

# How WiFi is a win for clients, employees, and your business

Just a few years ago, businesses began to think it would be a good idea to offer WiFi connectivity to customers who might want it. Sometimes they even charged for it. It was thought of as a nice extra—an amenity.

Today, free WiFi for customers and guests has become a must—at least for businesses that want increased sales, positive reviews on social media, and repeat business.

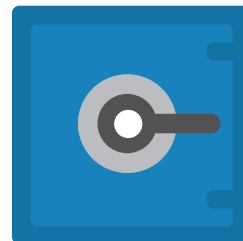
That's because consumers have become, shall we say, heavily dependent on mobile devices. Canadian smartphone owners estimate they spend an average of 90 minutes each day on their phone<sup>1</sup>—and not necessarily talking, but doing web searches, shopping, working, and playing games.<sup>2</sup> And the smartphone user penetration rate is expected to reach 65% of the Canadian population by 2017.<sup>3</sup>

No wonder that when customers and clients are sitting in a company's waiting area—or in a doctor's office, law office, restaurant, hotel, or store—they find themselves unhappy without WiFi connectivity. So attached are consumers to WiFi that British Columbia's biggest 911 call centre said the top source of "nuisance calls" in 2014 was customers complaining about nonfunctioning WiFi in coffee shops.<sup>4</sup>

Seeing this phenomenon, more and more businesses have accepted that their customers want WiFi. Meanwhile, service providers have evolved their business Internet offerings so that WiFi can boost a business's bottom line in a variety of ways. Here's what having a managed WiFi solution at your business can do.

## 1. Keep confidential company information secure.

You can create distinct networks that keep employee and guest usage separate. Network security can be ensured with user authentication. For companies that handle sensitive information, such as doctor's offices, law firms, and accounting firms, WiFi security firewalls and content filtering (which can include blocking objectionable web pages as well as email spam) can be customized, as needed.



## 2. Keep employees happy (and productive), too.

With high-quality WiFi, employees are no longer confined to their desks to work while in the office; they can take a mobile device to a colleague's office, to a private space, or to a part of the business located on the other side of the building. Meanwhile, a separate network for guests means employees do not have to sacrifice speed or bandwidth during times of heavy client usage.



## 3. Differentiate your business from the competition.

According to recent research, 96% of customers prefer free WiFi and would return to stores that offer it. Conversely, poor connectivity or no access at all can drive customers away.<sup>3</sup> And 65% of small business IT decision makers say offering WiFi has encouraged repeat business.<sup>6</sup>



## 4. Deliver customized messages to engage your customers.

While customers are connected to your WiFi network, you have a new communications channel through which to offer a variety of services and amenities. For example with WiFi and added marketing solutions:

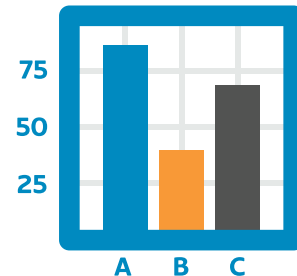
- A hotel can provide a local map and information about nearby points of interest, special promotions, and discounts.
- A professional services firm can provide information about other services the firm offers, or links to content about hot topics in their field of expertise, such as taxes or family law.
- A retailer can offer price-matching for products a customer may be researching on a competitor's site.<sup>7</sup>



## 5. Analyze your customer base deeply, but easily.

If you have a managed WiFi solution, a customer portal will give you insight into customers' behavior, devices, and apps, allowing you to adjust your business strategies and marketing decisions accordingly. For example, analyzing traffic flow in a store can identify places where product positioning or staffing can be improved.

Analytics can tell you who is a repeat customer, how long customers stay on WiFi while in your establishment, and the time periods and days in which your WiFi is most in-demand—all of which can help shape the types of services and real-time promotions you offer to those customers.



## 6. Provide an opportunity for customers to opt in to your communications.

Businesses can enhance their marketing with custom business branding as customers log in. In exchange for access to free WiFi, you can get your customers to like your Facebook page, thereby promoting your page to the customer's network.

## 7. Make your life as a business owner easier.

With a managed WiFi solution, you can easily do many things through a secure and easy-to-understand cloud portal: track your company's WiFi usage (and monitor possible abuse), seamlessly receive upgrades, and more. Or you can make life even easier, and allow your Internet provider to handle the backend for you with 24/7 support. Meanwhile, you can concentrate on doing what you do best: growing your business.

# WiFi terms decoded

## Understand these terms to help you make decisions about WiFi for your business

### **802.11ac:**

The latest version of the wireless networking standard set by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Standards Association, with the fastest available connections and greatest range.

### **Access Point (AP):**

A device that transmits and receives data, acting as a connection point between a wired network and wireless devices.

### **Wireless Local Area Network (WLAN):**

A network within a limited area (such as an office, school, or home) in which devices (servers, computers, printers) are connected to each other and the Internet via radio signals.

### **Throughput:**

A measurement of WiFi network speed that takes into account network overhead and environmental factors. It is a more precise measurement of how many units of information a system can process than Mbps (megabits per second).

