

# Hospitality WiFi Study

of Guests & Hoteliers



**Full  
Report**

# An Intimate Look at Hospitality Wi-Fi: A Study of Guests and Hoteliers Full Report

## Introduction

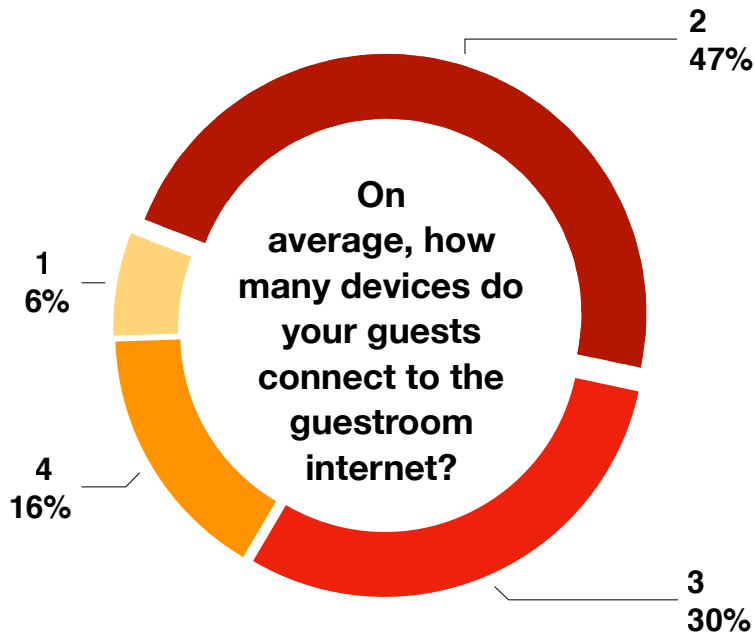
In the global hospitality industry, Wi-Fi services have become one of the most crucial amenities that hoteliers must make available to their guests during their stay. From fulfilling entertainment needs to interacting with services or staying in touch with family or work, today's hotel guests no longer view Wi-Fi as a mere convenience, but an amenity as necessary as running water. With an array of internet-based systems now commonly found in consumer homes and with more guests traveling with more devices than ever before, robust and reliable hotel Wi-Fi is considered to be a "make or break" expectation when booking a hotel. Yet critical to delivering a satisfying stay experience, is understanding how guest online behaviors and preferences have evolved in recent years and what that means for a hotel network's ability to deliver the anticipated results.

Online content streaming continues to experience unprecedented popularity among guests, with growing numbers seeking out these enhanced guestroom entertainment services each year. With the widespread emergence of IoT, however, content streaming is just one of a seemingly endless array of services vying for a hotel's bandwidth. Following up from a similar survey conducted in 2015, Hotel Internet Services has again sought out the direct feedback of hundreds of hoteliers and guests to understand the level of functionality that is currently demanded from today's hotel Wi-Fi services. What follows are the responses of more than 670 guests and 200 hoteliers, each providing critical insight into how properties must adapt in order to remain competitive. To preserve reputations and booking numbers, this survey further offers an in-depth analysis of how the demand for faster online speeds, enhanced security and the ability for complete service personalization is even greater than ever before.

# HOTELIERS

With an array of devices now commonly available within the consumer market, hoteliers have an increasing need to cater to guests attempting to connect more than one device during their stay. With just 6 percent of hotelier respondents indicating that their guests seek to connect only one device, it is evident that older Wi-Fi networks designed for one device per room in mind are no longer sufficient.

This 6 percent stands in stark contrast to the more than 90 percent of total hoteliers that frequently encounter guests with at least two devices or more. Of further note is that such numbers are up from a total of 67 percent of hoteliers that responded in the same manner during the 2015 survey. With a more than 30 percent increase in just four years, these results point to a guest demographic that is rapidly growing and that is expecting a reliable Wi-Fi experience for each of the multiple devices that they travel with.

