



PRODUCT REVIEW

Welcome to WIPS

Your new wireless workplace



reviewed by
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Imagine having all of your data on you, whenever and wherever you go. Most of us use some sort of wireless technology to keep us looped into the wired world. The problem is that even with all the advances in wireless systems and devices, some fatal flaws remain. Wi-Fi (W-LAN) can be used for high-speed Internet access, but Wi-Fi coverage is quite limited. In most cases, the user cannot expect to always remain within an access point.

The rest of the time, Wireless Wide Area Networks (W-WAN) can be used. Those of you who have tried to download a Web page, or

even check your e-mail, will agree that W-WAN is slow, and is not suited for large-scale data transfer. Even when high-speed data transfer is available, often the data to be transferred is limited to proprietary formats to run on branded devices.

What's lacking in the marketplace is the ability to access any type of data, seamlessly and wirelessly. The protocol should be invisible to the user, and the data should be able to transfer in its native format; regardless of platform or the operating system it runs on. And it should be fast. Actually, such a product is foreseeable in the near future. That product is WIPS.

Rosetta-Wireless

WIPS is a new technology currently under development from Rosetta Wireless. In a nutshell, WIPS will provide an "always on" connection to the data that is important to you. It won't matter if you're in the back room or in Boston. WIPS will ensure that your data is in sync and transferred securely. Rosetta-Wireless, a Chicago area-based company, is betting heavily that WIPS will be adopted en masse over current technologies such as Wi-Fi and GSM. WIPS does not attempt to replace high-speed Internet access at the airport or your local coffee shop; it's better than that. Simply put, with WIPS your enterprise data is wherever you are.

How It Works

The WIPS system is a two-part, hardware-plus-software solution. The components are an intelligent fixed-end server called the central server (CS) and a small, intelligent, portable device called the personal server (PS). The CS is where most of the work occurs. It's in a fixed location and (for the most part) is invisible to the end user. On the other hand, the PS is carried by the end user and acts as a bridge between the mobile device (laptop PDA, etc.) and the CS. The PS is an independent piece of hardware, not a network card or a PDA expansion device. The PS is small and typically could be carried in the glove box of a car or a briefcase – wherever your mobile office takes you.

The CS can work successfully behind the firewall with available

enterprise-based solutions, or it can stand alone outside of the firewall and "log-in" to the enterprise and access all other data repositories the user is authorized to utilize.

The CS continually polls the enterprise looking for changes and updates to the user files. Changes, deletions, and new documents are immediately forwarded to the PS, over both W-LAN and W-WAN connections. The data transfer and connection is automatic and it continues without user intervention. WIPS always keeps track of which wireless connections are available, and which one to use. As a result of this prepositioning information on the PS, users experience a simulated, always-on, connection with instant access. In reality it's a virtual connection; the user is not really connected to his/her network. The user never really knows this. As far as end users are concerned, they have a hot-wired connection into their network. That's the beauty of WIPS. Most of the network specifics are hidden, freeing the user from worrying about technical details.

As an added benefit, because WIPS is able to determine which wireless service is available, it then has the ability to determine which wireless connection should use W-LAN (expensive and fast) or W-WAN (cheap and slow). WIPS provides a nice balance of increased reliability, speed, and lower data transfer costs.

Who Needs WIPS?

Mobile workers who rely on large amounts of data need WIPS. Picture a doctor who in the course of the day travels between hospitals. WIPS would allow him or her to keep current patient records. It wouldn't matter that the patient's chart had just been updated, or that the patient just had a digital chest X ray. These files would automatically be updated on the doctor's laptop. No matter where he or she was, the files could be opened up in their native format (Word, Photoshop, etc.). WIPS works so seamlessly, our doctor may even forget that it's on.

WIPS would not add much value to mobile users who don't require large amounts of synced data. If your mobile experience is limited to checking e-mail, or you frequently visit a popular coffee shop (with W-LAN), your wireless needs are most likely being met and WIPS would not add much to your wireless experience, except for perhaps keeping files updated.

Final Thoughts

With the exception of pending patents covering the WIPS concept, algorithms, and basic operation, WIPS does not add many technology components. By using existing standards and protocols, WIPS makes existing technology work harder and more effectively for the mobile professional. Not surprisingly, Rosetta-Wireless is a bit tight lipped about WIPS insofar as product development and a rollout schedule. But expect WIPS to enter the marketplace within the next year. 📶

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