The Great Venue Wi-fi Checklist

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An easy guide to network connections

Key Industry Stats

1.3 MILLION events held in 10,000 venues in the uk (eventbrite study)

OVER 50% of event organisers have used an event app at one of their events (event manager blog)

SMARTPHONES have now overtaken laptops in popularity in the UK

66% of UK residents own a smartphone and spend up to 2 hours per day using it

Network Jargon

Bandwidth

The amount of internet available at each venue. Think of bandwidth like a pie. If you're having a party and you're offering everyone pie, then you'll be aware that there's a finite amount to go around. The internet is the same. Bandwidth is simply the total amount of internet for your venue.
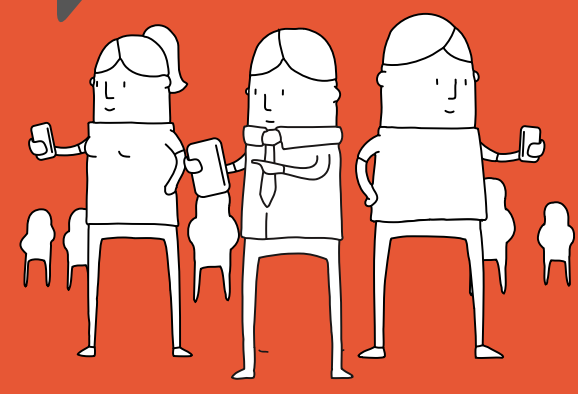
Bandwidth Allocation

Everyone wants a piece of pie, and these days, everyone wants a piece of internet too. Your bandwidth allocation is your strategy for dividing up the internet between everyone who needs to use it. You could offer it on a first come first served basis or set a time limit for each device. It's important to consider how you allocate your bandwidth so people don't end up frustrated and unable to connect.

Dedicated Connection

Basically, this is when the IT nerds at your venue cordon of some of the bandwidth so it can only be accessed by you. It might sound selfish, but it could be crucial on the day of the event. They'll usually create a separate network name and password that only you have access to.

Access Point

An access point is the thing that your laptop or phone is connecting to to get online. It's very similar to the router you have in your home, except venues tend to have several of them at different locations.

Simultaneous Connections

This is the total number of people that can connect to the internet at one time at your venue. Each access point can only support a finite number of users, so it's important to ensure you have enough access points if you anticipate potential high densities of use, for example at registration or in a breakout area.

Venue Network Checklist

Bandwidth ▶ Do you know the total bandwidth coming into the venue or conference centre?

Number of Devices ▶ Have you estimated the number of devices that you expect to be on site? Don't forget the events team and second devices.

Do this sum to check you have enough bandwidth for your event:

$$\frac{\text{Bandwidth}}{\text{Number Of People}} = \text{Bandwidth Allocation Per Device}$$

Bandwidth Allocation ▶ Has bandwidth been allocated to stop wi-fi hogs? Is it first come first served or is there a per-device allocation in place?

Access Points ▶ Calculate how many access points are in each area of the conference and how may simultaneous connections each access point can support.

Key Wi-fi Hotspots ▶ Map out key hotspots for network connectivity such as:
✓ Registration Area
✓ Sessions with Live Polling or Speaker Q&A
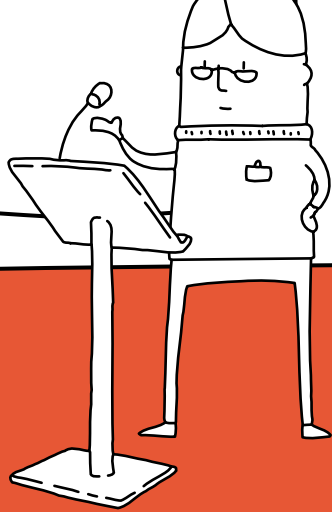✓ Breakout or Quiet Area

Do this sum to identify how many simultaneous connections you can support in each key hotspot:

$$\text{Number Of Access Points} \times \text{Number Of Connections Support} = \text{Simultaneous Connection Capacity}$$

Dedicated Connection ▶ If possible, request a dedicated connection so you won't be sharing your bandwidth with others in the venue. This is especially important for hotels!

Mobile Signal ▶ Have you got your phone out and tested the mobile signal? This will be the first port of call for backup if anything does go wrong. Test as many networks as possible!

IT Support ▶ Do you know what support is available if things go wrong? Ideally you should have dedicated IT support at the venue.

Want to find out more about event tech?

Why not book an Event Tech Clinic with Noodle Live - an Event Technology Company, specialising in event apps and RFID / NFC solutions

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