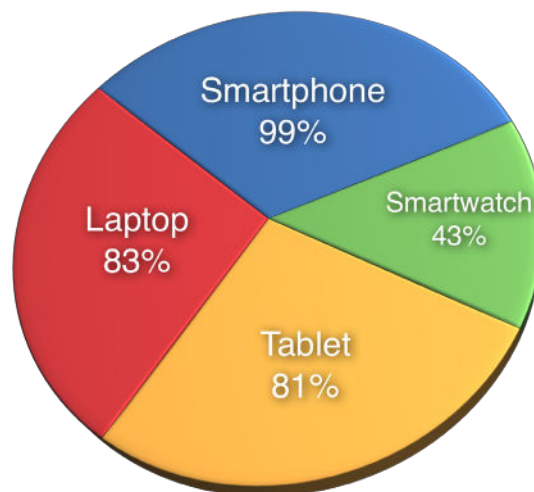


# HOTELIERS

Unsurprisingly, nearly 99 percent of hoteliers believe that their guests typically travel with their smartphones. Yet to put this in greater context, the figure is more than 20 percent higher than where it stood in 2015. Similarly, the presence of smartwatches has jumped to 17 percent in 2019, compared to merely 2 percent in 2015.

Answer Choices	Response %	Responses
Smartphone	99%	204
Smartwatch	43%	88
Tablet	81%	167
Laptop	83%	172
Other	2%	5

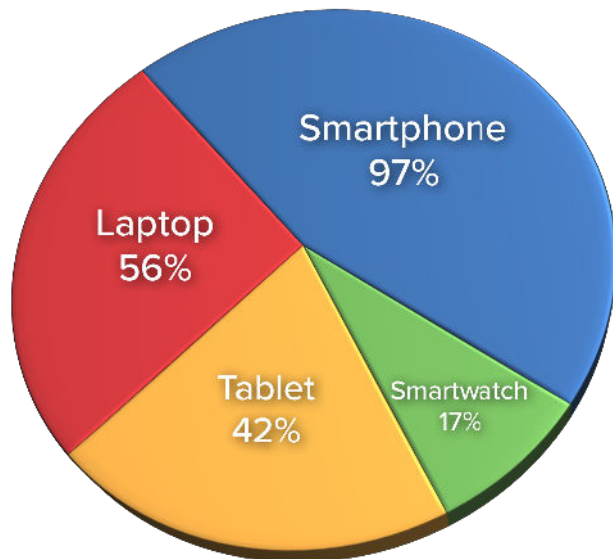
**Which devices do your guests normally carry with them when you travel?**



## GUESTS

### Which devices do you normally carry with you when you travel?

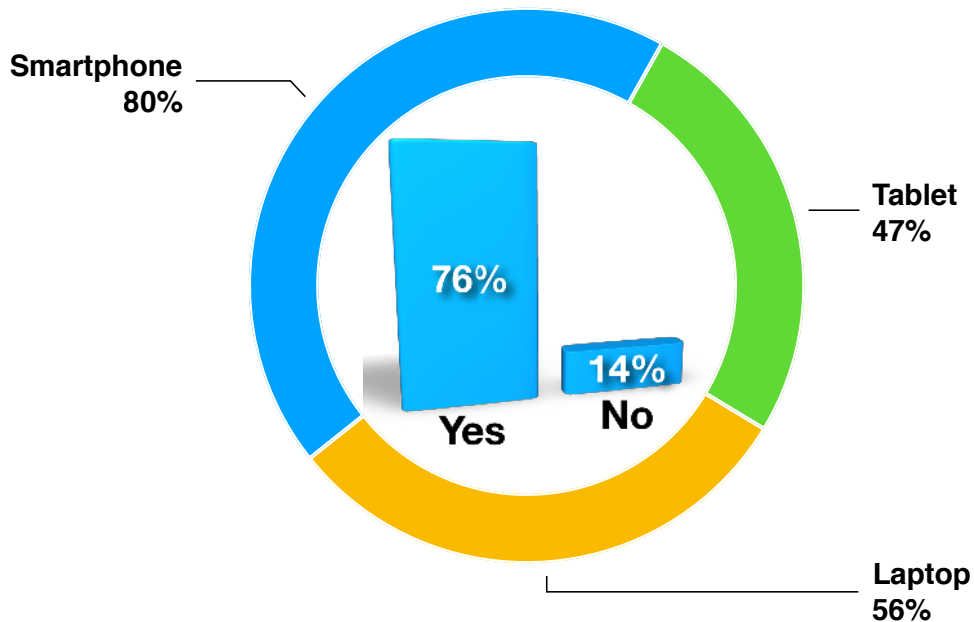
Confirming hotelier observations are the more than 95 percent of guest respondents that acknowledge traveling with their smartphones. Guests disclosing that they traveled with smartwatches likewise closely matched hotelier feedback, with a growth in adoption up to a rate of more than 16 percent.



