

# Retail Wi-Fi

Offering open access Wi-Fi points in retail and other businesses has been common since the mid-2010s. Many have seen economic returns from offering free Wi-Fi, including longer loiter times by customers that have led to increased sales, and attracting return customers, especially for coffee shops, restaurants, and bookstores. It has also increased customer satisfaction in businesses that see longer wait times for customers, such as auto repair shops or dentist offices<sup>66</sup>.

However, in the latter half of the 2010s, more cellular service providers have improved their data plans, offering high limit or unlimited data. This has mitigated the effectiveness of free Wi-Fi, and many customers say they are less likely to connect to an available Wi-Fi service if they're still able to get good cellular coverage. Places of weak or zero cellular coverage are where businesses can still use free Wi-Fi as a draw<sup>67</sup>.

Nevertheless there are many business sites in Alberta that have deployed free Wi-Fi and improved internet access in their communities. A number of them are using telco-based solutions like Shaw Go Wi-Fi and TELUS Free Wi-Fi, thereby eliminating network management of the service.

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## References

<sup>66</sup>InCorp. [Should Your Business Offer Free Wi-Fi? \(incorp.com\)](#). Accessed 03 March 2021.

<sup>67</sup>Business 2 Community. [Is Wi-Fi Even Necessary for Modern Business? Here's What You Need to Know - Business 2 Community](#). Accessed 03 March 2021.