



TECHNOLOGY BRIEF

IS FIXED WIRELESS BETTER THAN FIBER?

The need for connectivity speed, performance, and availability has never been greater and expectations have skyrocketed. The modern business is dependent upon always-on, high capacity connectivity to operate. Cloud platforms, connected devices, and rich media are now standard in today's business environment, and all are hungry for bandwidth and uninterrupted connectivity.

With the evolving digital landscape, many businesses are asking if their network technology is keeping pace with the new speed of doing business. Historically, internet networks were built using copper or fiber from the ground up. In the last two decades, fixed wireless has come on the scene for enterprise, bringing service from the roof top down. So how does fixed wireless compare to fiber? Let's have a look.

Fixed wireless access has distinct advantages over other networking technologies. One great advantage is the ease of installation. Trenching city streets is often required to bring fiber to a business in a metropolitan area. It can be incredibly cost prohibitive with installation wait times taking months and months. This isn't the case with fixed wireless service. Wireless technology allows for lower-cost network build-out, resulting in affordable installation fees and fast installation times. And, getting it faster, doesn't mean there is a compromise on network performance. In fact, the performance of point-to-point fixed wireless networks is often superior to fiber.

Not all fixed wireless is created equal. Fixed wireless access is a general label that applies to different wireless access solutions, incorporating different wireless technologies and network architectures. Both LTE and 5G are well known fixed wireless access solutions. However, networks based on these technologies use what is called a point-to-multipoint radio system, where network capacity at the base station is shared among multiple users. This approach is suitable for consumer, residential, and home-based businesses.

The other fixed wireless access option is point-to-point, which is an enterprise connectivity option. Unlike point-to-multipoint, when using a point-to-point solution, the full capacity of the base station is dedicated to one building or business location. The technology behind point-to-point solutions has evolved and susceptibility to environmental degradation has been reduced and eliminated for properly engineered links. Leading fixed wireless providers include SLAs, offering four nine (e.g. 99.99%) reliability, a sure sign that they engineered a robust network using the latest technology that isn't impacted by weather. The possibility of losing connectivity due to terrestrial outages like fiber cuts and road construction is a risk factor with fiber, but doesn't apply to fixed wireless.

Today's enterprise-grade fixed wireless access systems can deliver multiple gigabits of capacity. So while there is little difference in the speed or bandwidth options a business can buy, there is a significant difference in the cost per megabit or gigabit charged. Fixed access wireless is often less expensive than traditional fiber connectivity. If a business depends on speed and reliability and wants the best value for the investment, fixed wireless access is the winning alternative to fiber.

Fixed wireless internet access has become quite popular as businesses are learning about its advantages. Business owners are appreciating the new alternative that meets their bandwidth needs, reliability expectations, and budget desires. More and more businesses of all sizes are moving to fixed wireless, directly replacing fiber optic connections, and reaping the rewards.

WiLine is a fixed wireless internet access provider and has been serving businesses since 2002. Whether you need a primary connection or are looking for a diverse path backup access solution, WiLine offers tailored connectivity solutions at unbeatable savings with superior reliability. Installation is quick and easy, support is available 24/7, and the ability to scale up as the business grows is only a phone call away.

CONNECTIVITY COMPARISON

	FIBER	FIXED WIRELESS FROM WILINE
Bandwidth	Up to 10 Gbps	Up to 10 Gbps
Symmetrical	Yes	Yes
Service Level Guarantee	Yes	Yes
Reliability	99.99%	99.99%
Install Time	Months & Costly	Days & Inexpensive
Value to Investment	Typically highest priced option	Lower cost than fiber

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