

# Experts: Government, corporations a threat to Internet

By Hayley Tsukayama, Washington Post

What are the biggest threats to the Internet in the next 20 years? According to experts canvassed by Pew, the biggest threats aren't a rise in hacking attacks or new waves of Internet crime. They're government and big online corporations.

Control and consolidation were the top threats for experts canvassed by Pew's Internet and American Life Project in a study published Thursday. The think tank asked more than 1,400 experts – academics, theorists and those who work in the technology industry – to weigh in on what risks the Internet faces through 2025.

The majority pointed to government surveillance, restrictive regulation and corporate greed as the things most likely to kill the idea that the Web is a free-flowing network of information. Plenty expressed concern that the Internet will fracture due to government policies, such as those that limit access to the Web as some governments did during the Arab Spring, aggressive intellectual property laws or even well-meaning policies in Canada and Australia that aggressively filter all Internet traffic to combat child pornography. These efforts, experts said, cross the line – or at least flirt with it.

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