Answer Choices	Response %	Responses
Smartphone	97%	673
Smartwatch	17%	116
Tablet	42%	294
Laptop	56%	390
Other	1%	10

### Do you connect multiple wireless devices to the guestroom internet? If so which ones?

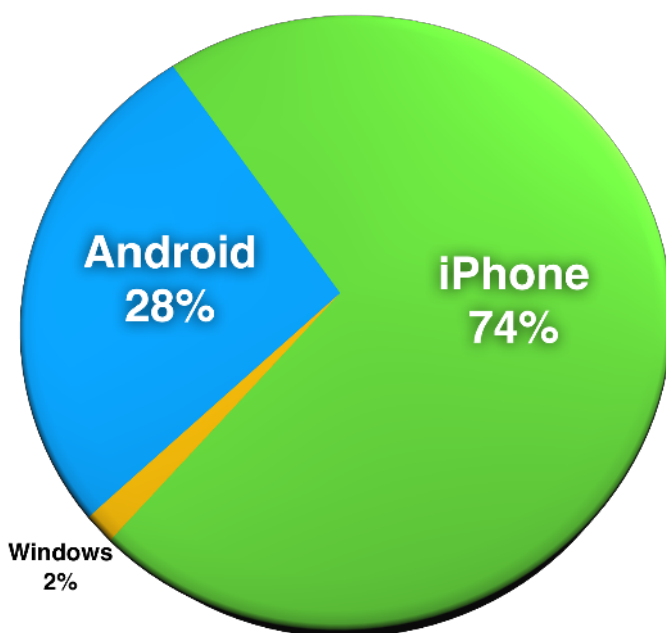
A critical aspect of the growing numbers of guests bringing multiple devices and that are present at a property during any given time, is the fact that more than three quarters of guests seek to connect more than one device to a hotel's Wi-Fi. This can place a significant strain on network resources, leading to a drop in performance and reliability if ill-equipped to handle such numbers.



# GUESTS

## What type of phone do you use?

Relevant to how hoteliers offer internet-based property services, amenities and apps, is analyzing the type of platforms most commonly in use by today's guests and ensuring compatibility. Whenever implementing a new service or feature, hoteliers should consider the fact that almost three quarters of guests currently use iPhones, demonstrating a need to prioritize iOS compatibility if needed.

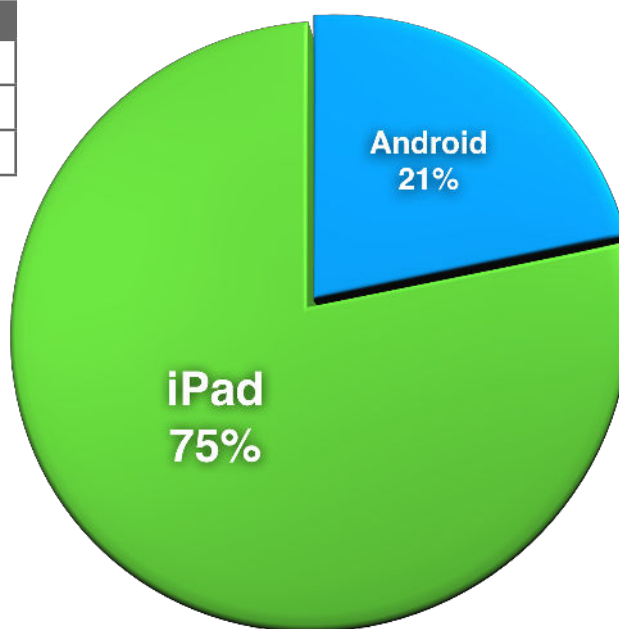


Answer Choices	Response %	Responses
Android	28%	196
iPhone	74%	510
Windows	2%	11
Blackberry	0%	0
Other	1%	8

## If you have a tablet what type do you use?

Answer Choices	Response %	Responses
Android	21%	208
iPad	75%	419
Other	8%	38

As with smartphones, Apple's iPad holds an impressive lead over guest ownership rates. This again demonstrates the priority that should be given to iOS compatibility if a factor in any new amenity implementation.

