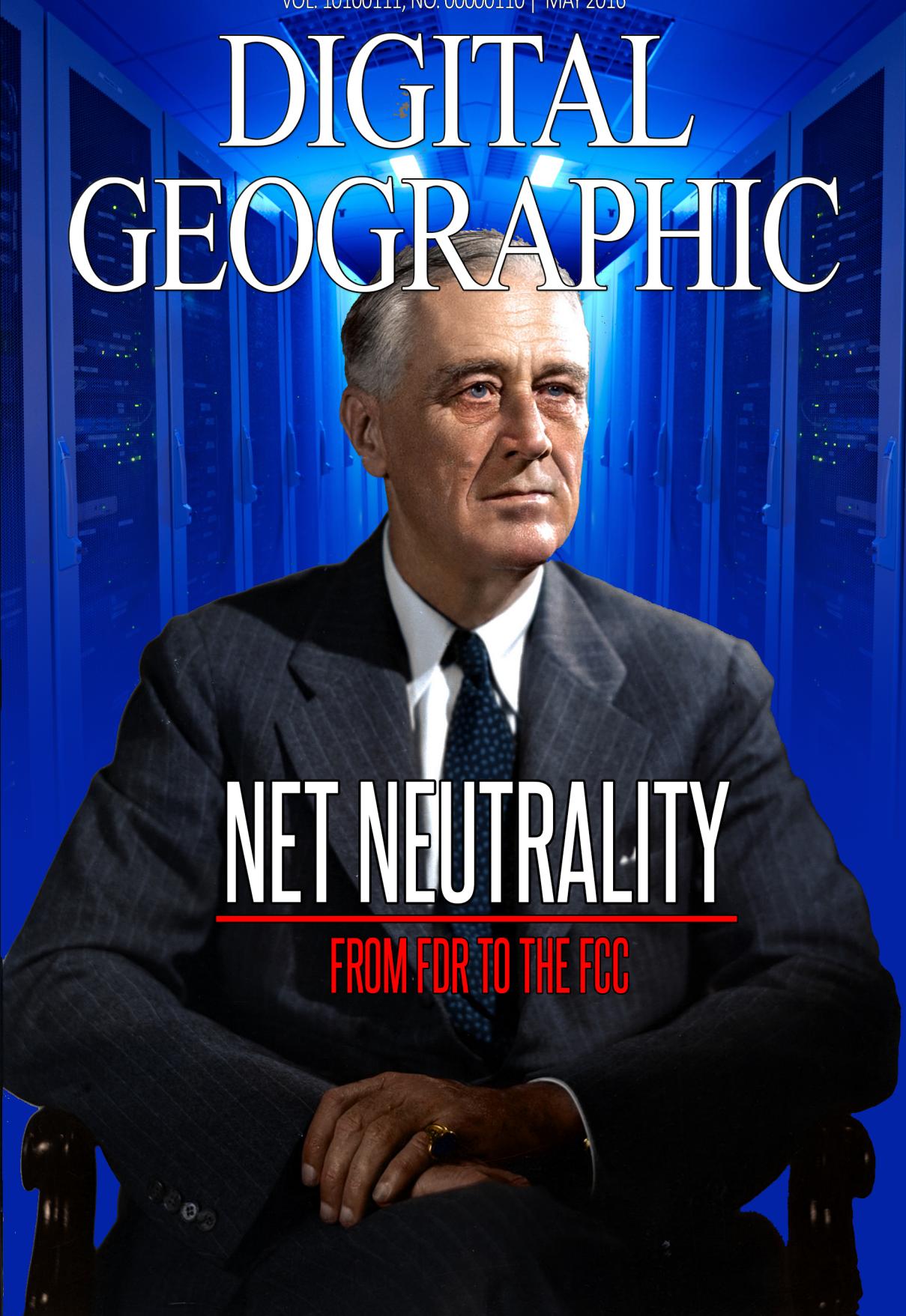


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DIGITAL GEOGRAPHIC



NET NEUTRALITY

FROM FDR TO THE FCC



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THE ISSUE | NET NEUTRALITY

This month's issue of *Digital Geographic* focuses on Net Neutrality. The idea of it is simple: should internet providers be allowed to create a fast lane for certain websites on the information superhighway, or should the governing body make it standardized and equal?

