ISP stands for Internet Service Provider; it is the company that provides internet access to people across the world. You must have an ISP if you want to connect to the internet. There are many companies that serve as ISPs, such as cable providers, mobile carriers, and telephone companies. There are three tiers in the ISP hierarchy, with Tier 1 being at the top. It has a global reach and does not have to pay for any online traffic, unlike lower-tier ISPs, which pay a cost when passing their traffic (Geeksforgeeks, 2020). Tier 1 providers are considered the "backbone" because they build infrastructure such as Atlantic Internet sea cables and provide traffic to all ISPs (ThousandEyes). If the ISPs are on the same level, they tend to let traffic pass through for free to save costs; ISPs that do this are known as "peers." Some examples of Tier 1 internet providers include Cogen Communications, Hibernia Networks, and AT&T (Geeksforgeeks, 2020). Tier 2 is connected to Tier 1 and 3; it only has regional or country reach. Tier 3 helps the user connect to the internet by charging them money, where then Tier 2 must pay some cost based on the traffic coming from the users. Tier 3's target audience is local businesses and the consumer market (ThousandEyes). Tier 1 providers control a portion of the internet, and Tier 2 and 3 rent bandwidth from the Tier 1 providers. It is more expensive to have a Tier 1 provider, but they are more reliable than Tier 2 and 3 (NiBusinessInfo). The capacity of the internet from your provider will determine the speed of how fast stuff loads, downloading files, email attachments, or updates to software. The bandwidth from a provider is shared between all the customers they have, and it can also affect the speed of the internet. There are some internet service providers that include restrictions on usage from the customers like bandwidth limitations and other policies (NiBusinessInfo). In conclusion there are three tiers of ISPs, tier 1 being the highest level of global connectivity and tier 3 used more locally. This hierarchy plays a critical role allowing internet service providers to give internet access globally.

![A diagram of a tier structure

Description automatically generated]()

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