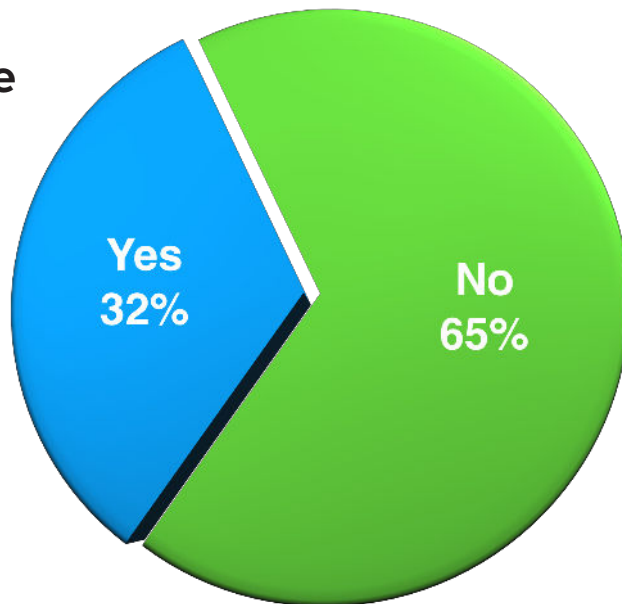


## GUESTS

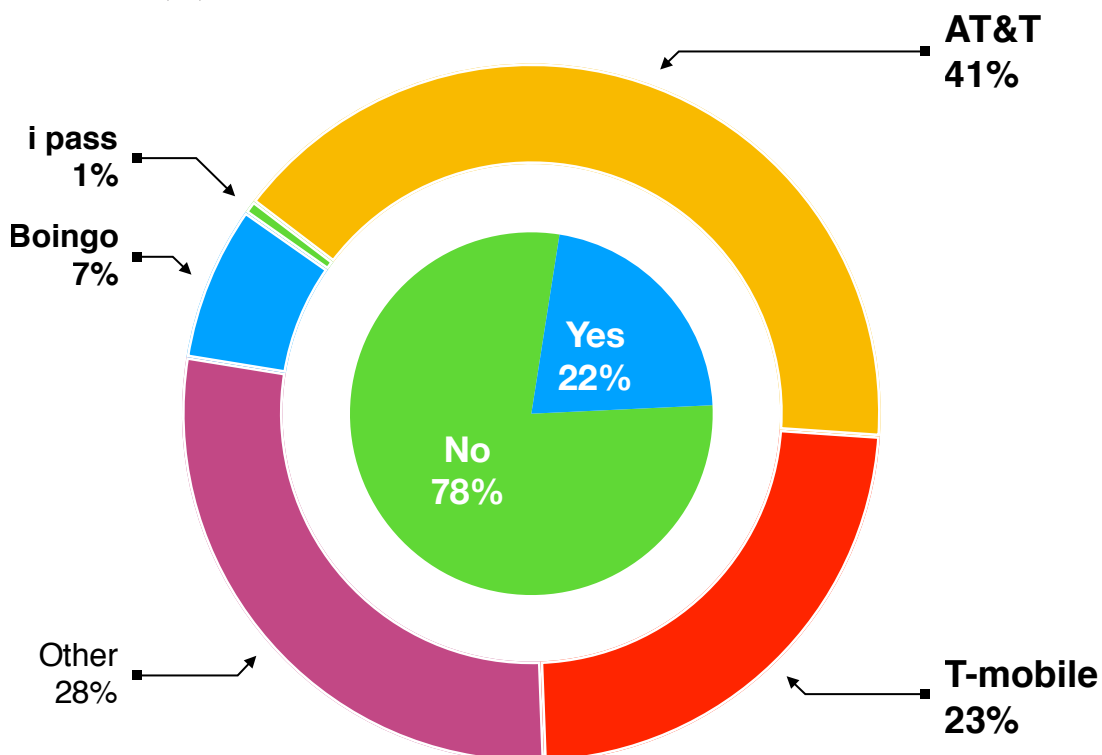
With 81 percent of guests indicating that they have experienced a poor Wi-Fi connection in the last 12 months,<sup>1</sup> a significant number of HIS guest survey respondents reveal that they travel with either a mobile hotspot or roaming Wi-Fi service. Hoteliers, however, should keep in mind that the vast majority of guests continue to rely on a hotel's network for their online needs.