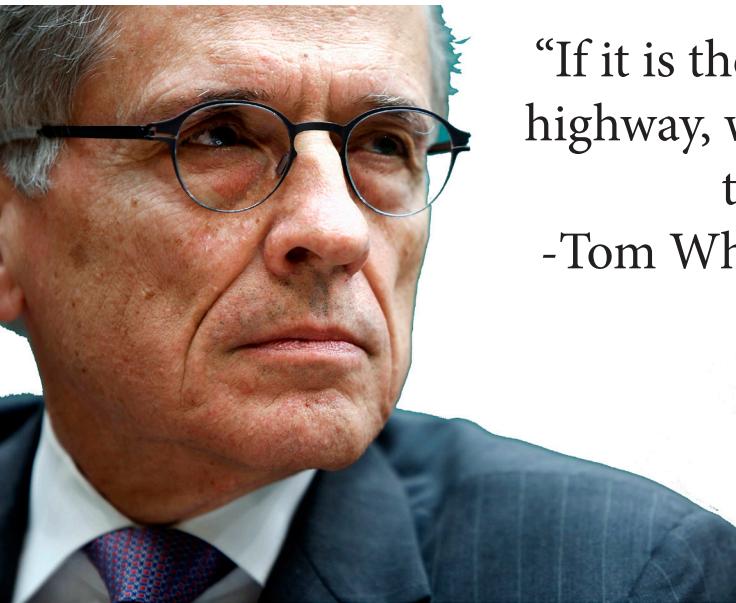
The story of Net Neutrality begins long before the first computer was even made. During the Franklin Roosevelt administration, the 73rd United States Congress passed the Communications Act of 1934, creating the Federal Communications Commission in order to regulate "interstate and foreign communication by wire or radio."

When Roosevelt signed this bill into law, he had no idea the revolution that culture would have in terms of converging ideas and technology into one well blended mix, all depending on the network service providers like Comcast and Verizon. The FCC would struggle to maintain the rapidly growing field till policy changes took place in 1996.

But even now, computer usage is radically different than what it was 20 years ago. Everyone from the smallest west coast startup to the federal government relies on the power of the web to survive. Yet, for years now, CEOs of Internet Service Providers (ISPs) have sent countless funds and lawyers to Washington to tip the already wobbly digital scale in their favor.

Tom Wheeler—Chairman of the FCC since late 2013—announced an upcoming proposal that sides with corporate backers in May of 2014. It would have permitted the restriction of bandwidth on websites that would not pay a fee to ISPs, essentially killing net neutrality and the modern media age. A true victory for enormous businesses.

"If it is the wireless information highway, we need the asphalt for that highway."
- Tom Wheeler, FCC Chairman





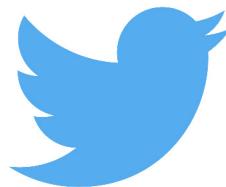
After significant public outcry over the proposal, Wheeler went completely the opposite direction. The new proposal that was sent to the committee, and later approved by it, would categorize net neutrality as a "Title II Service" under the Communications Act, making it what many assume broadband to exist as: a unrestricted flow of information and media at any cost.

To bring us to the current day, Net Neutrality may me be safe, but it could change rapidly. With the 2016 Presidential primaries all but set in stone, both the presumptive nominees for the GOP and the Democrats have opinions on the topic. Hillary Clinton has spoken out in favor of neutrality, even saying the FCC Title II ruling as just "a foot in the door."

Donald Trump, on the other side of the figurative aisle, is entirely against neutrality. Posting on Twitter in 2014, he even went as far as to imply it was a threat to conservative media and opinions online.

Come November, we may have a reinforcement to Wheeler's decision or a complete repeal of it. Whatever happens, we can only hope that media in a digital age will survive.

Written by William Linker



Obama's attack on the internet is another top down power grab. Net neutrality is the Fairness Doctrine. Will target conservative media.

