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President-elect Donald Trump could gut some of the most significant tech policies of the 21st century, all but erasing President Barack Obama's Internet agenda and undoing years of effort by lawmakers, tech companies and consumer advocates to limit the power of large, established corporations, analysts say. In particular danger are key initiatives of the Obama years, including net neutrality and a pivotal series of Internet privacy regulations that came along with it.

"Net neutrality has a big target on its back," said Robert Kaminski, a telecom analyst at Capital Alpha Partners. During the campaign, Trump vowed to "eliminate our most intrusive regulations" and "reform the entire regulatory code." He has singled out net neutrality as a "top-down power grab," predicting it would allow the government to censor websites.

Congressional Republicans have taken aim at net neutrality as well, setting the stage for a concerted effort by Trump and his House and Senate allies to undermine the policy. And because the government's consumer privacy policies draw their power from net neutrality, they are likely to fall as well if conservatives successfully gut the rules.

The forecast comes as a deep blow to Silicon Valley and the tech industry, many of whose executives had openly backed Hillary Clinton in the race for the White House. "I am surprised and disappointed," said Steve Case, the co-founder of AOL — even as other leaders, such as Box chief executive Aaron Levie, said they hoped Trump had been lying about his proposed policies. Levie has been an outspoken critic of Trump, saying his economic agenda risks undermining innovation in technology and transportation.

It's unlikely Trump was misleading the public, according to policy and business analysts. The new administration, they say, will instead delete from history the Federal Communications Commission's unprecedented regulations for Internet providers. An agency spokesperson declined to comment. At first, Trump's FCC may simply decide not to enforce the rules. But soon it would take formal steps to strike the rules from the books, said an FCC official who spoke on condition of anonymity. "They could potentially blow everything up fairly quickly," said the official, who added that any vote to overturn net neutrality could be met with a lawsuit filed by supporters of the rules.

Under the net neutrality rules, which were upheld by a court in a separate legal

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proceeding this year, it is illegal for Internet providers such as Comcast and AT&T to put up barriers to the websites consumers want to reach. Providers cannot block or slow videos, for instance, in order to favor email traffic. And they cannot demand special payments from website operators just so that the sites' content can reach Internet users.

The FCC's newly passed privacy rules, meanwhile, force Internet providers to give consumers a say in how their most sensitive personal data is used and shared. As providers increasingly realize their business depends on more than simply selling Internet access, many have moved to collect and analyze their customers' app usage, browsing history, mobile location and other information in order to sell targeted advertising.

Both federal policies were considered landmark measures, because the nation's top telecom and cable regulator had never before imposed such stringent obligations on Internet providers. With the Internet now a dominant communications network that allows Americans to find jobs, seek education and conduct commerce, that platform needed to be protected from anticompetitive behavior, regulators warned. That many Americans have only a couple of choices at best has made the FCC's mission more urgent, its Democratic chairman, Tom Wheeler, has said. "That is what economists call a duopoly," Wheeler said in a 2014 speech. – *Washington Post*; [more from Bloomberg](#) and [Ars Technica](#)

NBCUniversal, the U.S. media conglomerate owned by Comcast Corp, said on Thursday it was in talks to buy a stake in European broadcaster Euronews. Euronews' supervisory board has mandated Chief Executive Michael Peters to conduct exclusive talks with the aim of finding an agreement by the end of the year, a source close to Euronews management told Reuters.

Under a possible plan, NBC News - part of NBCUniversal - would look to strengthen Euronews' offerings, while NBCUniversal could use the transaction as a first step to expanding its operations on the European continent. NBC would take a stake of between 15 percent and 30 percent in Euronews, the source said. A spokesman for NBC News said it is "in discussions with Euronews about a potential investment and collaborative partnership between the two," but did not provide any details.

Egyptian billionaire Naguib Sawiris, who owns 53 percent of the broadcaster's shares following a 35 million euro (\$38.1 million) capital increase last year, would remain the controlling shareholder in Euronews, the source added. Created in 1993, Euronews broadcasts in 13 languages and covers 155 countries.

Initially conceived in the wake of the 1990 Gulf War as a 'European CNN,' it used to be owned by a consortium of state-owned European channels, which became minority shareholders after the arrival of Sawiris. Comcast acquired NBCUniversal in stages for about \$30 billion, completing its takeover in 2011. – *Reuters*



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