### **WPA2:**

The most up-to-date version of the WiFi Protected Access security protocol developed by the WiFi Alliance for wireless networks.

### **Service Set Identifier (SSID):**

A series of 32 case-sensitive alphanumeric characters that is the primary “name” for a WLAN. Access points broadcast the SSID to help devices find and join a wireless network.

### **Hotspot:**

A WLAN that provides free wireless access for the public in a specific area.

### **Bandwidth:**

The maximum data transfer rate of a network or Internet connection. Bandwidth is a measurement of how much data can be sent over a specific connection in a given amount of time.

# 75%

of Canadian companies support the use of employee-owned smartphones and tablets.<sup>1</sup>



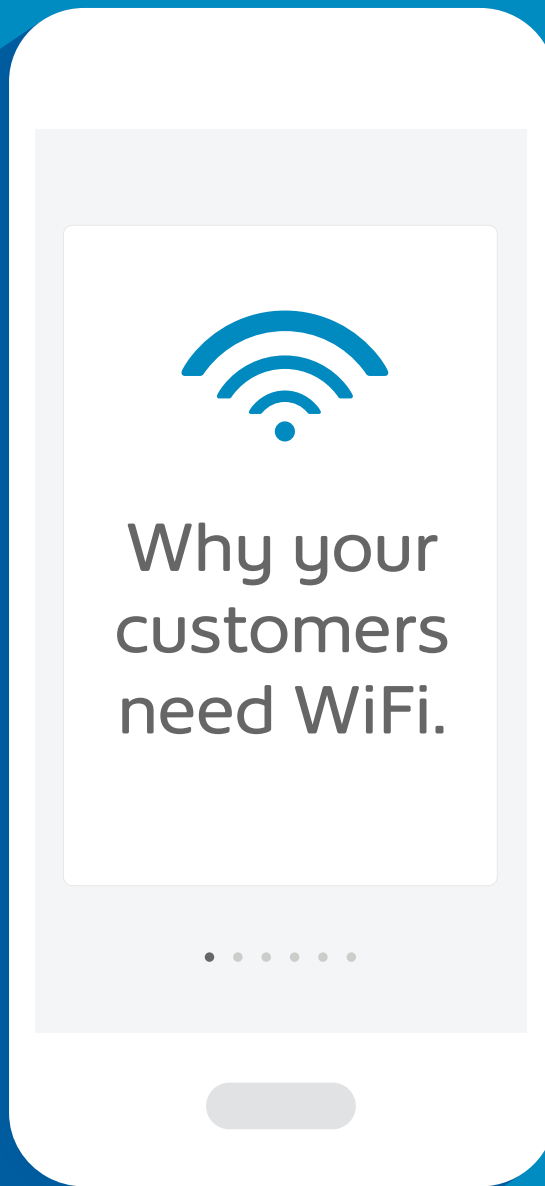
# 60%

of Canadian businesses use social media applications (Skype, Twitter, Facebook) for employee and corporate communications.<sup>2</sup>



# 78%

of data consumed on smartphones is accessed via WiFi.<sup>3</sup>



# 19:00

## 19 hours a day:

The average time a Canadian household spends connecting to the Internet via a mobile device.<sup>4</sup>

# More than half

of e-mails are opened on a mobile device.<sup>5</sup>

The average global smartphone user checks his or her phone

# 150 times

a day.<sup>6</sup>



In Canada, mobile data traffic will have grown 700% from 2014 to 2019.<sup>7</sup>

# 8/10

Canadian smartphone owners say they don't leave home without their mobile device.<sup>8</sup>



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<http://services.google.com/fh/files/misc/omp-2013-ca-en.pdf>

# Should your business have managed WiFi?

If your answer to at least one of these questions is “yes,” consider investigating a managed WiFi solution.

Do your customers/clients ever have to wait for appointments or services?

Do they use mobile devices to research and compare prices while in your store?

Does your office handle confidential health-related, legal, or financial information with specific security requirements?

Would more information about your customers' behavior help you make decisions about your products and services?

Do you need to prioritize your time on issues other than your company's IT?

# SmartWiFi

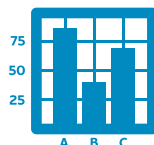
Our services are highly configurable and designed to provide ease of mind for our customers. We work with passion and integrity. Shaw has over 40 years' history providing leading-edge technology solutions in Canada.

## Cloud based management



View and manage through an easy-to-use online portal.

## Analytics



Optimize your business strategies based on customer analytics.

## High quality WiFi



Business-grade hardware capable of providing WiFi for numerous users without compromising performance.

## Multiple WiFi networks



Dedicated wireless networks for your employees and guests.



Turn your business into a Shaw Go WiFi hotspot.

## Device access management



Manage your WiFi performance so that a single heavy user doesn't impact the experience for everyone else.

## Ready to reap the benefits of WiFi?

To learn more about SmartWiFi and how it can help grow your business:

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