-Donald Trump, Republican Frontrunner



BATTLE LINES | NET NEUTRALITY

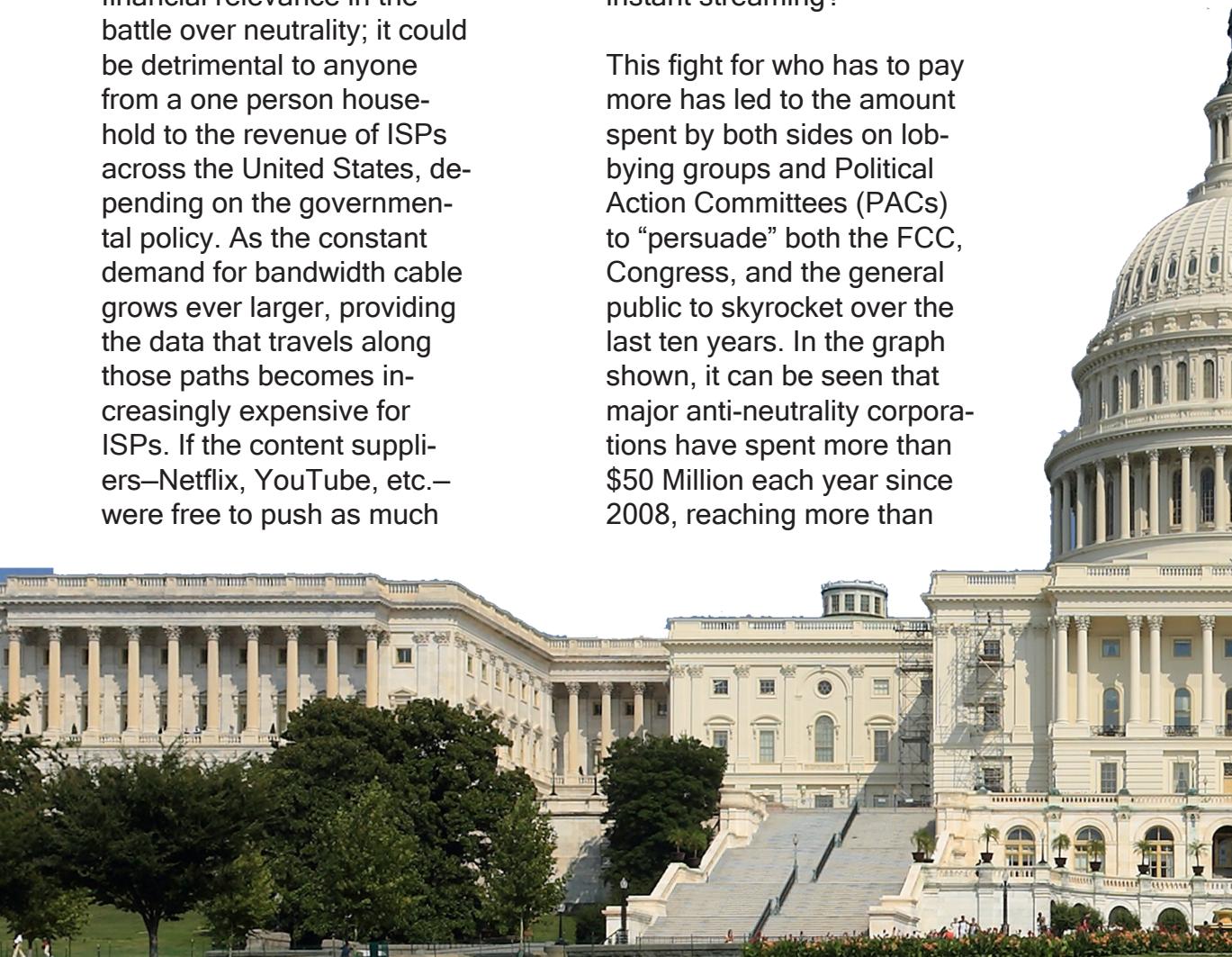
The fight over Net Neutrality is a dual-sided argument, with very little middle-ground to be seen. It comes down to smaller online companies and average users, pitted against major Internet Service Providers (ISPs) like Comcast and Verizon, as well as their affiliates. At first glance, this appears as “the people” defending their freedom from the corporate tendrils of “the man.” On closer look, it tells a slightly different story.

Both sides have significant financial relevance in the battle over neutrality; it could be detrimental to anyone from a one person household to the revenue of ISPs across the United States, depending on the governmental policy. As the constant demand for bandwidth cable grows ever larger, providing the data that travels along those paths becomes increasingly expensive for ISPs. If the content suppliers—Netflix, YouTube, etc.—were free to push as much

