



MANIFESTO OF THE SALOTTO 2018

Les jeux sont faits... ou non?

In 2010 Tim Wu, lawyer and professor at Columbia Law School, published "The Master Switch", the book in which he demonstrated how all the media and communications industries were characterized by a specific pathology that sooner or later makes the mechanisms of the market self-regulation ineffective and leads to a monopoly (or oligopoly).

In the same year Facebook with its 500M subscribers had just reached the break-even point, Netflix had less than 20M of users (US only), Amazon shares were worth 1/15 of the current ones and the "smartphone" phenomenon had just broken out. Apple and Microsoft were third and tenth respectively among the top ten largest companies by market capitalization in the world, dominated by oil companies and banks.

In the same year, Barak Obama, attentive to the themes of Network Neutrality (a term coined by Tim Wu), inspired the first FCC directive in favor of the NN, revised and strengthened in 2015 by the "Open Internet Order": the regulators aimed to limit the discretion of telecommunications operators, so as to guarantee equal treatment for all the content providers and for all the end users of Internet services.

It was a long time ago. Today the top companies by market capitalization are Apple, Amazon, Alphabet, Microsoft, Facebook, Tencent and Alibaba Group and, at the same time, the current American president has already obtained that FCC radically changes the rules of Network Neutrality.

It seems that the "Master Switch" is now On for the benefit of the so-called "Over The Top", companies whose target is the entire world population, providing services with unlimited scalability.

Will the global companies be the only platforms to define the 21st century world? Do we believe that "diversity" is a value to protect, or do we think that the Internet industry will be inevitably represented by few global players? Why aren't any European subjects among OTTs? Is still possible to have new European and Italian companies capable of competing with them?

These are the topics we are going to discuss with influential interlocutors at the Salotto 2018.