

ISOC on Inter-Networking

The modern Internet features increasing complexity of uses and demand for bandwidth. The Internet Society believes that an Internet access environment characterized by choice and transparency, allows users to remain in control of their Internet experience, thus empowering them to benefit from and participate in the open Internet.

The Internet has become an indispensable tool for users around the globe and a fundamental enabler of innovation and growth. Passing standardized packets of information around without regard for their content or whether they require any special handling allows for more general-purpose networking and economies of scale in network deployment and management. Consequently, an inter-network (network of networks) as large and sophisticated as the Internet is possible. The "best effort" transmission of traffic within and between networks is an essential component of the Internet's power and success. The Internet's open architecture enables the delivery of diverse applications over the heterogeneous networks of which it is comprised. The open architecture allows for growth and coordination without central control and it is central to the Internet's utility and expansion. Demand for Internet connections with greater bandwidth is increasing and unlikely to abate. The availability and subsequent use of high bandwidth access networks are putting more and more pressure on network capacity, resulting in greater deployment and use of congestion management and traffic shaping techniques by network operators. That network operators are technically able to use network traffic management tools to treat packets differently, possibly charging users accordingly, has raised public concerns that the open architecture guiding the Internet's development might be in jeopardy. As a result, some believe that policy and regulatory measures are necessary to preserve the open Internet and to ensure that it remains an engine for innovation, free expression, and economic growth.

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