

# Slowdown brings awareness to net neutrality

By Nancy Scola, Washington Post

Wednesday, forces aligned in favor of stronger net neutrality rules will rally under the banner of Internet Slowdown Day, the latest push to funnel the public's attention to the Federal Communication Commission's on-going rulemaking on open Internet principles and practices.

First things first. Slowdown Day will not feature any actual slowing down of the Internet. The reason it won't? The same reason why this is a fascinating moment in the history of Internet activism. Companies participating in the protest, like Vimeo, Etsy and reddit, have become the digital infrastructure of the Internet age. Slowing down their services is likely to anger their audiences (not to mention, in some cases, their shareholders). In other words, they've become essential – Too Big to Slow? – but that also gives them enormous power. They have the ability to draw millions upon millions of eyeballs to the spinning loading icon that will be featured on their sites.

That spinning logo is one way that Web sites and Web users will be participating. Another is changing one's avatar, on Twitter or Facebook or what have you, to the icon. The hope is that the action will spread like a contagion, if one given a little push. Commit, the campaign is asking of its allies, to getting one person or company with a bigger reach than you to join in as well.

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