it requires all Internet traffic to be treated equally. Without Net Neutrality, businesses could be forced to pay Internet providers to deliver their content at the fastest possible speed and to the widest possible audience. Small businesses that could not afford to pay Internet providers could end up unable to reach many potential customers. Under the rules, however, Internet providers cannot:

- "Block access to legal content, applications, services, or non-harmful devices."
- "Impair or degrade lawful Internet traffic on the basis of content, applications, services, or non-harmful devices."
- "Favor some lawful Internet traffic over other lawful traffic in exchange for consideration of any kind- in other words, no 'fast lanes.'"

Internet providers also cannot favor content from their own affiliates or "unreasonably interfere with or unreasonably disadvantage" consumers' ability to select, access and use any lawful content, applications, services, or devices they want; or content providers' ability to make lawful content, applications, services, or devices available to consumers. Providers will be required to clearly disclose any applicable promotional rates, fees and surcharges and/or data caps. Finally, Internet providers must be transparent about network management procedures that may affect service, and cannot use reasonable network management needs to justify giving consumers or content providers less data than was promised to them. Instead, reasonable network management will constitute managing the actual technical and engineering aspects of a provider's network.

The rules will apply to any consumer-facing broadband Internet service, and across multiple platforms (i.e. on both computers and cell phones). The FCC will be able to take action against Internet providers that violate these rules.

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