Do This Before You Set Up a New Wifi Network

As wifi becomes ever more ubiquitous, so do a host of wifi problems that range from mildly irritating to infuriating or even dangerous. Most of them can be fixed with the right know-how – but even better, many can be prevented altogether by simply doing this one thing. And for small applications it's even free!

Wireless Site Survey

The trouble with wireless internet can easily be illustrated by wire internet. If you buy the wrong length wire, you very soon know about it, as you either roll up hundreds of feet of excess cable into a nest of noodles around your feet or route the cable across the middle of the floor with duct tape. You can see a cable. But if your hub has a range of six inches, or they're picking up your office intranet in North Korea, it's hard to know: you can't see wifi.

Now you can.

If you use Windows, there are a plethora of survey tools available for free, freemium and purchase. If you're looking for a few pointers for a small network there are plenty of free options. You can pay as much as $4, 000 for a tool like Cisco's Wireless Control System if you're rigging up a big network. For Mac, the options are more limited: NetStop has a good reputation and both free and purchase versions are available, so we'll talk a little about that.

For Larger Wifi Network

If you're building a larger wifi network you're going to need to get into AP placement, cabling needs and a host of other requirements, and the likelihood is that you're going to need the paid-for version of an application that can handle all those variables. That's a subject for another post. What about if you're just setting up a network for a smaller area? No coffee shop or other business, whatever it actually does, is complete without free wifi now. The chances are that if you're covering an area with less than a 100-foot radius from your wifi point, you'll only need one AP.

WIFI Site Surveying Tool

Use your wifi site surveying tool to find out several key metrics, including SSID, bans, security type (if it's WEP, you'll want to change that!), vendor, mode (b/g/n), signal to noise, signal percentage, and more. Not every tool offers every level of functionality, but before you call your wifi network good to go, give it the once-over with a site surveying tool and make sure there are no obvious glitches. Your customers and co-workers will never thank you – because if it's done well they'll never know it was done at all.

*Submitted to the Greater Ocean Township Chamber of Commerce by GOTCC member **John Kalli, CEO of Trinity Worldwide Technologies.** Trinity takes care of your IT and stands out for their reliability and responsiveness, focus on your needs, and personable staff who serve as your long-term business partner. **www.Trinityww.com 732.780.8615***