

Public Values at Stake in Net Neutrality

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Why it is hard to protect public values



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Protecting public values in net neutrality

What is at stake?

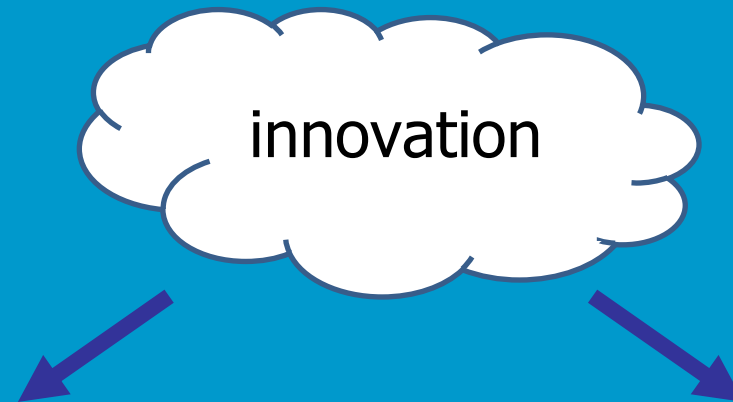
All sides of the net neutrality debate appeal to the same
public values

Innovation
Competition
Consumer choice
Quality of service
Security
Freedom of speech
...?

Public values as “clouds of goodness”

What does it mean to safeguard them?

Safeguarding implies more narrow interpretations and tradeoffs among competing values



Service innovation at
the edges

*e.g., enabling access
for all applications*

Network innovation
in the core

*e.g., enabling return
on investment*

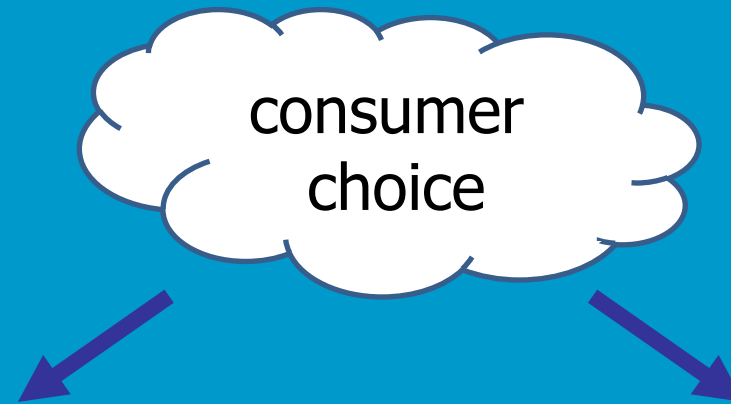


Competition in
services

*e.g., restricting
network management*

Competition in
infrastructures

*e.g., reducing entry
barriers*

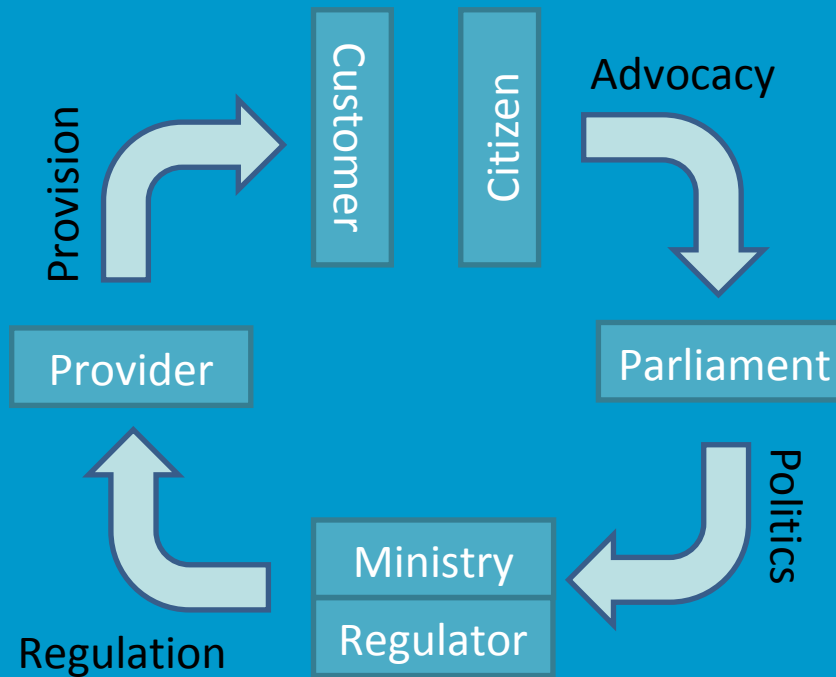


All services and
content always

*e.g., full range of
options available*

Differentiated
offerings

*e.g., limited services
for cheaper rates*



<Three implications for the net neutrality debate>

<1> Network neutrality debate is not about
pro or contra safeguarding public values

It is about making tradeoffs among competing
aspects of public values

Clear principles imply messy policies
(e.g., “no conditions limiting access to applications
and services”

vs.

“reasonable network management measures to
address security threats”)

<2> Network neutrality debate is not about
pro business vs. pro consumer

All proposals currently on the table imply risks to both
business and consumers

<3> Even if you advocate a certain interpretation of network neutrality, encoding that interpretation in strict norms or guidelines may be counterproductive

More stringent policies do not equal better protection (e.g., salary caps for CEOs)

Avoid overspecification, rather organize checks and balances, e.g., competition, transparency, joint development of principles