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# The Tech Insider

## Should You Be Concerned About The FCC And Its Jurisdiction Over *Net Neutrality*?

There is a term floating around in the Press lately called "*Net Neutrality*." It refers to the equal treatment of the flow of all data over the networks controlled by Internet Service Providers (ISPs) without regard to the nature of the data. What sounds like a longwinded description is actually a general concern by consumer watchdog groups and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) about ISPs limiting the flow of data used by third party services such as *Skype*, *Google*, *Hulu*, *Magic Jack* and *BitTorrent*. If you ever used any of these services or others like *Napster*, you might understand how the ISPs sense a threat to their livelihoods from these peer-to-peer applications.

The Cable and Phone Companies all offer TRIPLE combos (phone, Internet and television) to entice their subscribers to spend more money or commit to longer contracts. They need to do this because they have invested heavily in their network infrastructure and wish to gain a healthy return from their investments.

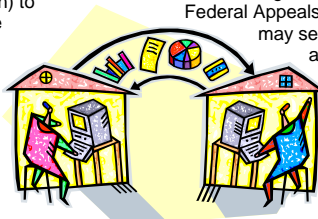
Enter *BitTorrent*, a peer-to-peer file sharing facility that operates over the Internet. It offers movies and music ("rich content") over the web FREE OF CHARGE. With all types of media files being transferred from one computer to another there are two considerations that are immediately evident to the ISP:

- ◆ Tremendous amounts of subscriber bandwidth is being depleted by the data used in this process.
- ◆ A Direct Competitor is exhausting ISP resources and without paying the ISP for the privilege while reducing the demand for billable services (e.g., movies and TV shows).

Given the circumstances, *Comcast Corp* allegedly blocked or degraded the *BitTorrent* transfers traveling over its network. This accusation was asserted by the Associated Press after it ran tests and reported that the cable company was interfering with attempts by some of its subscribers to share files online.

The situation has become rather grave inasmuch as there is now a legal dispute between the FCC and Comcast. If the Federal Appeals Court panel finds for the cable company, it may send a signal that clearly undermines the authority of the FCC in cases involving ISPs and its jurisdiction over them. If the FCC prevails, there is another worry on the horizon according to *Free Press* ([www.freepress.net](http://www.freepress.net)) and the *Electronic Frontier Foundation* ([www.eff.org](http://www.eff.org)). The existing wording of the draft FCC net neutrality proposal has created a loophole inasmuch as it allows for the U.S. ISPs to prevent all of their customers from using *BitTorrent* protocol under "reasonable network management" practices, as long as they are intended

*(Continued on page 2)*



The Internet has become a common medium for file sharing and other facilities like Voice Over IP. Now, ISPs are exercising their muscle—will they be abusive or play nicely?

## Why Can't I Install The Software From My Old PC?

When most people purchase a computer, the machine comes with the operating system pre-installed. In many instances, it also has an Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) version of a major application installed (e.g., Microsoft Office 2003 Small Business Edition).

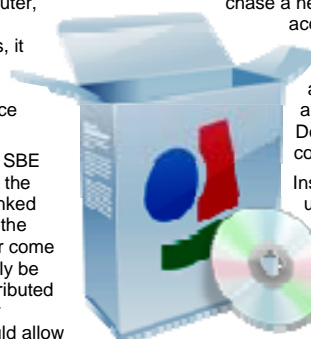
The reason we cited MS Office 2003 SBE was to demonstrate a point. If you read the End User License Agreement (EULA) linked with an OEM copy, you may notice that the terms impose a restriction that may later come back to bite you. Your software may only be installed on the machine that it was distributed with. You may NOT install it on another machine. If your hard drive fails, it should allow you to reinstall it onto the SAME machine as long as it uses the same processor or motherboard.

Why is this so important to recognize? When you pur-

chase a new computer, then and only then, may you acquire a OEM copy legitimately. If you wish to remain in licensing compliance, keep this in mind. Very often, a user will have an old machine, be used to the old software and want to transfer it to the new computer... Don't do it! If you do, you may expose your company to fines and bad publicity.

Instead, when you buy a new computer, unless you are super tight on cash or know you will not feel pressured to "migrate" the software... Buy a Retail or Open License copy. This way, you may legally move the license to a new computer (as long as the software is compatible) without the fear of licensing repercussions.

If you work with a reputable vendor or Trusted Advisor, they should advise you accordingly. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact us.



