

Tips for setting up and configuring a Hotspot

In this article we will show you some other hotspot solutions, most of them free.



Network administration - If you are in the process of setting up a wireless hotspot or have provided a wireless Internet connection, this article is still for you. In this article we will show you some other hotspot solutions, most of them free.

I also showed you how to set up a public and private network to be safe and how to save time and costs.

Protect your Private network

You need to make sure you protect it properly if you want to maintain your own network. Never allow any visitor to use your network. Your private network needs to be protected with WPA or WPA2 encryption, operating in easy mode to set up PSK or enterprise mode that requires a RADIUS server.

Note : *Never provide visitors with an encryption key or password.*

Also, make sure you want a hotspot solution that isolates traffic private and public. For example, some gateways that support private networks, provide a gateway to provide a direct connection to the Internet and are completely separate from the hotspot. That way, users cannot detect network traffic or unauthorized access to the network share.

If it comes with your gateway as an alternative software, then you should consider using VLANs.

Protect your users

On regular networks, such as your private network, you will want to get file sharing capabilities between users. However, on a hotspot you certainly do not want to provide such access to your files and computers to strangers. Therefore, it is recommended to block user communication on your hotspot.

If you plan to buy a hotspot gateway, user-to-user traffic will definitely be blocked. However, if you configure your own gateway, such as with a replacement firmware, then you need to make sure to enable AP isolation or layer-2 isolation.

For a wide coverage, consider Mesh Network topology

If you want to provide a wireless Internet connection in a wide area that definitely requires multiple access points (APs), you should consider installing a wireless mesh network.

APs will be called mesh nodes, unlike traditional Wi-Fi networks, you don't need to run wires to network routers or switches.

At least one mesh node must be connected to the network / Internet; they are called *gateway nodes*. Other nodes will receive connectivity through radio waves, traffic will spread from one node to another until reaching the gateway or destination node. The route to or from a gateway may change; It will automatically choose the best path.

Setting up a mesh network takes less time and costs because you don't have to run the cable. This is a great way for places where there are many changes that can affect the radio propagation environment because mesh nodes have high redundancy features. For more information on mesh solutions, see [here](#).

Place a Hotspot Gateway at the central point

Remember, Wi-Fi cannot transmit signals over a long distance and the signals will be rapidly degraded by barriers (such as walls or furniture). So you should place a hotspot gateway or router close to the covered area if possible, preferably choose a central location.

Do not hang it at a certain point at the end of the room or office. If necessary, use a new cable or a phone slot installed in a better location.

Use the SSID network name identifier

Unlike your private network, if you want people to know where the Wi-Fi signal is coming from. Then change the default network name (SSID) to something that people can easily recognize (for example, *free Internet at Sunset Hotel*).

Discover alternative software for Hotspot: CoovaAP

If you have a wireless router that supports this feature, then you can turn it into a hotspot gateway by uploading the free CoovaAP software. This free utility will provide an easy hotspot configuration with port lock feature so you can ask users to log in, display a statement or an agreement in use, or request a fee.

CoovaAP also provides a way to control bandwidth so you can control how much Internet you use. In addition, you can use their free or paid network management services.

Use a popular Firmware software

Commonly used firmware projects like DD-WRT and Sveasoft also have hotspot features. For example, DD-WRT supports Chillispot, NoCatSplash and Sputnik. Alternative firmware software also provides many essential enhancements, such as location statistics tools for detailed viewing on nearby networks, QoS settings for managing virtual traffic, LAN and Multi SSID to separate private and public access.

Consider using Sputnik service

SputnikNet service will be great if you have multiple hotspot locations and SputnikNet Express for many basic applications. Both of these services allow you to customize the welcome page, run internal ADs and review reports and usage charts.

In addition, they provide device authentication, allowing non-browser devices (such as Wi-Fi and PSP phones) to access it, and blocking private networks to separate Flow. The premium service also provides many advanced features for control, management and many other deployment options.

WPA / WPA2 Enterprise encryption and 802.1X authentication

If you are concerned about security, you will probably want to use the enterprise mode for WPA / WPA2 encryption.

Unlike the WPA / WPA2 PSK mode, users do not know the actual encryption key. They will log on to the network using the username and password, as required by 802.1X / PEAP authentication.

If interested, you can check the CoovaAAA service for free.

ZoneCD if an old computer is not used

If you have a redundant computer, you can turn it into a hotspot gateway. ZoneCD is a live CD for Linux that can run on computers and work with any wireless router or AP to provide public and private access.

Your compatible Intel computer only needs 128 MB of RAM, a CD-ROM drive, USB drive and two Ethernet network adapters.

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