

Computer Bytes – April 2017

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Happy Spring! Hope you're all enjoying this awesome weather!

This time around I've chosen to share a few items about wireless – home or business use.

We all know wireless or “wifi” is everywhere in our world. With this, there are some tips and tricks I'd like to share so you can use it in an efficient manner. Yes – I now many of you will already be aware of a lot of these insights but you may catch one or two things that help and those that are less familiar can pull in and use many of the tips.

First let's clarify the wireless. Start with the wireless Router. This is the device that broadcasts the wireless network name or SSID. It is generally your internet router itself (a combination modem/router) or an add-on piece of hardware to your Internet modem. In any event, this is where the wifi signal starts. You configure this device with your desired SSID (network) name and password (key/passphrase). The name you give it will be what you see when you look for wireless connections from your other devices (to be defined below). The purpose of the password is so others who can see your network cannot access without the password. This is for security AND the more people on your network, the slower the connection will become. For those of you less inclined to personalize, most of today's routers are pre-configured with “factory settings”. If you look on the unit it will have the SSID and PASSWORD located on it somewhere (magnifier required for those of us 39+ ☺!). If you make NO CHANGES as described above, these would be the “factory default” wifi connections. A key point to remember is if you choose to tailor your router to your own settings, a ‘reset’ will put it back to factory settings. Not necessarily just turning off/on, but a hard power reset or using the reset button most all units provide.

The next part of the wifi is the device you wish to connect; a mobile device (iPhone, iPad, laptop), printer, your TV, Netflix, etc. You must first enable the wifi at the device – these settings vary for different devices. Next you will search for wireless networks. If you've set up your wifi router correctly, you'll see your own in the list. Keep in mind your device will find ALL the wireless networks in its range. Some devices have better wifi so you might see more networks from two different devices at the exact location. Most of you have already experienced this routine but this sharing is just to help clarify and inform those who are still learning this function. Keep in mind the stronger the connection (more bars), the better the speed. Successful connection will remain in your devices unless some ‘hiccup’ occurs at which time you might have to reset.

Now that you've got your wifi configured and functioning, here are some additional suggestions for working with wifi. Routers broadcasts reflect a basic connection of 2G speed. If your SSID options present “5G speed” option, and your device supports it, it will see that network ALSO. This is theoretically a faster speed. Keep in mind if the lower speed network has stronger signal, it's sometimes a more consistent/stronger connection so you can try the settings to see which is better.

Another point; if you are using a mobile device with a data plan, i.e. AT&T, Verizon, etc., the wireless connection will supersede and carry the load and will not use any data time from your

plan. This is not as critical if you have “unlimited data plan” but in most cases the wifi connection will actually be faster. Mentioning faster – let me reiterate my point about a lot of users slowing the network. Keep in mind your wireless is using your Internet connection for online activities. If you end up with 6 phones, 3 iPads, 2 Netflix running, it will bog down. We often run into people complaining of slowness and identify such as the above. The Internet speed you have dictates the load it will carry. If you require faster in one place, say so you can do your work on the laptop, get others off active wifi. One last tip; when you are not using wifi on mobile apps, turn it off – it uses your battery more quickly when on. Of course there is a lot more info and many variables regarding wifi but my goal is to hopefully get you headed in the right direction. Good luck!

NOTE: Our sharing of information within articles includes suggestions and tips. USE AND/OR APPLY AT YOUR OWN RISK. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our offices for professional service/guidance.

Until next time, don't forget your backups! For more information, contact Harv Oliver, HANDS-ON Consultations, (805) 524-5278, www.hocsupport.com