

AT&T asks employees to lobby FCC on net neutrality

October 20 2009, By JOELLE TESSLER , AP Technology Writer

(AP) -- AT&T Inc. is encouraging employees to join its lobbying campaign against proposed federal rules that would restrict the ways broadband companies can manage traffic on their networks.

The Federal Communications Commission has asked the public to be part of an online conversation as it begins writing "network neutrality" rules, and has set up a blog to gather comments.

AT&T's top lobbyist, Jim Cicconi, sent a letter to the company's U.S. managers on Sunday urging them, their families and their friends to use the blog, <http://blog.openinternet.gov> , to call on the agency "not to regulate the Internet." He offered tips on what points to make in the blog posts.

Those include reminders that [net neutrality](#) rules would "halt private investment in broadband infrastructure," threaten "the jobs associated with that investment" and "jeopardize the very goals supported by the Obama administration that every American have access to high-speed Internet services."

Art Brodsky, a spokesman for the public interest group Public Knowledge, says AT&T is exploiting employee fears about job security to try to sway the public debate about net neutrality.

But Michael Balmoris, an AT&T spokesman, dismisses that charge. "We were providing important information to our employees, and it was up to

them to respond personally," he said.

The [FCC](#) is expected to vote Thursday to officially launch a proceeding to draft the network neutrality rules.

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