NOT YOUR ORDINARY HOT SPOT: WI-FI IN THE PARKS

This session explained how and why the Ohio State Parks System has been phasing in Wi-Fi at the parks. Wi-Fi is internet that can be accessed wirelessly. The presenter Phil Hoffman, explained what equipment works best and the approximate costs of the products needed to incorporate Wi-Fi in public places. He compared some of the best well-known equipment and their advantages. Mr. Hoffman discussed how there may be some advancements of technology, and how that affects the Wi-Fi in parks, for example site filtering and the cost of that additional equipment. He discussed the possibility of charging customers, and explained how customers expect that the internet access is free. Mr. Hoffman gave many reasons as to why you would want to add Wi-Fi to your parks but the number one reason is that it is what campers are asking for. Providing the service can even get campers to stay longer or bring more people into the park. At the end of the session, there was a great deal of time for questions and other comments and conversation.
WiFi:
Not Your Ordinary Hot Spot

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Ted Strickland, Governor ● Sean D. Logan, Director
Phil Hoffman
Electronic Services Section Mgr.
Field Support Group
Ohio State Parks
Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources
Proviso: I am not a network administrator.
Roadmap

1. How Ohio does it
2. National Trends
4. Q&A
How Ohio does it

• Where/When
• Why
• How
• Nuts & Bolts
How Ohio does it

• Where/When
• Why
• How
• Nuts & Bolts

2006:
- Alum Creek
- East Harbor
- Rocky Fork

2007:
- Hueston Woods
- Grand Lake St. Marys

2008:
- Dillon
- Jackson Lake
- Mosquito Lake
- Pymatuning
What You Should Know

- Currently, **free high-speed WiFi** is offered at five state park campgrounds:
  - Alum Creek
  - East Harbor
  - Grand Lake St. Marys
  - Hueston Woods
  - Rocky Fork

Some users with Microsoft Vista have reported they are unable to connect to our WiFi network. We are investigating this problem and appreciate your patience and understanding.

Coming soon to:

- Dillon
- Jackson Lake
- Mosquito Lake
- Pymatuning

*Wifi at Punderson State Park Lodge*
How Ohio does it

- Where/When
- Why
- How
- Nuts & Bolts
Internet at parks? DNR public survey says so

Struggling financially for years, Ohio’s state parks system continues to address concerns originating from a diverse constituency base.

And the DNR Division of Parks and Recreation does this by conducting ongoing as well as special survey work to gauge the public’s attitudes, opinions, and preferences.

It is this commitment to service that helped put the shine on the parks system’s reputation even in its darkest financial hours.

The agency’s survey work comes in several forms. First is the agency’s ongoing customer satisfaction survey. This survey receives about 20,000 responses annually.

“It’s something that we always want to do,” said Jean Backs, a division spokeswoman.

Good, bad and indifferent responses are measured and then weighed, giving the DNR’s most visible division a heads-up on what it is doing right and what it is doing wrong.

Clearly, the parks division is doing a lot correctly though the public is becoming aware of the agency’s many needs.

Long financially neglected by both the previous governor’s administration and the state legislature, the parks division’s infrastructure is crumbling as is its rolling stock.

Yet, more demands by a discriminating public continue to be made. That’s where a series of surveys conducted a few years back in anticipation of the parks division’s 2006-2010 strategic plan comes into play.

The agency’s camper survey went to the state’s 200,000 registered RV owners while the state also conducted focus groups at various state parks.

Lastly, the parks division opened itself up to a questionnaire positioned on the Internet.

“The additional surveys shows if there is something the public is not getting from us as an agency. We also wanted to get feedback from people very familiar with the parks,” Backs said.

What the state found with the surveys were both realistic objectives as well as impracticable ones, such as a surprisingly large number of people who requested the state build swimming pools. That’s not going to happen in any camper’s lifetime.

