



United Technologies

this is momentum

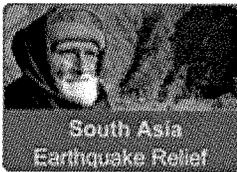
BusinessWeek | online

SEARCH SITE

Advanced Search

- TOP NEWS
- BW MAGAZINE
- INVESTING
- ASIA
- EUROPE
- TECHNOLOGY
- AUTOS
- INNOVATION
- SMALL BIZ
- B-SCHOOL

MARCH 7, 2006
VIEWPOINT
By Rick Boucher



BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Stop searching,
start finding!

- Accounting
- Advertising & Marketing
- Air Charter
- Annuities
- Antivirus / Antispan Solutions
- Architects

POWERED BY
DIRECTORY M

PREMIUM CONTENT

MBA Insider

BW MAGAZINE

- Get Four Free Issues
- Register
- Subscribe
- Customer Service

ONLINE FEATURES

- Book Reviews
- BW Video
- Columnists
- Interactive Gallery
- Newsletters
- Past Covers
- Philanthropy
- Podcasts
- Special Reports

BLOGS

- Auto Beat
- Blogspotting
- Brand New Day

Beware of a Two-Lane Internet

Some companies' efforts may mean larger outfits with financial heft get faster-priority access on the Net. At stake is the very essence of the Web

In the decade since Congress last rewrote the nation's telecommunications laws, our open and accessible Internet has become a wellspring for innovation, producing the likes of Google (**GOOG**), Yahoo (**YHOO**), eBay (**EBAY**), Amazon (**AMZN**), and thousands of smaller successful e-commerce enterprises. Collectively, the services they sell at home and abroad, and the jobs they have created, are driving forces of the 21st-century economy.



ADVERTISEMENT

momentum by
UTC Power
A United Technologies Company

Yet storm clouds are gathering, threatening to inhibit further progress. And as we prepare this year to refine our telecommunications rules once again, a measure to assure continued Internet openness and accessibility is now required.

THE SQUEEZE. Recently, executives at some telephone companies have indicated that their business model for providing broadband service will

TOP
POPULAR

1. Apple Drop
2. It Feels All C
3. The Guy
4. No S MyS
5. Hello Spect Rec

Get Free I

MARKET

DJIA
S&P 500
Nasdaq

STOCK L

Stocks 1
Inflation
Create / C
Launch P

Fed

STORY TOOLS

- Printer-Friendly Version
- E-Mail This Story
- Reader Comments



POLL INSTANT SURVEY >>

Sony finally announced the price for the PlayStation3. At \$499 to \$599, it won't come cheap. Too pricey for you?

- The features-rich PS3 will be worth every penny
- It's a bit of a stretch, but I'll find it in my budget
- That's way out of my league
- Not sure

GO VIEW POLL RESULTS >>



Byte of the Apple
Deal Flow
Economics Unbound
Fine On Media
Hot Property
Investing Insights
New Tech in Asia
NussbaumOnDesign

Tech Beat
Working Parents

TECHNOLOGY

J.D. Power Ratings
Product Reviews
Tech Stats
Wildstrom: Tech Maven

AUTOS

Home Page
Auto Reviews
Classic Cars
Car Care & Safety
Hybrids

INNOVATION & DESIGN

Home Page
Architecture
Brand Equity
Auto Design
Game Room

SMALLBIZ

Smart Answers
Success Stories
Today's Tip

INVESTING

Investing: Europe
Annual Reports
BW 50
S&P Picks & Pans
Stock Screeners
Free S&P Stock Report

SCOREBOARDS

Mutual Funds
Info Tech 100
S&P 500

B-SCHOOLS

Undergrad Programs
MBA Blogs
MBA Profiles
MBA Rankings
Who's Hiring Grads

BW EXTRAS

BW Digital
BW Mobile

include not only charging customers for an Internet connection but also assessing a fee on Web sites to enable their customers to reach them more quickly.

Essentially, what these executives are proposing is the creation of a two-lane Internet where larger, more established Web sites with financial resources that pay for fast-lane access will be able to squeeze out smaller, emerging Web sites.

One must ask what will happen to the next Google or Yahoo struggling in a garage today, if new, innovative companies (that must often give away their services as they strive to become established) are stuck with inferior, slow-lane Internet access, simply because they lack the resources to pay the toll-booth keepers.

FUTURE HELP? This potential problem would be eliminated by market competition in the delivery of high-speed Internet access. But many consumers today are up against a duopoly; a single telephone company and a single cable company are the sole broadband providers in most communities. Our experience with cell phones teaches us that, in general, the true benefits of competition only occur when a market is served by three or more providers.

But that competition does not exist today. In its absence, a firm principle of network neutrality is essential. With two simple new rules, and without hurting consumers or limiting innovation, telephone companies could launch an array of new services, including high-quality multichannel television.

Under the first requirement, broadband providers would be prohibited from blocking, interfering with, or impairing the ability of Internet users to access lawful content, applications, and services on the Internet. Under the second principle, the broadband operators would be prohibited from favoring themselves or their affiliates in the allocation, use, or quality of Internet access services.

PROTECTING CHOICE. Consistent with these rules, a broadband provider could prioritize a category of its own bits, such as video, if it also prioritized all video bits traveling over its pipes at no cost to other service providers. Internet providers could also take reasonable and nondiscriminatory steps to manage their networks for technical efficiency, to protect network security, and to prevent illegal activity.

This simple, straightforward approach would preserve consumer choice and the openness and accessibility that have been the hallmark of the Internet. Under this approach, the incubation of new Internet-based products and services will continue to thrive. With the proposed merger of AT&T (**T**) and BellSouth (**BLS**), "last-mile" Internet links will be controlled by an even smaller number of companies whose reach will span the nation. A clear rule to assure Internet openness and accessibility is, therefore, even more urgently required.

Simply put, to foster the conditions that have contributed so much to our economy and our way of life, we need to avoid a two-lane Internet, controlled by incumbents manning toll booths. That's the net on net neutrality.

Rick Boucher represents the Ninth District of Virginia in the U.S. House of Representatives. A Democrat, Boucher is the co-founder and currently a co-chair of the Congressional Internet Caucus

PEOPLE SEARCH

Search for business contacts:

First Name :

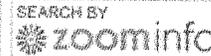
Last Name :

Company Name :



PREMIUM SEARCH

Search by job title, geography and build a list of executive contacts



TECH WHITE PAPERS

- ▶ Most Recent
- ▶ Most Popular