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# The Internet Eco-System

The global Internet is made up of all types of network infrastructure operators. They might be categorised as follows:

- Access Providers
- Regional Providers
- Global Providers
- "Tier-1s"
- Content Providers
- Content Distribution Networks
- Internet Exchange Points

All these network infrastructure operators interconnect with each other in a variety of ways.

#### **Access Providers**

Provide access to end users only. They buy transit and participate at Internet Exchange Points.

## **Regional Providers**

Have a presence in many economies. They provide transit to Access Providers, and may be Access Providers themselves (either directly or through specific local subsidiaries). They usually participate at Internet Exchange Points.

### **Global Providers**

Have a presence in some or most of the continents on the planet. They provide transit to Access and Regional Providers, but are unlikely to be Access Providers themselves. They might participate at Internet Exchange Points (either directly or through specific local subsidiaries).

#### "Tier-1s"

The Global Providers who do not need any transit. Tier-1s only peer with each other. They do not

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participate at Internet Exchange Points.

#### **Content Providers**

Are responsible for generating the distributed content that most end-users are interested in accessing. Content providers have their own infrastructure and transit networks, and participate at Internet Exchange Points.

#### **Content Distribution Networks**

Operators who use their own infrastructure and transit networks to deliver content either by private peering or by peering at Internet Exchange Points to the Access Providers whose end users consume it.

## **Internet Exchange Points**

The Internet Exchange Point is the foundation on which the entire Internet is built, facilitating large volumes of peering between the different types of network infrastructure operators.

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