Probably not much more likely will be the construction of additional golf courses and marinas. All identified by some respondents as key priorities.

More probable are such things as improvements to restrooms with flush toilets, campgrounds and trails for both horse people and hikers.

Then too, the state learned that a lot of people want to remain connected to the information super highway. That’s even if they’re supposedly on vacation; a tantalizing admission that people want to remain wired when they’re supposed to be relaxing.

Consequently, the parks division is trying to see how it can link its various park headquarters with wireless broadband services.

“Technology is an important part of many people’s lives and they want to bring it with them,” Backs said.

An admission that might startle many of us who want to leave it all behind when we go on vacation.

Even so, this effort to adjust its services in order to accommodate its customers demonstrates a savvy business culture on the part of the parks division.

So, too, is the recognition on the part of the state to understand that trails serve as a major attraction for people visiting parks. Fully 30 percent of the Web survey respondents said bridle trails should be a priority while 26 percent said hiking trails must go to the top of the list.

Meanwhile, the camper survey sampling showed that both fishing and hunting ranked high on the list and ahead of such things as hiking, boating, golf and wildlife watching.

“You people really do enjoy the simple things in life and the survey shows they want a place where they can fish, or have access to trails and use programs that are being offered. That latter one has always been a hallmark of ours,” Backs said.

An offshoot of the survey work suggests that people might even want the state parks to adopt a “user card” similar to what many big box retail stores, grocery, and gasoline chain offer. By using this card, a regular park visitor might obtain discounts or other special promotional items, Backs said.

All of which comes down to working toward better communication with the public.

People really do want to know, and it appears the Division of Parks and Recreation also really wants to listen.

B Burdened by nets and invasives

Here are a few observations about the Ohio wildlife scene on a lazy summer’s day that is just about

In many respects, it is a good law. It’s certainly better than what was

OUTDOOR Outlook

few members of Congress themselves. Perhaps more at issue
How Ohio does it

• Where/When
• Why
• How
• Nuts & Bolts
How Ohio does it

• Where/When
• Why
• How
• Nuts & Bolts

Part of the Ohio State Parks Strategic Plan:

“Implement a pilot program to provide WiFi at select state park campgrounds by December 2006…”

and provide WiFi at all state park campground within five years.

Make WiFi a part of your strategic plan!
How Ohio does it

- Where/When
- Why
- How
- Nuts & Bolts

- Broad Support
- Competition
“WiFi is an economical and creative way to attract customers. Best of all, it attracts customers to not only visit, but to stay a while, get comfortable, and explore the other services...available.”

Putting Free Public Wi-Fi Access into Action at Your Small or Medium Sized Public Library
Kimberly Bolan and Rob Cullin
http://www.webjunction.org/do/DisplayContent?id=11036
How Ohio does it

- Where/When
- Why
- How
- Nuts & Bolts

- Met with ODNR’s IT team
  - Timeline
  - Marketing
How Ohio does it

- Where/When
- Why
- How
- Nuts & Bolts

Form a team or committee!

- Timeline
- Marketing
How Ohio does it

- Where/When
- Why
- How
- Nuts & Bolts
  - Connectivity
  - Components
  - Maintenance
How Ohio does it

• Where/When
• Why
• How
• Nuts & Bolts

• Connectivity
  • Components
  • Maintenance
How Ohio does it

- Where/When
- Why
- How
- Nuts & Bolts

• Commercial Broadband (DSL/Cable/Fiber Optic)
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dial Up</th>
<th>DSL</th>
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<th>Fiber/Other</th>
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How Ohio does it

- Where/When
- Why
- How
- Nuts & Bolts

- Commercial Broadband (DSL/Cable/Fiber Optic)

Between $40 and $100 per month
How Ohio does it

- Where/When
- Why
- How
- Nuts & Bolts

No broadband = No WiFi!
How Ohio does it

• Where/When
• Why
• How
• **Nuts & Bolts**
  • Connectivity
  • **Components**
  • Maintenance
Proviso: I am not a network administrator.
How Ohio does (NOT)

