

The Technology Revolution

A Campaign for Liberty Manifesto

This is what a technology revolution looks like:

New innovators create vast new markets where none existed previously; Individual genius enabled by the truly free market the Internet represents routes around obsolete and ineffective government attempts at control; The arrogant attempts of governments to centralize, intervene, subsidize, micromanage and regulate innovation is scoffed at and ignored.

The revolution is occurring around the world.

It is occurring in the private sector, not the public sector.

It is occurring despite wrongheaded attempts by governments to micromanage markets through disastrous industrial policy.

And it is driven by the Internet, the single greatest catalyst in history for individual liberty and free markets.

The true technology revolutionaries have little need for big government and never have. Microsoft ignored the government for years and changed the world by leading the PC revolution.

Today, companies like Apple -- which has created several completely new markets out of whole cloth (iPhone, iPad, iTunes, and iPod) -- are changing the world again, successfully adopting visionary new revenue models for movies, songs and games, and launching an "app economy" responsible for creating almost half a million jobs in the United States since the iPhone was introduced...

All in less than 5 years, and all without government permission, partnerships, subsidies, or regulations!

Technology revolutionaries succeeded not because of some collectivist vision that seeks to regulate "fairness", "neutrality", "privacy" or "competition" through coercive state actions, or that views the Internet and technology as a vast commons that must be freely available to all, but rather because of the same belief as America's Founders who understood that private property is the foundation of prosperity and freedom itself.

Technology revolutionaries succeed because of the decentralized nature of the Internet, which defies government control.

As a consequence, decentralization has unlocked individual self-empowerment, entrepreneurialism, creativity, innovation and the creation of new markets in ways never before imagined in human history.

But, ironically, just as decentralization has unleashed the potential for free markets and individual freedom on a global scale, collectivist special interests and governments worldwide are now tirelessly pushing for *more* centralized control of the Internet and technology.

Here at home they are aided and abetted both by an Administration that wholeheartedly believes in the wisdom of government to manage markets and some in the technology industry that cynically use the cudgel of government control and regulation to hamstring competitors – the Apple's and Microsoft's of tomorrow.

Internet collectivism takes many forms, all of them pernicious.

Among the most insidious are government attempts to control and regulate competition, infrastructure, privacy and intellectual property. According to them;

- Successful companies in brand new frontier industries that didn't even exist as recently as five years ago should be penalized and intimidated with antitrust actions in the name of "fairness" and "competition."
- Privately owned broadband high-speed infrastructure must be subject to collective rule via public ownership and government regulations that require "sharing" with other competitors.
- Internet infrastructure must be treated as a commons subject to centralized government control through a variety of foolish "public interest" and "fairness" regulations.
- Wireless, the lifeblood of the mobile Internet revolution, must be micromanaged as a government-controlled commons, with limited exclusive property rights.
- Private property rights on the Internet should exist in limited fashion or not at all, and what is considered to be in the public domain should be greatly expanded.
- Private sector data collection practices must be scrutinized and tightly regulated in the name of "protecting consumers", at the same time as government's warrantless surveillance and collection of *private* citizens' Internet data has dramatically increased.

Internet collectivists are clever.

They are masters at hijacking the language of freedom and liberty to disingenuously push for more centralized control.

"Openness" means government control of privately owned infrastructure.

"Net neutrality" means government acting as arbiter and enforcer of what it deems to be "neutral".

“Internet freedom” means the destruction of property rights.

“Competition” means *managed* competition, with the government acting as judge and jury on what constitutes competition and what does not.

Our “right to privacy” only applies to the data collection activities of the private sector, rarely to government.

The eminent economist Ludwig von Mises wrote that when government seeks to solve one problem, it creates two more.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the realm of Internet collectivists and the centralized control of the Internet they seek.

The body of incremental communications law and regulation that has emerged since the days of Alexander Graham Bell are entirely unsuited to the dynamic and ever-changing Internet for one simple reason: Technology is evolving faster than government’s ability to regulate it.

Ronald Reagan once said, "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction." But in the Internet era, true Internet freedom can be lost in far less than one generation.

Around the world, the real threat to Internet freedom comes not from bad people or inefficient markets -- we can and will always route around them -- but from governments' foolish attempts to manage and control innovation.

And it is not just the tyrannies we must fear. The road *away* from freedom is paved with good intentions.

Today, the road to tyranny is being paved by a **collectivist-Industrial complex** -- a dangerous brew of wealthy, international NGO's, progressive do-gooders, corporate cronies and sympathetic political elites.

Their goals are clear: The collectivist-industrial complex seeks to undermine free markets and property rights, replacing them with "benevolent" government control and a vision of "free" that quickly evolves from "free speech" to "free stuff."

We know where this path leads. As Thomas Jefferson said, "The natural progress of things is for liberty to yield and government to gain ground."

A benevolent monopoly for "the public interest" is nothing more than a means for the old guard to reassert their power. The role of the government on the Internet is to protect us from force and fraud, not to decide our interests.

But while the Internet has produced a revolution, it has not, in fact, "changed everything".

We do not need to reinvent our principles for the web; we only need apply our core principles to it. When faced with Internet regulation, we should ask these key questions:

1. Is this a core function of the federal government?
2. Does it execute Constitutionally defined duties?
3. Does it protect Constitutionally defined rights?
4. Does it protect property rights?
5. Does it protect individual rights?
6. If the federal government does not do this, will others?
7. Will this policy or regulation allow the market to decide outcomes or will it distort the market for political ends?
8. Is this policy or regulation clear and specific, with defined metrics and limitations?

Yes, there will always be problems and challenges that exist in the online universe. These challenges are sometimes significant and important and other times not. Government, however, will never solve them. Markets will.

As a matter of principle, we oppose any attempt by Government to tax, regulate, monitor or control the Internet, and we oppose the Internet collectivists who collaborate with the government against Internet freedom.

This is our revolution.... Government needs to get out of the way.