## Quotations

*"After years in the work force, someone finally concluded that an employer is someone who's late when you're early and early when you're late."*

**Anonymous**

*"Success in business requires training and discipline and hard work. But, if you're not frightened by these things, the opportunities are just as great today as they ever were."*

**David Rockefeller**

*"For myself, I am an optimist—it does not seem to be of much use being anything else."*

**Sir Winston Churchill**

**"We make all of your computer problems go away without the cost of a full-time I.T. staff"**

**Ask us about our fixed price services HTS Insight Hassle-Free Agreements—Computer Support at a flat monthly fee you can budget for just like rent!**



The new Open Government Directive has made datasets available from these departments: State, Treasury, Defense, Justice, Interior, Agriculture, Labor, Commerce, Health and Human Services, HUD, Transportation, Energy, Education, Veterans Affairs, Homeland Security, EPA and the Offices of the U.S. Trade Representatives, US Ambassador to UN and the Council of Economic Advisors.

## Net Neutrality Concerns

*(Continued from page 1)*

to "prevent the unlawful transfer of content." This draft is open for comment until March 5, 2010. After that date, it may be signed off to become FCC Regulation.

According to EFF's Richard Esquerre, "Carving a copyright loophole in net neutrality would leave your lawful activities at the mercy of overbroad copyright filtering schemes, and we already have plenty of copyright enforcers targeting legitimate users by mistake, carelessness, or design."

**So, where does this leave us?** If the judges rule in favor of Comcast, the FCC appears as ineffective AND the ability is retained by the broadband providers to limit bandwidth to its subscribers using products such as BitTorrent. However, if the ruling goes in favor of the FCC and the current wording of the pending legislation goes unchanged, then it is effectively the same result excepting that the FCC has politically saved face.

*What can be done to address this matter in a way that is appropriate?* It depends if your interests lie in the cable company or the recording industry OR if you tend to download music and movies ("rich content") using BitTorrent or other peer-to-peer software. You can be sure that those representing us in Con-

gress will be pressured by the lobbyists for the MPAA or RIAA (Motion Picture / Recording Industry) to preserve the wording in the current draft. The big unknown is whether the people that use services such as Skype or MagicJack (instead of telephones) or Hulu and BitTorrent (instead of television or buying movie DVDs or music CDs) will rally and become vocal. The question is not even over the legality of the services or the integrity of the act—it is a question of \$\$.

The RIAA has suggested that the FCC has given the go-ahead to "piracy" by not allowing ISPs the right to block subscribers from filesharing. The RIAA wrote: "ISPs are in a unique position to limit online theft. They control the facilities over which infringement takes place and are singularly positioned to address it at the source."

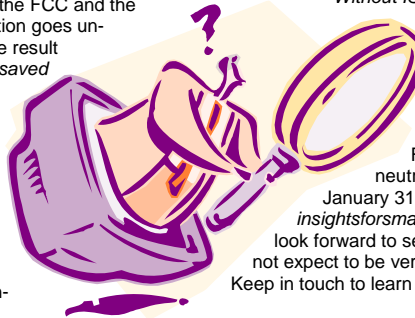
*Without ISP participation, it is extremely difficult to develop an effective prevention approach."*

You have read some of the arguments given in this case. We would like to know what your take is on this matter.

For more information on net neutrality, please be sure to read the

January 31 blog article at <http://insightsforsmallbusinesses.blogspot.com>.

We look forward to seeing how this resolves, but do not expect to be very surprised by any outcome. Keep in touch to learn more.



## Obama Administration Posts Federal Data Online

### Discover. Participate. Engage.

These are the three encouraging words found on the homepage of [www.data.gov](http://www.data.gov), the Federal Government's latest website. On December 8, 2009, the White House issued an Open Government Directive (OGD) instructing Executive Departments to publish three "high value datasets" online within 45 days. The Open Government Datasets showcase the high-value data sets agencies have published to fulfill the Directive and thereby increase accountability, promote informed participation by the public, and create economic opportunity.

Amongst the data posted are the ratings for 2,400 lines of tires from the Transportation Department (based on tread wear, traction performance and temperature resistance). Labor provides the names of 80,000 workplaces that have had injuries and illnesses in the past 10 years. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration posted its database on carsseats, while the Medicare data-

base, formerly available for \$100 on a CD is now free online.

According to the White House's CIO, Vivek Kundra, "We're democratizing data." The Directive has been well received by the Sunlight Foundation, too—Ellen Miller, Executive Director cited, "There's recognition that public equals online." She further added that the effort reflects "a sea of change in the government's attitude."

It's refreshing to know that information is being made available to the people and not just stowed away (like the end of "Raiders of the Lost Ark") in the basement of a federal agency. Can you benefit from this newly available information? Give it a look and you may be pleasantly surprised.



