What is a wireless range extender?

by James Shelton

Article published on December 14th 2011 | Networks

A wireless range extender, or wireless repeater enhances the range of a WiFi network. It needs a pre-existing WiFi network. Using a repeater, the same SSID for the network is kept (installing a second access point would create another WiFi network). All this device does is retransmit the signals it gets from the main access point. In this method it can relay the signals to areas of a home or workplace that get little or no signal from the base router. This is all achieved wirelessly, with the device only requiring a power outlet and a decent location to work.

Usually, one wireless device has lots of modes â€“ wireless repeater is just one of them. These modes are often wireless access point, wireless bridge or wireless repeater. There are, however, a good number of great devices on the market that are committed repeaters. These are often very easy to set up (in comparison with a device with many modes that may require more in-depth set-up work). They are also usually much smaller than the multi-mode devices, and can be plugged straight into an electrical source (with no wires needed).

Are some devices in your home or workspace way too far away from your main access point to access the internet? You might use a wireless repeater to solve your dilemma. It is usual for there to be low WiFi access in a basement or on a patio in a household with one wireless router located in the office, for instance. This all varies with distances and wall thicknesses, of course â€“ sometimes the signal can have a hard time covering any more than one floor. In such a situation a wireless repeater provides a straightforward solution. The low-coverage area can be connected to the network by positioning a repeater somewhere in between the main router and the sector needing a signal boost.

Some key features you may want to keep in mind when searching for a wireless repeater are compatibility, range and ease of setup. The next level in high-speed wireless connection is Wireless-N. This technology has the range and capacity to support the high bandwidth usage of gaming systems and streaming high-definition video. Not all wireless-capable devices are Wireless-N compatible, however; especially older computers or wireless cards will need a repeater thatâ€™s Wireless-B or Wireless-G compatible. Thus itâ€™s good to obtain backwards-compatible repeater devices to cover all bases (most are, but just in case).

While shopping for a repeater, itâ€™s helpful to know how much of a boost is needed. If the signal just needs a small bump (in a situation where, for example, the signal reaches the area in question but is a little frail) this will not matter much, but for bigger boosts to the signal needed a higher-quality repeater with a high range is required. The most reliable way to gauge this tends to be reading user reviews to find out what other owners of the device have been able to accomplish with the repeater in question.

Finally, itâ€™s advisable to find a repeater with fairly simple configuration procedures if you can. Sometimes the documentation can be somewhat incomprehensible, and if youâ€™re not too technical minded it could end up in a real headache. Once more, this is a place where customer reviews are a valuable source of information; also sometimes searching online for help will get you a good comprehensive outline to first configure your wireless repeater if youâ€™re running into problems.

Article Source:
http://www.articleside.com/networks-articles/what-is-a-wireless-range-extender.htm - Article Side

James Shelton - About Author:
James Shelton is interested in wireless technology and newest developments in that field.

For plenty more information on wireless repeater devices and a bunch of reviews of popular ones currently on the market, visit a www.wirelessrepeaterhq.com.

Article Keywords:
wireless range extender, wireless repeater

You can find more free articles on Article Side. Sign up today and share your knowledge to the community! It is completely FREE!