



## **Media Minutes**

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**Producers: Stevie Converse and Candace Clement**

### **TRANSCRIPT**

#### **Net Neutrality: Separating Fact from Fiction**

The Federal Communications Commission has announced plans to create stronger open Internet rules. And the fight over Network Neutrality – the longstanding principle that keeps information flowing freely online – has been reignited, with opponents of Net Neutrality increasingly resorting to misinformation and spin.

To counter those arguments from big phone and cable companies and their hired front groups, Free Press has released a new report called *Digital Déjà Vu: Old Myths about Net Neutrality*. It exposes false claims Net Neutrality opponents are making about investment, regulation, competition and other prevalent issues.

Derek Turner is the research director of Free Press.

**Derek Turner:** *The reason we wrote this paper was to alert people in the debate that a lot of the talking points coming out against Net Neutrality are simply old and long-discredited talking points. That this ground was tread years ago when the Net Neutrality debate first started in 2005 and 2006, and even some of the providers themselves have moved on from some of these arguments.*

With phony grassroots groups and industry lobbyists smearing Net Neutrality on the airwaves, on the Internet and in newspaper op-ed pieces, Turner wanted to set the record straight.

**Derek Turner:** *The sky is not falling. We're not talking about some radical, new, heavy-handed regulation of the Internet. What we're talking about is preserving something that has always existed, which is the basic rules of the road that prevent incumbent Internet Service Providers from discriminating. These aren't new regulations. In fact, the Internet was born under a regime of non-discriminatory protections. The Internet as we know it today wouldn't exist if it wasn't for regulation.*

If the Internet is not protected, users will begin to see changes in the way their connections work. Turner says that without Net Neutrality peer-to-peer file-sharing will be a thing of the past; telephone applications like Skype will slow to a crawl or disappear;

and your favorite sites may load very slowly or not at all. Laptops could be locked down, much like mobile phones are today. They'll come preloaded with software that only works on one network that will only allow access to certain sites.

**Derek Turner:** *These carriers' mindset is so backward and so closed and so focused on monetizing everything that flows across their network, that they think that's what consumers want. And that's certainly what they want, because it helps profit their stock price. They're very short-term focused, and they don't see the bigger picture. They don't see that an open Internet with unlimited applications that's evolving at a rapid pace is actually good for their own businesses. It makes consumers value their connections more, it gets more people on the network, and it actually makes them a ton of money.*

To read *Digital Déjà Vu*, go to [freepress.net](http://freepress.net).

### **Informing Communities: Knight Commission Releases Landmark Report**

Last week at the Newseum in Washington, D.C., the Knight Commission on the Information Needs of Communities in a Democracy released an extensive new report on the information needs of citizens in the 21<sup>st</sup>-century.

*Informing Communities: Sustaining Democracy in the Digital Age* was the product of 18 months of work and numerous hearings, panels and interviews. The Knight Commission included 17 commissioners from diverse backgrounds and across the political spectrum.

Commission Co-Chair Theodore Olson, the former U.S. Solicitor General, expressed how inspired he was by the creativity and innovation that is taking place everyday.

**Theodore Olson:** *We put a lot of attention into the fact, what do communities need, what is the array of things that communities can use to judge themselves – those community citizens and those communities can judge how those communities are doing – to evaluate the access to information and how it gets to them and what types of information, what channels of communication they need, so that they can put pressure on the leaders of their community to do something about it.*

Former FCC Chairman Michael Powell said that democracy is organized around geography. In this age of virtual reality and distance overcome by digital technology, we often overlook the significance of physical surroundings – roads, schools, local economies and community centers.

**Michael Powell:** *There are two kinds of information – we focused on both. You need to be a civic participant in order to be an active member in a vibrant democracy. But we also understand there's no way to do that if the personal life-enhancing needs that you need on a day to day basis – when my family wakes up at 6:00, what does it have to know, at 6:01 and moving forward.*

The commission proposed three basic steps for creating a stronger information system:

First, the creation of universal broadband access for all Americans through a national digital broadband infrastructure; second, the creation of a national policy to help people engage with the information and use it to help build stronger communities; and, third, finding sustainable models for supporting the kind of journalism that informs Americans of the world they are living in.

To read the report, *Informing Communities*, go to [knightcomm.org](http://knightcomm.org). That's K-N-I-G-H-T-C-O-M-M.org.