### Do you travel with a Mobile Hotspot?

Answer Choices	Response %	Responses
Yes	32%	208
No	65%	419



### Do you currently use a roaming WIFI service? If so which one(s)?



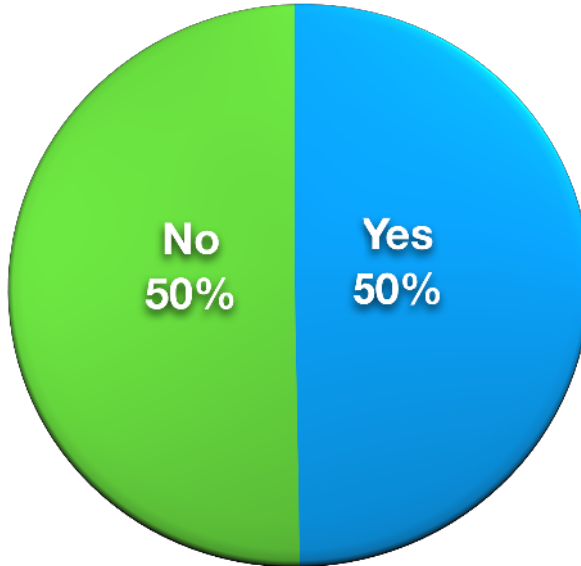
1. <https://www.thestreet.com/story/12793880/1/why-hotel-wifi-sucks-and-what-you-can-do-about-it.html>



# GUESTS

## When staying at a hotel, do you use the internet to watch movies and/or TV for things like Netflix, Hulu, etc.?

During 2015's survey of guests, just above 45 percent of respondents indicated that they seek to use a hotel's internet to stream services such as Netflix or Hulu. In 2019, that number now stands at an almost even 50 percent, and will undoubtedly continue to rise as more guests seek to access the personalized content that they are accustomed to when at home.

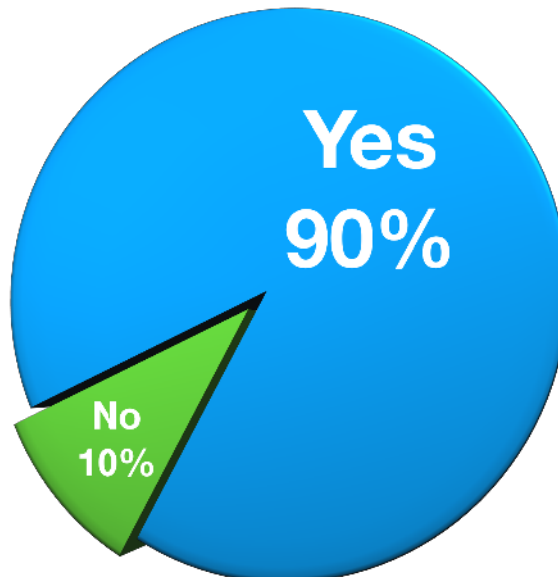


Answer Choices	Response %	Responses
Yes	49.71%	344
No	50.29%	348

# HOTELIERS

## Do your guests use the internet to watch movies and/or TV for things like Netflix, Hulu, etc.?

For their part, hotelier respondents overwhelmingly view the ability to access content streaming as being a popularly sought service by many of their guests. Together with the feedback from guest counterparts, such results reveal a growing trend towards a need to implement network infrastructure capable of simultaneously supporting online streaming activity for a considerable number of guests.

