

Wireless in MSV: upgrade or downgrade?

By Mark McGuire
TECHNEWS WRITERS

Ever since my family got high-speed internet, I've had to deal with poor service, shoddy hardware, and deplorable connection quality. The problems only got worse when we started using wireless. It was a constant trial to position access points around the house, so that every room got good signal strength, and even then the connection was worse than a wired one. It got to the point where I convinced my father to put holes in the walls and purchase network cable, so I could run it through the walls and crawlspace of our home. Afterward, the few problems we had were because of our phone line.

These previous experiences with wireless were what caused me to be skeptical of the wireless upgrade to MSV. I was stunned when I got the email from my RA, explaining that only wireless internet would be available in MSV. For me, this is about as close to a deal-breaker as it can get. I would have seriously considered looking for an apartment, if that were a viable option. My fears were confirmed on move-in day, and since then things have only slightly improved. At the time of writing, I have lost connection to a voice chat server over twenty times. The longest I have stayed connected is ten minutes. The other users of the server have not lost connection at all. I have spent eighty dollars on network equipment, including external antennas, but the connection is only slightly better than an old wireless USB dongle I purchased 5 years ago.

OTS surveyed MSV over the last month, and when they came to my room, I was sure to express my dissatisfaction with the internet ever since the switch to wireless. I know that my friends in MSV did as well, but the ques-

tion remains: how will OTS solve this problem? I'm not a qualified network technician, even though I have taken courses on it, and I don't know the costs of the solutions that OTS has to consider, but I do believe that there is a most reasonable course of action. Bring back the wired internet.

I know the big thing about the switch to wireless was the upgrade in speed, but did we really see a significant increase? Previously dorm rooms in MSV were connected by 10Mbps (roughly 1 megabyte per second) lines. The average speed I experienced was over 250 kilobytes per second, and the maximum was one megabyte per second. The connection was reasonably stable, with a few outages because of hardware. After the upgrade, I've had average speeds of around 400 kilobytes per second with a very rare maximum of 1.6 megabytes per second. The connection quality, however, is laughable. I entirely lose connection tens of times a day, and even when I'm connected I get frequent slowdowns and packet loss.

So at the cost of reliability we have gained a small improvement in connection speed. A trade-off that could never be justified to any user. What can we do? Rewiring MSV with new cable would be costly and money has already been spent on the wireless upgrade. Why not just bring back wired in addition to the wireless? There's no need to replace the cables to the rooms, we already have wireless for speed. Why not just plug the rooms back into the network switches? That way latency-dependent applications can run without disconnecting, and users of iPads and laptops can still use the improved wireless. From my perspective, it seems to be a simple, cheap solution that everyone benefits from.

(Photo courtesy iitundergrad/flickr)



Vis-à-vis: Violate this!



By Vlada Gaisina
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According to the United Nations, one of every three women on the planet will be physically or sexually abused in her lifetime. (www.vday.org)

Every day, 1600 women and more than 10 000 newborns die from preventable complications during pregnancy and childbirth. Almost 99% of maternal and 90% of neonatal mortalities occur in the developing world. (WHO, www.who.int)

In 2005, 1,181 women in the United States were murdered by an intimate partner. That's an average of three women every day. Of all the women murdered in the U.S., about one-third were killed by an intimate partner. (Bureau of Justice Statistics, as reported by the National Organization for Women, www.now.org)

The list of similar statistics trails on, each more disturbing than the other. According to WHO, "the United Nations defines violence against women as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life." This includes not only domestic violence, but also sexual harassment and abuse by authority figures, trafficking, child marriages and sexual abuse in conflict situations.

We live in the 21st century. Think about that, and reread the statistics above. Did it feel any different?

Meanwhile, women in Afghanistan resort to self-immolation to escape virtually every form of abuse, a transgender woman in DC is arrested for being assaulted by an off-duty cop, and a Long Island DA said that the murders of four women, whose bodies were found in Suffolk County, were "a direct result of their business as prostitutes."

Volumes can be written on the inherently detrimental effect of violence, but even beyond that the point needs to be reinforced that domestic violence or violence against anyone because of their gender, race, sexuality, ethnicity or social status is truly despicable, abhorrent, and vile. Nothing less would do.

If there is any hope of ever curbing vio-

lent behavior against women and minorities, this approach needs to be taken in every classroom. Those who adopt this view at an early age not only will refrain from gender-based violence, they will be outraged by its instances elsewhere and be compelled to address it. I applaud the schools that already have a zero-tolerance policy for such behavior, but unfortunately we continue to see many examples of disastrous effects of intolerance – the Rutgers suicide being but one of them.

And when was the last time domestic violence got any coverage by the media? There has been hardly any, since the Rihanna and Chris Brown incident from 2009, yet it continues to happen daily. According to the National Institute of Justice (<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov>), 1.3 million women and 835 000 men are physically assaulted by an intimate partner in the United States annually. Of course, in this ADD culture of Twitter and instant updates nobody pays attention unless celebrities are involved.

Many websites provide further statistics, as well resources for the victims and how-to guides for the activists. See, for example, Stop Rape Now (UN Action against violence in conflict), United Nations Secretary-General's Report on Violence against Children (www.unicef.org), the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (www.svri.org), and WHO Multi-Country Study on Women's Health and Violence Against Women.

To make a more immediate impact right in the IIT community, come to a performance of the Vagina Monologues this weekend! The Monologues are performed as part of the V-Day campaign, originated by author and activist Eve Ensler (www.vday.org). Since its inception in 1998, the movement has continued to grow, spreading to 140 countries, with over 5,400 benefit events taking place in 2010. V-Day's mission is an organized response to violence against women and girls, with an oft-quoted slogan "Until the violence stops," signifying the intent to make the world an aggression-free place for women, however long it might take.

IIT's performances will be held on Saturday, February 12, at 6PM in the Pritzker Club and on Sunday, February 13, at 3PM. The admission fee is \$5 and 90% of the money raised will go directly to Porchlight Counseling, who provide support to college victims of sexual assault, as well as outreach and education programs to help prevent it. The other 10% goes to the V-Day campaign. Come enjoy some free snacks, cheer on the 13 women performers and give the violence a proverbial middle finger.

CMC Professional Development Seminars

Tuesday, February 8th – Researching Companies – 12:50 – 1:50pm

Wednesday, February 9th – Interviewing – 12:50 – 1:50pm

Wednesday, February, 9th - Communication – 3:00 – 4:00pm

Thursday, February 10th – Working a Career Fair – 12:50 – 1:50pm

Friday, February 11th – Resume Critique Sessions – 2:00 – 4:00pm

CAREER FAIR WEEK! (all seminars at 5pm)

February, 14th – Creating a Quality Resume

February, 15th – Interviewing

February, 16th – Researching Companies

February, 17th – 30 Second Pitch

February, 18th – Working a Career Fair

February, 21st – How to Ask/Answer Questions – Webcast and In person

February, 22nd – Image Management – Webcast and In person

You can RSVP at www.cmc.iit.edu