I'm interested in becoming a Personal Telco Wi-Fi Hot Spot…

We're pleased to say it's an easy and rewarding process.

PTP or The Personal Telco Project has been in existence for over three years. We are an Oregon 501c3 non-profit; we aim to provide free Internet access and education to all using the popular Wi-Fi wireless standard also called 802.11b/g.

Today we have many public hot spots in the Portland metro area. Access is always free, we don't track users or restrict where they go on the internet. There is no spam, nor to we inject annoying pop-up messages, it is truly a free Internet surfing experience.

For the last two years Portland has won the Intel-sponsored 'Best Places To Use Free Wi-Fi' award, and that has been mainly due to the efforts of PTP. We are a wholly unpaid volunteer group who give up their free time to build and maintain the network for the benefit of Portland residents and visitors.

We hold monthly meetings and wireless hacking nights to teach people how to build and run the equipment themselves. Our meetings are open to all and we encourage anyone with an interest to attend and learn. We have members ranging from novices to wireless professionals so don't worry if you currently have zero wireless knowledge, we'll aim to change that. And best of all, we don't bite!

What advantage is there in being a free PTP node?

1. You become part of an expanding network that has proven itself time and time again to drive traffic 'customers' to your location. Our popular node listing located on our main we site http://www.personaltelco.net is the local de-facto guide to free Wi-Fi access in Portland.
2. Being part of the expanding PTP network helps your business, helps the local community and helps keep the providers of costly Internet access in check.
3. We get many opportunities to direct the media to our locations for interviews and it has proven to be beneficial to the businesses.
4. And lets not forget that this technology is cool and sharing a little free Internet with friends, neighbors and customers is bound to generate good Portland karma!

What is involved and what is the cost of becoming a PTP node?

Let us assume you own a small restaurant or café, in which case the requirements are very simple as only a single Access Point is required.

Here are the steps:

A. Contact PTP via Email at info@personaltelco.net informing us that you are interested in becoming a node. Please provide us your full name, location, type of business and whether you have existing Internet bandwidth at the location in question.

B. A PTP Area Captain will respond and make initial contact. Please be patient as we have day jobs, families and existing PTP commitments.

C. If you don't already have broadband Internet, then that is step one as it can take a while to get your service up and running. You must order DSL together with a rented DSL modem from a Wi-Fi friendly ISP (Internet Service Provide) as most ISP's specifically forbid the open sharing of your circuit in their published AUP (Acceptable Usage Policy).

   PTP recommends three local DSL vendors who support PTP and work very well with us, they are:

   Easystreet Online Services
   http://www.easystreet.com
   503-646-8400

   Integra Telecom (you will need to order your phone service with them to get DSL)
   http://www.integratelecom.com
   503-453-8777

   Spiretch
   http://www.spiretech.com
   502-222-3086

   Next you need to purchase a Wi-Fi Access Point with a combined router. We have had very good success with the affordable models from Netgear.

We specifically recommend the Netgear model WGR614 which can be purchased from Fry's or online from the likes of Amazon for about $60 plus shipping.

We need some sturdy shelf space, large enough to hold a desktop PC case. We'll also need three free nearby power outlets to plug in the DSL modem, Wi-Fi Router and the Linux-based gateway computer we will donate to your node.

Once your DSL circuit is live and you have your Netgear WGR614 in hand, contact your PTP Captain and let him or her know you are ready to roll.

Please additionally Email your assigned Captain a logo of your business if you have one. We prefer .JPG format. We'll then incorporate that into the splash page.

As each new person locates your new Wi-Fi node and connects, when they open a web browser they'll see your logo, our PTP logo and will be asked to read and accept our acceptable usage policy by hitting the accept button. Our AUP works to protect you and us by requiring that folk play nice on the Internet and don't spam or Email objectionable material using a PTP node.

We will arrange an installation time, typically after work. Our install volunteers often race directly from their day jobs to get you up and running, so a steady supply of free coffee and snacks is always much appreciated.

We'll configure the equipment, put PTP stickers on the door, add your node to our popular node listing and announce the new location to our many supporters online.

See, it really is that easy!

Cheers Nigel
Nigel Ballard
PTP Director and Press Liaison.

Personal Telco, helping give the Internet back to the people, one Wi-Fi node at a time