

A Primer on the Importance of the Open Internet

The open Internet is essential to America's economic success, job creation, and business formation.

- REALTORS® rely on bandwidth intensive applications like streaming video, voice over Internet protocol, and mobile applications to serve clients. These services and applications require an open Internet that is unencumbered by discrimination by Internet service providers.
- In 2012, the Internet economy was the 4th largest market in the world, behind only the U.S., China, Japan, and India.
- Internet-enabled part-time businesses employ roughly 6.6 million workers and contribute \$141 Billion to U.S. GDP.
- Meanwhile, the nation's largest telephone companies have shed over 105,000 jobs since 2008, 20% of their combined workforces.

Protecting the open Internet has been a bipartisan priority for the past decade.

- Led by Republican Chairman Michael Powell, in 2005 the FCC adopted a policy statement supporting open Internet principles to encourage broadband deployment and preserve and promote innovation.¹
- In 2008, Republican FCC Chairman Kevin Martin and the Commission ordered Comcast to stop blocking and throttling Internet traffic.²
- In 2010, a Democratic majority on the FCC approved new rules to protect the open Internet.³ The 2010 rules were overturned in court for relying on the wrong legal authority, and in 2014 President Obama called on the FCC to protect the open Internet by relying on legal authority that would allow the rules to survive a legal challenge.⁴

Large and small businesses across the American economy support an open Internet and believe rules are necessary to prevent ISP bottlenecks.

- Small businesses, startups, technology companies, real estate professionals, and Fortune 500 companies in industries including manufacturing, shipping, construction, financial services, insurance, and logistics agree on the need to preserve the open Internet.⁵
- Most potential U.S. customers have only two choices for home broadband, and for speeds above 25 Mbps, increasingly required for family homes, over 80 percent of Americans are limited to a single option.⁶
- In 2013, Verizon's attorneys asserted in federal court that if not for FCC rules, the company would pursue deals that charged websites for priority access and guarantees not to block or degrade traffic.⁷

1 Federal Communications Commission, Internet Policy Statement (FCC 05-151), 2005, https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-05-151A1.pdf.

2 Federal Communications Commission, File No. EB-08-IH-1518, WC Docket No. 07-52, Memorandum Opinion and Order, August 1, 2008, https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-08-183A1.pdf.

3 Federal Communications Commission, GN Docket No. 09-191, WC Docket No. 07-52, Report and Order, 25 FCC Rcd 17905, 2010, https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-10-201A1.pdf.

4 See e.g. Lorenzo Franceschi-Bicchierai, "Obama takes on ISPs: 'No higher calling' than protecting an open Internet," Mashable, Nov. 10, 2014, <http://mashable.com/2014/11/10/obama-net-neutrality/>.

5 See e.g. Joshua Brustein, "Behind Closed Doors, Ford, UPS, and Visa Push For Net Neutrality," Businessweek, Nov. 14, 2014, <http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2014-11-14/net-neutrality-ford-ups-visa-and-bofa-lobby-fcc-in-secret>

6 Federal Communications Commission Chairman Wheeler, "More Competition Needed in High-Speed Broadband Marketplace," Sept. 4, 2014, https://apps.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-329160A1.pdf.

7 Verizon v. FCC, 740 F.3d 623, 646 (D.C. Cir. 2014) (citing Transcript of Oral Argument at 31, Verizon, 740 F.3d 623, Nos. 11-1355, 11-1356 (D.C. Cir. 2014)).