
Observations on Network Regulation

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Priority Routing Adds Value

- “The routing of IP data is a zerosum game: If a router speeds up one set of bits, by definition, all other bits are slowed down.”
 - Comments of Free Press, FCC GN Docket 09-51 (National Broadband Plan)
- By the same logic, it would make no sense for commuters to pull off the highway to allow an ambulance to pass—an accident victim may get to the hospital 10 minutes sooner but a hundred commuters will get home 6 seconds later.
- VoIP vs. BitTorrent
- Wireless
 - Priority permits use of otherwise idle capacity

History

- Pre Computer Inquiry II
 - Email was a tariffed service.
Telenet, Tymnet
 - ISP-like entities filed tariffs.
 - Users feared regulation.
- One of the goals of the policies behind CI-II was to free all service providers from the impairments of regulation

Infrastructure Protection is on the Honor System

- “In the current Internet architecture, congestion control depends on parties acting against their own interests.”
 - IETF Working Group Draft, “Open Research Issues in Internet Congestion Control”
- BitTorrent, Firefox, other applications violate this honor code.

Incentives for Innovation

- How would a network-neutrality policy affect the incentives to innovate of the various entities that build, provide, and use the Internet?
- Manufacturers
- Network Service Providers
- Users