



Bandwidth and Guest Satisfaction: Why Tiered Wi-Fi Makes a Difference

Research indicates that Wi-Fi is the number one amenity hotel guests are looking for; this isn't surprising. Business travelers have stated for some time now that advertised 'free Wi-Fi' is what hooks them. However, when they check themselves in, get settled, pull up their email inbox, they come to the realization that their email attachments will take an eternity to download.

Consider: everything from the timely loading of a site to the streaming of videos or music, can all be hindered by free Wi-Fi—sometimes indefinitely. Just as hotels need enough water running through the pipes to ensure good plumbing, they need to also ensure enough bandwidth access to every guest who wants it. The solution to the complaints from customers and consumers, and an effective way for a business to monetize their Wi-Fi network, is through the popularized tiered Wi-Fi system.

How it Works

Hotels and other businesses that currently offer free Wi-Fi to their customers have the opportunity to increase their revenues by switching from completely free Internet service to this more flexible tiered Internet pricing model. Essentially, this tiered pricing model allows free basic Wi-Fi access to all guests with the option to upgrade to higher bandwidth for a small charge. In the same way that you would upgrade a double room to a queen suite, or to a king suite with an ocean view, different guests can choose their own level of bandwidth accommodation.

For example, certain hotel guests may be satisfied with the moderate and limited bandwidth available to check their emails and post updates to social media sites. However, many travelers often have higher bandwidth needs. Sending large file attachments, watching Netflix movies, or conducting a videoconference can rarely be done via the first tier. These applications require significant bandwidth, yet hotels may find it difficult to provide this level of access to all of their guests. Adding additional bandwidth is expensive. Allowing guests to upgrade their Wi-Fi access, for all of their devices, ensures they will get the best Wi-Fi access to handle their needs. By charging a small fee for additional bandwidth, the hotel then ensures a revenue stream that can offset the costs of providing additional access.

Preparing For a Tiered System

Keep in mind, this option isn't simply available by changing pricing models. This will not fix inadequate equipment or networks that are still using technology that is out of date. For that, hotels need to contact GuestLinX to evaluate their network. Even though it can be expensive to upgrade an



existing network, or to implement a new network, the costs of integrating the tiered system are exceedingly offset by the return from its implementation, like with many monetizing solutions. In addition, hotels can integrate the tiered payment programs with their current PMS (Property Management Systems) for seamless billing & management. Properties are also creating rewards programs centered around tiered Wi-Fi – like a “frequent flyer” incentive program for Wi-Fi. The more points a guest earns, the more Wi-Fi bandwidth access they are given. These types of incentives are proven to not only increase guest satisfaction, but also brand loyalty.

Where Tiered Systems Can Take Us

Monetizing Wi-Fi has become more prevalent, and is quickly becoming an industry standard. According to an article in USA Today, Marriott International and Hilton Hotels have hotels that are utilizing a tiered Internet pricing model. The Wyndham group, which currently offers free Internet access at most of their hotels, is one of the many companies that are dabbling in hybrid or tiered Internet pricing models.

If bandwidth is at the top of the consumer’s list, it has to be at the top of yours. Frequent guests no longer hope for Wi-Fi options, they expect them – where, when and how they want them. With a tiered system, your valued customers will have the freedom of choice via your monetized network; one prepared for the next evolution in Wi-Fi. With Hotspot 2.0 and other wireless applications around the corner, hotels, resorts and other guest service industries must stay at the forefront in order to attract guests. If and when the tiered Wi-Fi system is implemented, businesses are guaranteed a ROI, and won’t miss the window of opportunity that more and more hotels, airports, and conference centers are opening to ensure a satisfied guest population will keep coming back for more.

GuestLinX is committed to ensuring that its’ customers have the latest information to make accurate and knowledgeable decisions on the installation, usage and application of their Wi-Fi system. Incorporating the newest trends and technologies into an existing or new Wi-Fi system will be a key factor of success as Internet access and ease of use become increasingly important to consumers. Various tiered pricing options through GuestLinX can alleviate the appearance of overcharging for the Wi-Fi access that guests are demanding. **To discuss how this model, and other monetizing systems, can be incorporated into your business, please contact us today.**

GuestLinX, Inc. is a leader in wireless network design, installation, monitoring and customer support. We build Wi-Fi networks that meet the high expectations and demands of our customers.

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