

INFLUENCING THE DEBATE

Large Internet service providers, such as Verizon, Comcast and AT&T have largely avoided the public debate, instead seeking influence through lobbying, spending more than \$238 million on filings that mentioned the term “net neutrality” at least once, according to the Quid analysis.

Advocacy groups, particularly pro net neutrality groups, concentrated their outreach through Twitter, using impassioned language to call people to action. These groups have sought to encourage people to submit FCC comments, often even providing templates that break down into three areas:

- Protect the diversity of the Internet: 24 percent (of the templates submitted)
- Schedule public hearings before making a decision: 14 percent
- Reclassify Internet service providers to allow more regulation by the FCC: 14 percent

The only significant anti-regulation template (4 percent) advocated not reclassifying ISPs.

Netflix also has been one of the leading advocates for net neutrality, with its CEO Reed Hastings being a vocal supporter. It has had an effect on the public conversation, with 5 percent of media about net neutrality surfacing around Hastings’ criticism of Comcast and Verizon. The ISPs have responded, saying Netflix shouldn’t expect anything for free, but that is the rare representation of Internet service providers attempting to sway public opinion in the media.