

Here is yet another example of the kind of wrong-headed thinking going on these days:

ISP Imposes Data Cap, Explains It To Users With Condescending Pizza Analogy

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Cable company WideOpenWest (which markets itself as WOW!) yesterday told customers that it is imposing a data cap and explained the change with a pizza analogy that would seem more appropriate for a kindergarten classroom than for an email informing Internet users of new, artificial limits on their data usage. The email said WOW is "introducing a monthly data usage plan for your Internet service on June 1, 2021" and described the system as follows:

"What's a monthly data usage plan? Let us illustrate ... Imagine that the WOW! network is a pizza. Piping hot. Toppings galore. Every WOW! customer gets their own slice of pizza, but the size of their slice is dependent on their Internet service plan. While customers who subscribe to 1 Gig get the largest slices, those with Internet 500 get a slightly smaller piece, and so on. But, it's all the same delicious, high-speed pizza that you know and love. Now, say you're not full after your slice and you grab another. That extra slice is like a data overage. Don't worry -- we got extra pizza... umm, data... just in case. If you exceed your data allowance, we'll automatically apply increments of 50GB for \$10 to your account for the remainder of the current calendar month. Total overage charges will not exceed \$50 per billing statement no matter how much data you use. Even better -- the first time you experience a data overage, we'll proactively waive fees."

The email did not mention that, unlike pizza, Internet data doesn't run out and that there is plenty for everyone as long as a network is properly constructed and provisioned. And despite paragraphs of comparing data to pizza, the email literally never says how much data customers will be allowed to use before they are charged extra. The answer is in a newly updated "network management practices" document that says the monthly cap will range from 1TB to 3TB: the 50Mbps download plan gets 1TB, plans between 100 and 300Mbps download speeds get 1.5TB, the 500 and 600Mbps plans get 2.5TB, and the gigabit plan gets 3TB.

WOW has over 800,000 internet customers in parts of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, South Carolina, and Tennessee. In a separate document, WOW says that "unlimited data plans may be added for an additional monthly charge" but doesn't say how much it will cost.

It's apparently not a bad April Fools' Day joke, either. People in the DSLReports forum have reportedly confirmed the changes with a WOW representative.