

WiFi Gotcha List

Notes and Observations from
Small Libraries, or

Some tips on how to not suffer
common mistakes with your
new wifi install

Paul Groll, MS, CCSE, CISSP

Department of Information
Technology, State of Michigan

Groll@Michigan.gov

Merit
Member
Conference
20 June 2007



Information Vacuum – WiFi dont's

◆ Google says:

- public wifi 29,100,000
- public wifi install 1,680,000
- wifi install 1,650,000
- “public wifi” 169,000
- “library wifi” 15,100

- “library wifi mistakes” did not match any documents



Assumptions – The Ideal WiFi

- ◆ Floors are all radio transparent
- ◆ Range is always max, and walls don't matter
- ◆ Shelving is mostly empty space
- ◆ Books are invisible
- ◆ Anyone can manage the system
 - Pournelle's Law - you are "someone"
- ◆ People are all nice and friendly

Assumptions

- ◆ We should offer full, unfettered access
 - a public network is an “open” network
- ◆ Hardware is expensive; design small
- ◆ We can work with what we have
- ◆ Everyone wants the same thing online
- ◆ Everyone needs to print
- ◆ Today’s solution will meet foreseeable demand



The Real World

- ◆ Nothing is transparent but air
 - Murphy's Inverse Law of Desire
- ◆ People are the most expensive component
 - hardware cost is nearly zero over time
 - allow for sufficient design, scalability
- ◆ Extra capacity – if you build it, they will come
 - the value of cold spares
- ◆ Pure-bred solutions can save you a lot
 - troubleshooting and maintaining a mixed-vendor shop can wreck your TCO

The Real World

- ◆ BadGuys happen
- ◆ Theft and vandalism – think ahead
- ◆ Security is a moving target
 - keeping up takes time, time is money
- ◆ Curb Surfing
 - Boat slips – preferential – only ones filled!
 - new legal issues arising – someone’s job?
- ◆ Swamping the single segment
 - consider blocking some content – service packs, isos, etc. - add segments for “special services”



The Real World

- ◆ Plan ahead for a lifecycle model; include funding
- ◆ Dedicated email setup
- ◆ Dedicated weather.gov setup
- ◆ Board Policy issues – clarity in advance
- ◆ Determine how to deal with neighbors
 - how open is “open”?
- ◆ Talk through your scenarios – printing
- ◆ Wireless is not the same as wire-free
 - especially conference and study areas, stacks



The Real World

- ◆ Expect the need to define everything
 - define “fast” and “slow”
 - be crystal-clear on the level of security
- ◆ Use this community for Q&A
 - Merit lists, netsec, others
 - MichLib-L
 - Ask, ask, ask, decide (modern version of “measure twice, cut once”)
- ◆ Expect Change
 - you never know what might happen

Michigan man fined for using free Wi-Fi

He had been checking e-mail using local cafe's wireless system

By [John Cox](#), Network World, 05/23/07

A Michigan man has been fined \$400 and must work 40 hours of community service for using a local café's [Wi-Fi](#) connection from his parked car to check his [e-mail](#) and surf the Web.

He got off easy, according to the [local TV station](#) that reported the case: under Michigan computer access law, using a Wi-Fi connection without authorization is a felony, punishable by as much a \$10,000 fine and five years in prison.

But the story raises more questions than it answers, including whether the café's Wi-Fi connection was a fee-based service, which would imply authorization was required, or a free service that, without any security restrictions, could be accessed by anyone within range, including someone outside the restaurant. The story also doesn't say whether the defendant, Sam Peterson II, of Sparta, Mich., was convicted of the crime or pled to the charge.

Source: www.networkworld.com



From the News Desk

Michigan man arrested for using cafe's free WiFi from his car

By [Jacqui Cheng](#) | Published: May 22, 2007 - 10:37AM CT

A Michigan man is being prosecuted for using a cafe's free WiFi... from his car. Sam Peterson was arrested under a Michigan law barring access to anyone else's network without authorization, according to [Michigan TV station WOOD](#). Since the cafe's WiFi network was reserved for customers, and Peterson never came into the cafe, he was essentially piggybacking off of the open network without authorization.

The arrest came about because Peterson apparently showed up to the Union Street Cafe to use its free WiFi from the comfort of his car, and he did so every single day. A police officer grew suspicious of Peterson and eventually questioned him as to what he was up to. Peterson, not realizing that what he was doing was (at least) [ethically questionable](#), told the officer exactly what he was doing. "I knew that the Union Street had WiFi. I just went down and checked my e-mail and didn't see a problem with that," Peterson told a reporter.

Source: www.arstechnica.com

Related Stories

[The MacBook "hack" controversy continues](#)

[Tor hack reports downplayed by developers](#)

The case of the stolen Wi-Fi: What you need to know

Don't let your wireless network play host to strangers, say security experts

Stephen Lawson [Today's Top Stories](#) - or [Other Mobile and Wireless Stories](#) -

August 08, 2005 (IDG News Service) -- Benjamin Smith III and Gregory Straszkiwicz both were arrested for allegedly stealing something no one could see, hear or feel. That thing was valuable enough for victims to press charges in both cases. But the arrests were over something many consumers throw out their windows every day: a Wi-Fi signal.

TODAY'S TOP STORIES

- Hot stuff: Your summer gadget guide
- Apple picks a fight

Source: www.computerworld.com





