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The FCC rules on "Net Neutrality"

An OCS editorial review

On December 21st, the eve of the winter solstice, a one-vote Democrat majority of three FCC commissioners voted to render regulatory control over the vast nebulous network known as the Internet. Very few advances in history have had as dramatic an impact on society as the Internet, so it was perhaps only a matter of time before the government could no longer resist meddling.

Basically, the issue pits "content providers" like Netflix, Google's YouTube, Microsoft web applications, Skype, Vonage, and file sharing and gaming utilities against the "service provider" networks, like AT&T, Sprint, Verizon and others, who carry the bandwidth that's consumed by content providers. Carriers are arguing for payment to help fund the necessary expansion of their infrastructure to support exploding content services, or they are threatening to block unpaid or "free-riding" commercial content.

We believe the free market can sort this out much more efficiently than government, and caution a "be careful what you wish for" position. And regardless, OCS customers need not be concerned about any changes, at least not for the time being. That's because we have never blocked access to any content over the Internet, which is purportedly the "quixotic pressure to fight an imaginary problem" described by Robert McDowell, one of the two dissenting Republican votes on the FCC commission.

However, OCS does use fiber trunks from Sprint and AT&T to connect to the Internet, so any blockage at their end could create the same end result.

According to a Wall Street Journal editorial (with which we agree), "the administration has just made telecommunications a less attractive place to invest [or do business]. To health care and financial services [and auto and housing], add one more industry that the federal government has drawn into that huge gray cloud called *economic uncertainty*."

The WSJ continues, "The action is breathtaking. At a stroke, the FCC circumvents Congress, defies the courts and declares itself overlord of the Internet. Under the new so-called "net neutrality" rules, Internet service providers will have less say over how they manage their own networks and serve customers going forward."

The activity the FCC aims to forbid is a non-issue for OCS, since we don't block access to any sites on the Internet. But we are nevertheless concerned that this is a slippery slope which will only expand federal interference unless it is either repealed or ruled unconstitutional via expected challenges after the new Congress is seated.

And, needless to say, any new regulatory fees which the FCC

Continued on Page Two

Antivirus programs falling behind

Recent tests of consumer antivirus software show that products are declining in performance as the number of malicious software programs increases, a trend that does not bode well for consumers.

Overall, the results create a dimmer picture for people's chances of keeping their computers free of malware. "The tested security products (including Symantec, McAfee and several others) haven't necessarily fallen in quality, but rather the threats are evolving at a rapid and increasing pace," said Rick Moy, president of NSS Labs, an independent security software company.

"It's a cat and mouse game," Moy said, "and the bad guys basically are getting smarter. At any given point, the antivirus products have to keep catching up."

(As an option, OCS customers may consider our online OfficeScan service for corporate-level security with automatic transparent updates.)

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Net Neutrality (from Page One)

might impose on ISPs, either directly or indirectly, would need to be passed on to customers as added surcharges. Other service providers are already doing that, but so far OCS has not.

The FCC will still allow (*gee, thanks*) "reasonable management" by ISPs to control issues such as congestion and security over their networks – including metered usage surcharges.

OCS policy has always been that we don't care what users do with their Internet access (as long as it's legal), but bandwidth is a limited resource which must be allocated fairly – and billed accordingly – to ensure reliable service to all customers.

A Washington DC attorney who represents wireless ISPs wrote, "This vote is a landmark in the ongoing net neutrality debate, but it is far from the end of the road." And blasted the Washington Times, "On this winter solstice, we witnessed jaw-dropping interventionist chutzpah as the FCC bypassed branches of our government in the dogged pursuit of needless and harmful regulation. The darkest day of the year may end up marking the beginning of a long winter's night for Internet freedom." *Stay tuned...*



Stuck in a contract?

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- Lindsay
- Exeter
- Badger Hill
- Visalia East
- Yokohl Valley
- Camp Nelson
- Success Valley
- Richgrove
- Delano East

Mailbox size increase

Effective immediately – thanks to new mail server software that can manage higher throughput, plus much higher capacity storage drives, mailbox sizes for OCS Webmail have been increased from 30MB to 100MB. We still encourage users to keep their Webmail storage cleared out periodically, since mailboxes that become full are no longer able to accept new mail. However, for some this change will relax the frequency at which that must be done and allow more flexibility.

Tired of Satellite? You're not alone. In some remote areas where OCS cannot deliver service, satellite may be the only option ... however it is typically much slower than advertising would suggest, and daily bandwidth restrictions can be draconian. We can waive our normal equipment deposit for customers switching to OCS from another service – tell your friends and receive a referral credit for up to a month's free service.

Tired of Clearwire? Approximately 25% of all new OCS accounts in 2010 were customers switching from Clearwire.



Fan Mail

"Your service is far better than anything we [a local packing house with multiple locations] have experienced before in both speed and reliability. We transfer files 30 times faster, even though our previous provider claimed to be a high-speed business service. And real people answer the phone at OCS, not an answering service, even on weekends ... we are extremely happy!" -BP/SP

OACYS INTERNET SERVICE PLANS

Plan Name	Average Speeds			B-M-W ¹	One-Time Fees			Monthly Service
	Min	Typ	Max		Service Activation	Install/Configure	Equipment Deposit	
1 Bandwidth-Mailboxes-Webspace (see notes)								
DIALUP	26K	40K	53K	1-5-5	25.00	-	-	24.95
Accelerator	Typically 2-5X faster			-	-	-	-	+5.00
WIRELESS STANDARD 2.4 GHz								
24 Basic	125K	500K	750K	10-5-5	25.00	100.00	100.00	49.95 ^{2,3}
24 Premium	250K	1M	1.5M	15-5-5	25.00	100.00	100.00	79.95 ^{2,3}
24 Business	375K	1.5M	2M	20-10-10	25.00	100.00	100.00	129.95 ^{2,3}
WIRELESS SPECIAL CASES 900 MHz (where available)								
900 Basic	125K	375K	750K	5-5-5	25.00	100.00	100.00	59.95 ^{4,5}
WIRELESS MISSION CRITICAL 5.8 GHz (where available)								
58 Premium	250K	1M	1.5M	15-5-5	25.00	100.00	100.00	99.95
58 Business	375K	1.5M	2M	20-10-10	25.00	100.00	100.00	129.95
58 Professional	500K	2M	3M	25-25-25	25.00	100.00	100.00	159.95
58 Corporate	750K	3M	4M	30-30-30	25.00	100.00	100.00	199.95
58 Enterprise	1M	4M	5M	40-40-40	25.00	100.00	100.00	249.95

All plans include automated central email virus scanning, email spam filtering, and website parental controls. Some plan types permit webspace for personal use only. Wireless installation and deposit package may be paid in installments upon request. All speeds are symmetrical (same for upload and download) within the OACYS network only. All plans terminate at OACYS Porterville headquarters and transport to the Internet via dual T3s over dedicated OC12 fiber optic circuit. All plans subject to change without notice. Pricing and terms are current at the date of this newsletter and supersede previous versions. For footnotes 2,3,4,5 surcharges may apply. Please check with our office for additional details.

I Didn't Know That!

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