

What to know about the net neutrality 'day of action' internet protest

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Credit: Wikipedia

Right now, you may have a shaky idea of what net neutrality is, but on July 12, a massive online protest plans to make you painfully aware.

More than 50,000 people, sites and organizations will take part in the net neutrality "day of action," an online protest being organized by multiple internet advocacy groups. A few well-known participants include Amazon, Reddit, Netflix, Facebook, Google, Etsy, Kickstarter, and the American Civil Liberties Union.

Sites taking part in the protest will display messages on their homepages with language that's meant to show people what the web could look like without the net neutrality principle that internet service providers should give equal access and treatment to all content online.

Right now, barring factors like your own internet connection's speed and how well the [site](#) you're visiting is designed, every site should load at the same speed whether it is your email, Netflix or a small business's website.

Supporters of net neutrality argue that relaxing the rules could lead to internet service providers putting some content in the fast lane while slowing down other content, or even making some things more difficult to find.

On the other hand, ISPs like Comcast and Verizon believe net neutrality keeps them from innovating in areas where they make money off the internet service they provide.

During the online protest you could see faux-alerts with messages like "Sorry, we're stuck in the slow lane." The slow lane, in this case, being an [internet connection](#)'s speed.

If a site you visit displays primarily videos, you may even encounter a

few spinning wheels of death in place of content that would normally buffer quickly and play.

Vimeo will also be taking part in the [protest](#). Jamie Wilkinson, a VP of engineering at the company, described what the video-sharing website would be doing on Marketplace.

"The top, maybe, quarter of the (homepage) has a big banner saying, 'Today is the day. Let's save the [internet](#),' " he said. "Take action around net neutrality, and really save this thing that we've all really enjoyed and benefitted from - and continue to want to benefit from."

The "day of action" goal is to encourage people to submit public comments on net [neutrality](#) to the Federal Communications Commission because the FCC would like to remove the legal authority (called Title II) used to support [net neutrality](#) rules.

This round of comments is due before July 17. After that, a second commenting round will open until Aug. 16. In the second round of commenting the public is expected to reply to comments filed during the first round.

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