## Your Newest Benefit: InsightsForSmallBusinesses

It has been one of the area's best kept secrets since November 2009—Our new web log (BLOG). The blog is easily accessible from our website's home page ([www.tech4now.com](http://www.tech4now.com)), it's been referenced for a while in a number of our *HTS Tech Insider* issues and you can directly access it by entering the full address in any browser:

[InsightsForSmallBusinesses.blogspot.com](http://InsightsForSmallBusinesses.blogspot.com)

On the site, you will find articles that bring to light current issues of our day, as well as ideas worth pondering for the small business.

The topics are timely and offer insights to everyday business concerns and problems. Each article is self-contained and provides a brief, yet complete explanation on the subject at-hand.

The blog also serves as a sounding board. There, you may post your comments and opinions on the discussions.

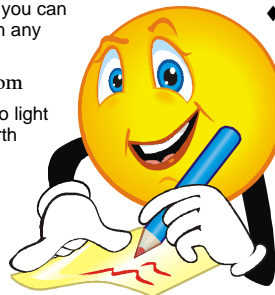
Some of the subjects discussed include:

- ◆ Windows 7 and its features compared to Windows XP
- ◆ Benefits of online data backup vs. tape backup
- ◆ Considerations before acquiring a server
- ◆ Thoughts on Maintenance Contracts
- ◆ Password Policies
- ◆ Net Neutrality and the FCC

Each week, a new subject is posted to the blog with a timely and thought provoking subject.

If you have a particular subject or news item that you want to learn more about, contact us on the web at [www.tech4now.com](http://www.tech4now.com) or e-mail us at [support@tech4now.com](mailto:support@tech4now.com).

The blog is intended to serve you as another mode by which you may get details that you need for your business. When you visit, be sure to sign-up to become a "follower," this way when a new article posts, you can be the amongst the first to read it.



# Trivial Matters

The questions posed are from the *Cokesbury Question Book*, so if you need to know the answers THIS month, you can look them up on the web, otherwise, they will appear in next month's issue.

1. Who engraved the plates for the first paper money issued by the Continental Congress, supervised the manufacture of gunpowder for the Colonial Army, and made the boiler for Robert Fulton's ferryboats?
2. What poet addressed poems to a mouse and a louse?
3. What territory did the U.S. purchase in 1917 for \$25 million?
4. George Washington owned a set of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Is this true or false?
5. What does the Statue of Liberty hold in her left hand?
6. Can you name three or more Presidents of the U.S. who never held any other elective office?
7. What city in the world is situated on two continents?
8. In an ordinary deck of playing cards, the jacks of hearts and spades are pictured in profile with only one eye visible, while the jacks of diamonds and clubs have two eyes showing. How many jacks' eyes are visible in a deck?
9. How many people can the Empire State Building hold—10,000, 80,000, 100,000?

Questions are sourced from "The People's Almanac" series of books by David Wallechinsky & Irving Wallace



In an ordinary deck of playing cards... How many jacks' eyes are visible? (I'm giving you the answer here!)

## Client of the Month—Giant Packaging, Inc.



Phillip Okin and Jerry Geller  
President and V.P., Sales  
Giant Packaging, Inc.

This month, we are proud to feature **Giant Packaging, Inc.** of Rochelle Park, NJ. Giant Packaging has been in business for over twenty-five years. They provide industrial and commercial warehousing supplies, as well as recycling services and many other products. Giant

Packaging distributes over 1,000 items.

We recently spoke with Jerry Geller, V.P., Sales for Giant to ask him a few questions about our relationship. We have been working with Giant for about four years now. Before we supported them, they worked with a company from Long Island. Jerry noted that **"They would not get to us on time. We couldn't deal with that."**

What is the single biggest benefit you have seen since working with us? **"Your ability to come to**

**my needs when I need you. When I call you, you have always been there."** He added that since working with us and using our SPAM filter **"It's now a thousand times better! I get just about ZERO SPAM. It was easy to establish... an invisible transition. Just 1, 2, 3, Done!"**

Jerry then referenced his experience on our introducing the Blackberry to his daily productivity tools, **"It has simplified my life a thousand percent (100%). It was a very smooth transition."**

His closing comments were, **"I just like working with your company and find you, Fred, to be a very nice guy. I appreciate everything that you have done for Giant Packaging."**

If you need industrial packaging, printed polybags, peanuts, bubblewrap or boxes for your business—give Giant Packaging a call. If you wish to order from them, their number is (201) 291-1902.

