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SINCE 1982

Is Your Wireless Network Being Piggybacked?

Leaving your wireless network unprotected could be an open door for freeloading neighbors or "drive-by piggybackers" searching for unsecured wireless networks to which they can connect for free service.

It is not at all uncommon for home users with wireless-enabled computers to be able to see the presence of other nearby wireless networks in the neighborhood. Windows XP and Vista have an option to display all available wireless networks, then click on the one you want to use. If the one you choose is not secured, anyone – a neighbor or even a total stranger – can connect just as easily.

In a recent news article, a suburban Seattle resident reported that when he turns on his computer he regularly sees on his screen a list of two or three wireless networks that do not belong to him, but are nonetheless available for use – without the approval or even knowledge of the owner.

This is typically the result of installing a wireless router, so that one or more laptops within a home or business can share the same network from anywhere in or near the building. "Most people just plug the thing in," says an industry analyst. "Ninety percent of the time it works, and they stop at that point and don't bother to turn on its security."

For a while, a Los Angeles couple's new wireless Internet service seemed perfect. They were able to sit in their sunny back yard working on their laptop computers – but they soon began noticing that their high speeds had become as slow as rush-hour traffic.

"We didn't know whether to blame it on the service provider or what" they said – but the problem turned out to be neighbors who had tapped into their network. The additional online traffic nearly choked out the legitimate subscribers, slowing their performance until it was practically unusable (not to mention the bandwidth usage).

Uninvited connections could also be unintentional. Since generic out-of-the-box setups are usually preset with a default network name (or "SSID") which people don't always change, it's not uncommon to see more than one network listed with the same name – and a neighbor might mistakenly connect to the wrong one.

The recommended plan is to enable your router's security features, then set your network as your default connection so you don't have to choose every time. Router security can add a password, usually in the form of an encrypted "access key" made up of as many as 26 cryptic characters which are then required of anyone trying to connect to your network. Furthermore, many routers can also block the broadcast of your network's name so that it doesn't even appear on other computers.

Or, if you prefer you can list the unique identification (or "MAC") number of each computer that's authorized on your network, which will then exclude all others. Router firewalls can also be enabled.

OCS technicians normally configure security on routers that we install, however many people purchase and install their own. For more information about network security or OCS technical and consulting services, please call us at 559.781.4123 or email CustomerService@ocsnet.net.

MORE THAN 368 MILLION VIRUSES, SPAM, AND PHISHING ATTEMPTS HAVE BEEN STOPPED BY THE OCS CENTRAL SYSTEM. CALL US ABOUT OCS OFFICE SCAN!

Email Policy Change Announcement

The following addition has been made to the "Email" section of the OACYS Internet Service Agreement (see Subscribers>Usage Policies on our website):

Original Text: Email will be stored on the server for no longer than 60 days from the date of receipt.

Text Added: After 60 days of inactivity on any email account, OACYS reserves the right to remove any email address and its mailbox contents if after 10 days we are unable to contact the customer via alternate email addresses or telephone.

Our original policy text did not explain what would happen if mail was stored longer than 60 days. This clarification is necessary due to the large volume of old mail (sometimes very old) that we're still storing on our mail servers in unused mailboxes. We make every effort to contact these account holders, but if they are unreachable or do not respond we need to reclaim the wasted space.

Work from home!
OCS can connect your home to your office or tie multiple offices together at high speed and with full VPN security, anywhere in the Valley or beyond ...

OCS service plans are described at www.porterville.com

Internet Plans and Pricing

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27 YEARS
COMPUTER SERVICES

Marines Ban Twitter, Facebook, MySpace

The U.S. Marine Corps has banned Twitter, Facebook, MySpace and other social media sites from its networks. "These Internet sites in general are a proven haven for malicious actors and content and are a particularly high risk due to information exposure, user generated content, and targeting by adversaries," reads a Marine Corps order.

"The very nature of social network sites creates a larger exploitation window, exposes unnecessary information to adversaries and provides an easy conduit for information leakage that puts security and personnel at an elevated risk of compromise."

The reference to "adversaries" implies foreign threats, but for general domestic purposes we could just as easily apply the term to criminals, social misfits, and identity thieves who lurk on these sites. Be careful how much personal information you or your children decide to make public!

