

## **FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION FREES UP AIRWAVES TO EASE WI-FI CONGESTION ACROSS THE COUNTRY**

### ***NEW RULES WILL INCREASE UTILITY OF 100 MHz OF SPECTRUM AVAILABLE FOR HIGH-CAPACITY, HIGH-SPEED WI-FI***

*Today, the Federal Communications Commission approved new rules that will make 100 MHz of spectrum in the 5 GHz band available for greater unlicensed use, offering more spectrum for Wi-Fi in homes and congested spaces like convention centers, parks, and airports and increasing the potential for more innovations. The new rules will allow for transmission speeds of up to 1 gigabit per second.*

**Spectrum is the invisible infrastructure used by wireless devices, such as smartphones and tablets, to provide communications services. Every day, Americans are becoming more dependent on wireless connectivity.**

- The share of people in the U.S. who own a smartphone increased from 35 percent in May 2011 to 58 percent in January. (Pew)
- The percentage of adults 18 years old and older who own a tablet computer jumped from 8 percent to 42 percent during the same period. (Pew)
- The amount of data downloaded from the Internet using a wireless device will surpass the amount of online information flowing through wired connections in 2016. (Cisco)
- By the end of 2014, the number of mobile-connected devices will exceed the number of people on earth. (Cisco)

**Unlicensed spectrum is spectrum that is open or shared, can be used by anyone, and is a platform for innovations like Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, and Near Field Communication.**

- Unlicensed spectrum enables Wi-Fi hotspots, and wireless devices such as headsets, cordless phones, security alarms, garage door openers, baby monitors, mobile payments, and vehicle radars, to name just a few.
- Unlicensed spectrum generated \$222 billion in value to the U.S. economy in 2013 and contributed \$6.7 billion to U.S. GDP. (WiFi Forward)
- Unlicensed devices play an important role in meeting public demand for wireless broadband service, particularly wireless local area networking and broadband access.

**Wireless carriers use unlicensed spectrum to off load mobile data traffic from licensed, cellular networks to fixed networks or unlicensed networks like Wi-Fi.**

- Globally, 45 percent of total mobile data traffic was offloaded onto a fixed network via Wi-Fi in 2013. (Cisco)
- The amount of Internet traffic offloaded from smartphones will be more than half – 51 percent – by 2018, and the amount of traffic offloaded from tablets will be 69 percent by 2018. (Cisco)
- By 2017, Wi-Fi devices will power a majority of all Internet traffic. (Cisco)

**Specifically, the new rules will greatly increase the utility of 100 MHz of unlicensed spectrum in the 5GHz band, enabling more high-capacity, high-speed Wi-Fi across the country by:**

- Increasing the utility of the 5GHz band already available for unlicensed use, while protecting incumbent users from harmful interference.
- Removing the indoor-only restriction on unlicensed use from 100 megahertz of spectrum in the 5 GHz band to provide more flexibility for Wi-Fi and to take greater advantage of the latest Wi-Fi standard known as 802.11ac to move more data at faster speeds and support deployment of outdoor Wi-Fi hot-spots.
- Modifying existing rules to require device manufactures to use secure software to prevent modifications that can cause harmful interference to radio services.

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