

In more than 150 countries on 5 continents, Verizon provides world class, end-to-end services to the business and government markets. In the U.S., we are redefining the broadband experience by investing in fiber-to-the premises – providing voice, data and video to homes and businesses with the most advanced network in America. When you add that Verizon also operates the most widely available mobile broadband network in the U.S., it should not surprise you that we see ourselves as uniquely positioned to deliver a digital future.

It should also come as no surprise that we support the notion of an open Internet. We make it our business to give customers access to the products and services they want. A recent survey in Europe found that an Internet service provider blocking or restricting particular services or applications would lose more than a quarter of its customers. This is appropriate – a competitive market and the forces of history and technical innovation inexorably push us toward openness, not limits.

Verizon does, however, reject the notion that a ‘network neutral’ Internet means that ‘all bits are created equal’, and thus, must be treated that way. This has never been the case, and for good reason. Each network employs traffic management tools – the products of continuous technical innovation by engineers and manufacturers – to address cyber-security threats, congestion and rapid changes in bandwidth demand. These tools help to provide a quality service, not to detract from user experience or access to content.

At Verizon, we continue to engage to understand many views on this topic. To some, the mere fact that some bits are treated differently than others is contrary to what they believe the Internet to represent. To others, network management has been confused with a tool for copyright enforcement or for policing the Internet. And yet, nearly all agree that IPTV, VoIP, online gaming, and medical monitoring are but a few of the services that require traffic management. Is it possible that a company could use otherwise good tools to do bad things? Yes. Should regulators stand ready to address such behavior quickly and decisively if it happens? Absolutely. But whether the proposal is for ‘network neutrality’ or a ‘fifth freedom’ or ‘principle’, the fundamental aim should be to advance choice – not a potential fear in favor of preemptive rules where they may not yet be needed.

Investment in broadband requires the right policy environment, one that fosters innovation, enables networks to deliver increasingly complex services, and ensures that competition can flourish. At Verizon, we not only believe in the power of superior broadband networks, but also in the policies to achieve a bright future, faster.