

WHAT DOES AT&T HAVE TO SAY ABOUT “NET NEUTRALITY?”

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AT&T Chairman & CEO Edward Whitacre, March 21, 2006....

On blocking access to content or applications –

“Any provider who blocks access to the Internet would be inviting his customers to find another provider. It’s just bad business. Let me be clear: AT&T will not block anyone’s access to the public Internet, nor will we degrade anyone’s quality of service. Period. End of story.”

On limiting choices, options and innovations on the Internet –

“But the net neutrality proponents would actually limit choices and options for Internet users. They say it is unfair for Internet users and content providers to pay different prices for different levels of speed, reliability and security. It’s like saying that we should add no more lanes to a highway that is increasingly congested.”

On the Internet’s cooperative ecosystem –

“At the end of the day, the interests of both network providers and content providers are intertwined. Content providers want their customers to have the best experience possible. We want more people to use our networks to realize new possibilities. More broadband – deployed as quickly as possible, is good for everyone.”

AT&T Vice President Jim Cicconi, March 22, 2006...

On “discrimination,” “equal treatment,” and “prioritization” –

“So, when we hear some people arguing for “equivalent treatment,” we’re talking about a pretty radical concept of insuring that things that travel over the public Internet are guaranteed a level of quality consistent with things that never touch the public Internet and that travel over virtual private networks or dedicated lines.”

On why net neutrality is a bad idea –

“The thing I worry about is the push for the government to regulate how Internet traffic is managed. It’s a really bad idea and I think it would damage the Internet in ways that are foreseeable...and it would be very important to keep the government out of this area – out of regulating the Internet – in the absence of any compelling argument that there is abuse or some damaging acts taking place.”

On government’s role in “net neutrality” –

“I think the better government role is to watch and observe and act only if there are bad things happening.”

On what net neutrality is really about –

“The core of this argument is about a handful of companies who plan to stream movies on the Internet, and who want us to guarantee them that their streaming movie services are as high a quality as ours and cable’s. We’re not saying we won’t provide them a service to guarantee that. What we’re saying is that you cannot provide dedicated-line, virtual private network services for free. When a Google says the DSL user should pay for that, in effect what they’re talking about is that our entire base of DSL subscribers would be charged money so Google would pay nothing to be able to stream movies. That would jack up DSL prices for people who may never use the Google service. I just think that is wrong.