



**WI-FI IS BETTER THAN CHOCOLATE?
NATIONAL SURVEY OF ENTREPRENEURS SAYS YES**

Wireless Internet access better at keeping “Main Street” business patrons happier than freebies like candy, water or magazines

Wi-Fi attracts customers and enhances customer satisfaction

PHILADELPHIA, Pa., May 13, 2014 – A national survey of entrepreneurs and small business IT decision makers conducted by [Bredin Research](#) and sponsored by [Comcast Business](#) found that offering free Wi-Fi works better at keeping customers happy than common “waiting area” conveniences like candy, water or magazines. These “Main Street” businesses that offer Wi-Fi — coffee shops, bars, restaurants, retailers, doctor’s offices and others — are leveraging the service to attract new clientele, improve customer loyalty and raise their profile within the community.

Respondents who indicated that they do not currently offer Wi-Fi also understand the benefits of offering the service in their location, and overwhelmingly their intention is to offer it in the near future. Those that do not plan on offering it – predominantly those that have been in business for 20 or more years – cite concerns over tech support, employee distraction and cost.

“Main Street businesses and entrepreneurs of all types recognize that wireless Internet access is a must for their patrons, and that providing free Wi-Fi can give them a competitive edge,” said Bill Stemper, president, Comcast Business. “More and more, we are seeing that if a business provides Wi-Fi now to its employees for business purposes, extending access to its customers is a logical next step that is a way to keep them coming back in the future. Given the challenges that small businesses face in today’s uncertain economy, we are encouraged that technologies like Wi-Fi will help sustain growth.”

The key survey findings are:

- **Wi-Fi is better than candy.** Main Street business owners say Wi-Fi is equally or more effective at making patrons feel welcome than other amenities such as magazines (94%), community bulletin boards (91%), candy (90%) or water (86%).
- **Wi-Fi helps draw customers.** Nearly eight in 10 businesses offering Wi-Fi (79%) say it helps keep customers happy while they wait. 65% report it has encouraged repeat business, and 55% say it has brought in new customers.
- **Wi-Fi helps sales.** More than half (55%) of businesses providing Wi-Fi believe it has resulted in higher sales per customer visit.
- **Promoting Wi-Fi is key.** Those businesses that expected increased revenues in 2013 are more likely to promote the Wi-Fi they offer (64% vs. 38% of businesses that expected decreased revenues). In turn, customers are more likely to promote these businesses through their social media channels.
- **Non-users have concerns.** Fears of tech support (33%), employee distraction (33%) and costs (32%) are reasons cited for not offering Wi-Fi to patrons.
- **Non-users see advantages.** Many respondents recognize the benefits of offering Wi-Fi, including raising their company profile (41%) and keeping up with the competition (38%). Of those Main Street businesses that currently don’t offer Wi-Fi to patrons, 61% plan to offer it soon or would consider providing it.
- **Wi-Fi builds connections.** Nearly 20% of the business owners surveyed promote themselves as “community hubs,” such as a meeting place for church groups, sports clubs or other community groups.

- **Businesses with Wi-Fi expect growth.** 67% of businesses that offer Wi-Fi to their customers expect revenue growth. Of the businesses that don't offer Wi-Fi, only 50% expect growth.
- **Businesses with Wi-Fi boost productivity.** Separate from offering Wi-Fi to patrons, respondents' employees use Wi-Fi for business purposes such as accessing corporate resources (49%), tracking inventory (36%) and holding conferences with business partners and customers (35%). 93% of these businesses believe that Wi-Fi enhances productivity. Companies with growing revenue were more likely than non-growing companies to use Wi-Fi as a customer amenity.

The Small Business Wi-Fi Survey was conducted online among a representative sample of 602 principals and IT decision makers at companies with 1 to 100 employees in the United States between Dec. 18 and Dec. 31, 2013. The survey has a margin of error of +/-4 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence.

Find the SMB Wi-Fi survey on social media with #SMBWiFi.

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Bredin is a market research firm and consultancy which helps clients better understand and engage with small and mid-sized businesses (SMBs). Bredin provides market insight through original research, develops marketing strategy and executes acquisition and retention programs to help clients develop profitable, long-term relationships with SMBs. Learn more at www.bredin.com.

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