Stuck in a contract?
Show us your binding paperwork and we may be able to waive up to $100 from your OCS startup costs to help offset your early termination fee with Brand X!

WIRELESS SERVICE AREAS

- Porterville
- Springville
- Pleasant Valley
- River Island
- Globe Drive
- Strathmore
- Terra Bella
- Lindsay
- Exeter
- Badger Hill
- Visalia
- Yokohl Valley
- Camp Nelson
- Success Valley
- Richgrove
- East Delano

GoToAssist for Better Customer Support

OCS subscribers are always happy to learn that our customer service and support is located right here in Porterville, with real live people who know what they're doing.

But sometimes our support staff can still spend considerable troubleshooting time asking customers to describe what they're doing and what they see on their end, which can be frustrating.

Now we have a much better way that works great. Over the phone we give you a special website to browse to and a unique connection code, which grants us temporary permission to access your system remotely – you can then watch and talk on the phone while we help sort out your problem, just as if we were sitting beside you at your desk. Remote access permission terminates automatically when the session ends.

As one customer put it, "Your technician used remote support to log into my computer and help resolve an email problem in a matter of seconds, rather than asking a billion questions and asking me to click here and there. Glad to see that OCS is moving up in the tech support world!"

Fan Mail
"Your service is far better than anything we *[a local packing house with multiple locations]* have experienced before in both speed and reliability. We transfer files 30 times faster, even though our previous provider claimed to be a high-speed business service. And real people answer the phone at OCS, not an answering service, even on weekends … we are extremely happy!" -BP/SP

OACYS INTERNET SERVICE PLANS

| Plan Name | Average Speeds | | | B-M-W[1] | One-Time Fees | | | Monthly Service |
	Min	Typ	Max		Service Activation	Install/ Configure	Equipment Deposit	
					1 Bandwidth-Mailboxes-Webspace (see notes)			
DIALUP	26K	40K	53K	1-5-5	25.00	-	-	24.95
Accelerator	Typically 2-5X faster			-	-	-	-	+5.00
WIRELESS | STANDARD 2.4 GHz								
24 Basic	125K	500K	750K	10-5-5	25.00	100.00	100.00	49.95[2,3]
24 Premium	250K	1M	1.5M	15-5-5	25.00	100.00	100.00	79.95[2,3]
24 Business	375K	1.5M	2M	20-10-10	25.00	100.00	100.00	129.95[2,3]
WIRELESS | SPECIAL CASES 900 MHz (where available)								
900 Basic	125K	375K	750K	5-5-5	25.00	100.00	100.00	59.95[4,5]
WIRELESS | MISSION CRITICAL 5.8 GHz (where available)								
58 Premium	250K	1M	1.5M	15-5-5	25.00	100.00	100.00	99.95
58 Business	375K	1.5M	2M	20-10-10	25.00	100.00	100.00	129.95
58 Professional	500K	2M	3M	25-25-25	25.00	100.00	100.00	159.95
58 Corporate	750K	3M	4M	30-30-30	25.00	100.00	100.00	199.95
58 Enterprise	1M	4M	5M	40-40-40	25.00	100.00	100.00	249.95

All plans include automated central email virus scanning, email spam filtering, and website parental controls. Some plan types permit webspace for personal use only. Wireless installation and deposit package may be paid in installments upon request. All speeds are symmetrical (same for upload and download) within the OACYS network only. All plans terminate at OACYS Porterville headquarters and transport to the Internet via dual T3s over dedicated OC12 fiber optic circuit. All plans subject to change without notice. Pricing and terms are current at the date of this newsletter and supersede previous versions. For footnotes 2,3,4,5 surcharges may apply. Please check with our office for additional details.

I Didn't Know That!

- OCS provides "A-to-Z" technology services
- Complete computer service and repair shop
- Variety of Internet access plans and packages
- Professional website development and hosting
- Programming and custom development
- eCommerce solutions
- Computer and Internet technology consulting
- Secure branch office inter-networking
- Internet-based "VOIP" telephone services

To set Account Preferences or make Payments Online, click **UserAdmin** on our website

On the road? Call our toll-free support at 888-OACYSCOM