

Wi-Fi to carry up to 60% of mobile data traffic by 2019

UNITED KINGDOM: Juniper Research has released a report that indicates that Wi-Fi networks will carry almost 60% of smartphone and tablet data traffic by 2019, reaching over 115,000 PB (Petabytes) by 2019, compared to under 30,000 PB this year - representing almost a four-fold increase.



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The report, 'Mobile Data Offload & Onload: Wi-Fi, Small Cell & Network Strategies 2015-2019', found that mobile data offload, [data migration from a mobile network to a Wi-Fi network], offers several key benefits to industry stakeholders. Offload not only addresses the issue of patchy coverage, but also has the potential for the creation of new services, such as VoWi-Fi (Wi-Fi Calling), and would increase the usage of existing 3G/4G services.

However, the research cautioned that Wi-Fi offload brings challenges to operators of effective deployment and ROI (return on investment). "Operators need to deploy own Wi-Fi zones in problematic areas or partner with Wi-Fi hotspot operators and aggregators such as iPass and Boingo," added research author Nitin Bhas.

Additionally, operators are also converting residential customers to community hotspot providers, especially in the US. According to Wi-Fi service provider iPass, there were nearly 40 million community hotspots in 2014 and it expects this to more than double this year to nearly 90 million.

Global mobile data traffic highlights

- Global mobile data traffic generated from devices including smartphones, feature phones and tablets forecast to exceed 197,000 PB in 2019.
- Juniper estimates global smartphone data consumption to be nearly twice the amount of tablet traffic in 2015.
- Developing markets, such as the Indian subcontinent, are forecast to witness higher growth rates and increased market share of the total mobile data traffic over the next five years; with operators in India already witnessing close to 100% y-o-y growth in data usage.
- North America and West Europe will together account for over 50% of the global mobile data being offloaded in 2019.

The whitepaper, 'Wi-Fi Calling Operators' is available to download from the website together with further details of the new research and interactive dataset. For more information, go to www.juniperresearch.com.