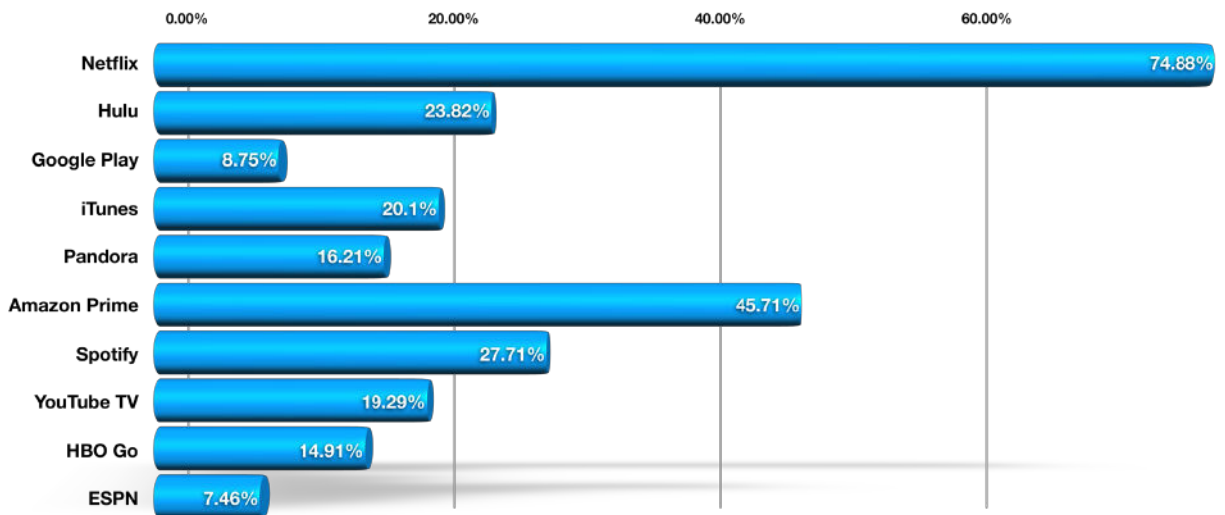


Answer Choices	Response %	Responses
Yes	89.81%	185
No	10.19%	21

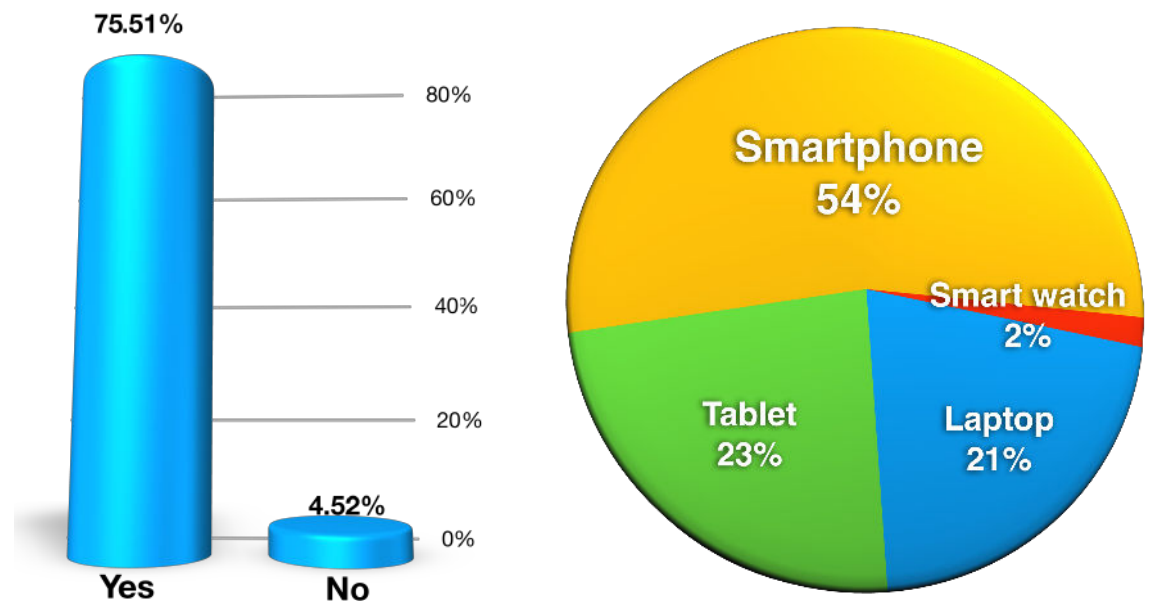
# GUESTS

As expected, Netflix is a top choice by a majority of guest respondents, yet other streaming platforms such as Hulu, Amazon Prime and Spotify also enjoy considerable usage. With a majority of guest respondents indicating that they access such content via smartphone and with 65 percent revealing that they would prefer the ability to cast such content to televisions as indicated on the following page, hoteliers should increasingly consider casting-platforms