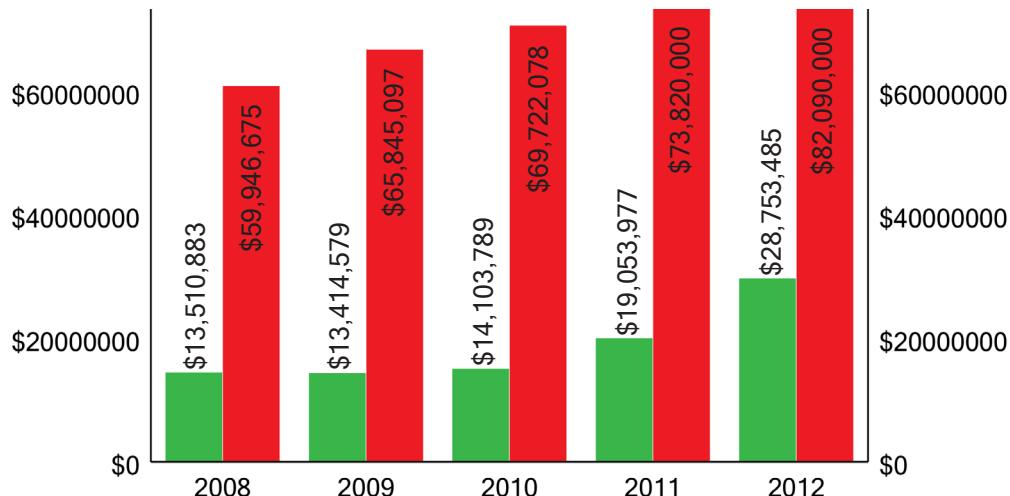
much data out as they possibly could, ISPs would have to hike up their prices to match the price of digitally “moving product.”

On the other hand, if net neutrality died, allowing ISPs to charge websites using more bandwidth to pay extra to send out content, it would mean the killing blow for small internet companies and start-ups, as well as the end of free or low price options at larger sites. And what consumer wants to see higher prices for Netflix instant streaming?

This fight for who has to pay more has led to the amount spent by both sides on lobbying groups and Political Action Committees (PACs) to “persuade” both the FCC, Congress, and the general public to skyrocket over the last ten years. In the graph shown, it can be seen that major anti-neutrality corporations have spent more than \$50 Million each year since 2008, reaching more than



Lobbying Expenditure For and Against Net Neutrality (2009-2012)



Green bars represent the financially largest five proponents of net neutrality (Google, Microsoft, Level 3 Communications, Apollo Investment Management, and Dish Network), while red represents opponents of the issue (AT&T, Comcast, National Cable and Tel. Assn., Verizon, and Time Warner). Source: The Daily Dot.

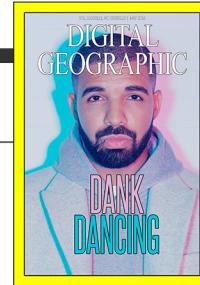
\$80 Million in the most recent complete sample year, 2012. Not to say that pro-neutrality organizations haven't raised much, but it pales in comparison to the opposition.

To go beyond money, the FCC was influenced by simple words as well. Over the course of July, August, and early September 2014, the FCC received 3.7 *million*

comments on their website, with only roughly one percent of them being against neutrality, according to analysis by the Sunlight Foundation.

So, where does that leave net neutrality in our modern country? For now, it's alive and well. That is, till Congress gets its hands on it.

Drake's Drawback



I found your recent piece on Aubrey “Drake” Graham to be most disorienting. It was lewd, dull and rambling. I especially didn’t like Mr. Graham’s liberal opinion on climate change. Next time you abandon any hope of writing a factual article, give me a call. If I ran *Digital Geographic*, you’d think twice before printing such rubbish.

RUPERT M.
Melbourne, Australia

This Hotline Bling written about in February’s issue is not a problem of the 99 percent, but of the 1 percent! How could a magazine focused on the people speak so rashly in favor of Wall-street and it’s friends in the rap industry? If you ask me, we’re doomed!

BERNIE S.
Washington, D.C.

wtf, this rtacle is stupid and u r a bad riter. Totally fake and gay lmao

xXLadySlayer420Xx
An Online Forum Thread

Drake a weak [vulgarity redacted] who don’t even right his own lyrics! You call that newsworthy? smh

MEEK M.
Philadelphia, PA

Mr. Geographic,

Please return to printing about real things, like those African [racial slur redacted] you used to take those pretty pictures of in the eighties. And tell my grandson to call me, he never responded to my Facebook friend request.

XOXO,

YOUR DIGITAL IMMIGRANT GRANDMA
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

We would like to once again note that we are not related in any way to the other magazine that has a strangely similar format to our publication. That is a total coincidence, no connection whatsoever. And your Grandson did not have a comment for us.

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