Next month, we will introduce you to another of our *Clients of the Month*. If your company would like to be considered as a candidate for *Client of the Month*, drop me a line at [fred@tech4now.com](mailto:fred@tech4now.com).

## Quick Tech Productivity Pointers

The average user stares at the computer screen over five hours per day. Given the amount of time that your eyes are focusing on the monitor, they may tend to weaken or grow dependent upon optical aids. Well, here's some good news for those of you that have issues viewing everything on your screen:

**Use the combination of the CTRL key and the wheel on your mouse.** If you hold down the CTRL button while you roll the wheel on your mouse, you will effect a *ZOOM IN* or a *ZOOM OUT* on your screen. This will help you see what is on the screen without having to depend upon expensive software or other aids. The only caveat is that you have to have the cursor in the active window that you wish to view for the *ZOOM* to work.

Another suggestion to help you through the day with extensive monitor use is the **20/20 Rule**. The rule



states that you should give your eyes a rest for at least twenty (20) seconds after staring at your screen for twenty (20) minutes. Rest, in this case, refers to allowing your eyes to focus on a different field of vision; you may close your eyes, stare out of a window, read a printed item or, simply, take a bathroom break.

Whatever you decide, the objective is to allow your eyes to adjust from the screen.

One of the benefits that this provides is to allow your eyes to blink more, thus rehydrating them. Most people do not realize as they stare at a screen, they tend to blink with less frequency. Lack of moisture in the eye makes it weary quicker than under normal circumstances. Give your eyes the break they deserve. ;<)

If there are any tools that you would like to learn more about, please drop us a line at [fred@tech4now.com](mailto:fred@tech4now.com).

If your company would like to be featured as the *Client of the Month*, please call us to express your interest. You will get positive press for your use of technology and may even gain a client from the exposure.



By resting your eyes on occasion, your work at the computer monitor may become less tiring. Try the **20/20 Rule** or using Zoom features in your software to make the experience less stressful.

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Feedback & Suggestions...

Is there a topic or feature you would like to include in a future issue? Opinions and feedback are welcome and encouraged. Send me an e-mail or call our direct line.

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*"If you depend upon software, which we do for our business, it's a no brainer. You do it [enroll in Hassle-Free IT]. It's an investment and it brings back many returns as far as reliability and dependability."*

—Steve Braverman, President, *Industrial Firedoor & Hardware Supply*



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## The Lighter Side...

### On Account Of The Economy

After being laid off from five different jobs in four months, Jimmy was hired by a warehouse. But one day, he lost control of the forklift and drove it off the loading dock.

Surveying the damage, the owner shook his head and said he'd have to withhold 10 percent of Jimmy's wages to pay for the repairs. "How much will it cost?" asked Jimmy.

"About \$4,500," said the owner.

"What a relief!" exclaimed Jimmy. "I've finally got job security!"

### At The Firm

There is one Very Serious Law Firm. All staff come to work at 6 a.m. and leave around 11 p.m. Suddenly, one guy started his day at 9 a.m.—All the guys exchanged looks. He left at 6 p.m. Again, all the guys exchanged looks. The next day was the same story, as was the day after that. Finally, they come to the rebel to explain the rules. He listened, kept quiet for a while, then he said, "Excuse me guys, but I am on vacation."

### 'Cause I'm The BOSS!

The boss was concerned that his employees weren't giving him enough respect, so he tried an old fashioned method of persuasion: He brought in a sign that said "I'm the Boss" and taped it to his door.

After lunch, he noticed someone had taped another

note under his. "Your wife called. She wants her sign back!"

### In Recovery (A Valentine Story)

There was a lawyer who was just waking up from the anesthesia after surgery. His wife was sitting by his side. His eyes fluttered open and he said, "You're beautiful!" Then he fell asleep again. His wife had never heard him say that, so she stayed by his side. A couple of minutes later, his eyes fluttered open again and he said, "You're cute!" Well, the wife was disappointed because instead of "beautiful" it was "cute." She said, "What happened to 'beautiful'?"

He replied, "The drugs are wearing off!"

### Birth control pills....

An elderly woman went into the doctor's office. When the doctor asked why she was there, she replied, "I'd like to have some birth-control pills."

Taken aback, the doctor thought for a minute and then said, "Excuse me, Mrs. Smith, but you're 72 years old. What possible use could you have for birth control pills?" The woman responded, "They help me sleep better." The doctor thought some more and continued, "How in the world do birth control pills help you to sleep?" The woman said, "Simple. I put them in my granddaughter's orange juice every morning and I sleep better at night."