- Where/When
- Why
- How
- Nuts & Bolts

Linksys
<$60
How Ohio does it

• Where/When
• Why
• How
• Nuts & Bolts

Cisco Aironet 1300 series
<$800
How Ohio does it

• Where/When
• Why
• How
• Nuts & Bolts

Outdoor omnidirectional antenna
<$200
How Ohio does it

- Where/When
- Why
- How
- Nuts & Bolts

Lightning protection
< $200
How Ohio does it

• Where/When
• Why
• How

• Nuts & Bolts $1,500

Cost for basic components:
How Ohio does it

• Where/When
• Why
• How

• Nuts & Bolts

Cost for basic components:

$1,500

Policy features will cost much more
How Ohio does it

- Where/When
- Why
- How

**Nuts & Bolts**

Policy features:

- Site Filtering
- Authentication
How Ohio does it

• Where/When
• Why
• How
• Nuts & Bolts

Policy features:

• Site Filtering
• Authentication
How Ohio does it

- Where/When
- Why
- How
- Nuts & Bolts

Policy features:

- Site Filtering
- Authentication
How Ohio does it

- **Where/When**
- **Why**
- **How**
- **Nuts & Bolts**

**Policy features:**

- **Site Filtering**
- **Authentication**
Welcome to
Rocky Fork State Park
9800 North Shore Drive
Hillsboro, OH 45133
Park Office (937) 393-4284
Camp Office (937) 393-2210

- WiFi at Ohio State Parks is free to any registered camper.
- A valid reservation number is required and may only be used on and between your dates of arrival and departure.
- Ohio State Parks cannot provide any computer equipment.
- Abuse of WiFi at Ohio State Parks will result in permanent removal from the network.

Please Login
Reservation ID: 

[Cancel] [Login]
Welcome to
Rocky Fork State Park
9800 North Shore Drive
Hillsboro, OH 45133
Park Office (937) 393-4284
Camp Office (937) 393-3210

- WiFi at Ohio State Parks is free to any registered camper.
- A valid reservation number is required and may only be used on and between your dates of arrival and departure.
- Ohio State Parks cannot provide any computer equipment.
- Abuse of WiFi at Ohio State Parks will result in permanent removal from the network.

Please Login
Reservation ID: 1165887

[Login] [Cancel]
Welcome to
Rocky Fork State Park
9800 North Shore Drive
Hillsboro, OH 45133
Park Office (937) 393-4284
Camp Office (937) 393-3210

Welcome to Ohio State Parks Wireless Internet. In a few seconds, you will be redirected to the web page you originally requested.
National Trends

Free or For-Fee?
National Trends

“The message in all of this, of course, is clear to campground and RV park operators: It is becoming increasingly difficult to charge very much for Wi-Fi service when other businesses - and even entire cities - are making the service available for free or at greatly reduced prices. As a result, while Wi-Fi has become an increasingly important amenity for many parks, there may not be as much over-the-counter cash in providing wireless Internet service as many campground operators and Wi-Fi vendors might have thought several years ago when this technology was first being introduced.

- Woodall’s Campground Management, February 2006.
National Trends

Ohio State Parks

Coverage

Department of Natural Resources
National Trends

Ohio State Parks

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Fax: +1-401-352-2305
Email: info@icoacorp.com

Technical Support  800-410-0460
TengoInternet, Inc.

Littlefield Building Center
106 E. 6th St
Suite 900
Austin, TX 78701

Sales: 512.322.3959
Fax: 512.233.1783
Questions/Answers/Discussion
WiFi:
Not Your Ordinary Hot Spot
Welcome to NetSys Direct where we bring you the best VDSL, HPNA, Ethernet Extender, and Fiber Optic Products direct from the manufacturer. Let us Network Your World; you'll be glad you did!