that are compatible with an array of applications. With those wanting to cast content increasing by more than 10 percent since 2015, hoteliers should also evaluate how the growing presence of casting platforms will affect existing network performance.

## Which streaming subscriptions do you use when traveling?



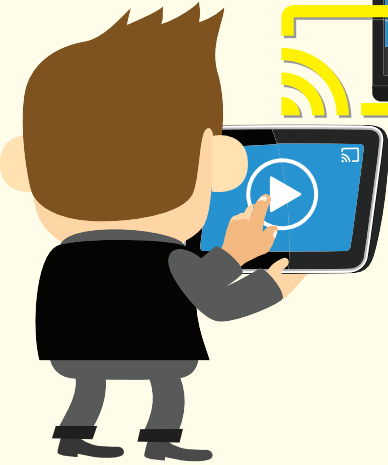
## Do you access these apps or streaming subscriptions on a personal device when traveling? If so, what kind of device?





# GUESTS

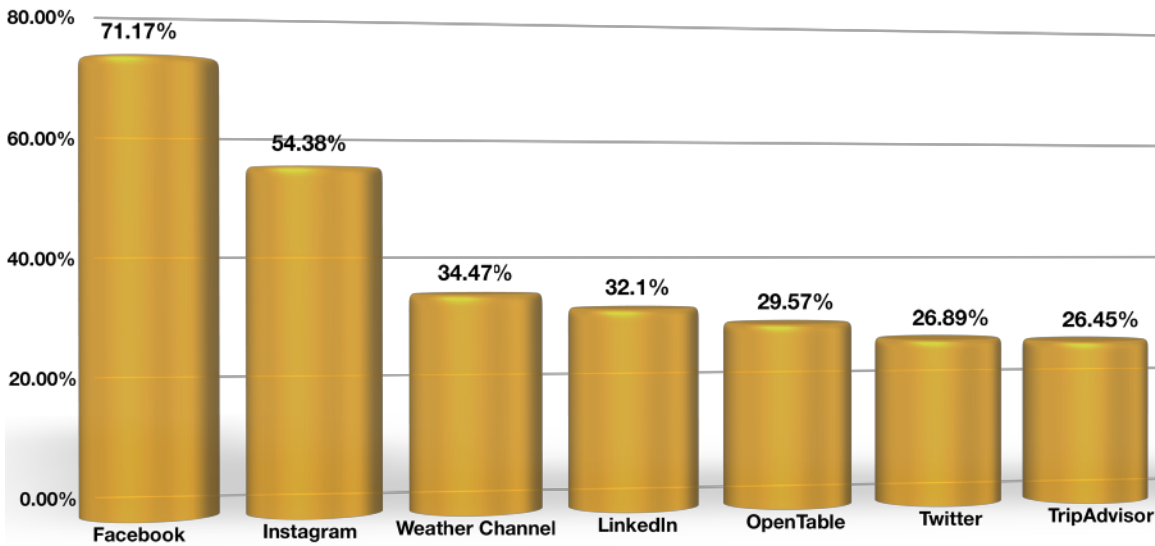
Would you prefer the ability to wirelessly cast these apps or streaming subscriptions onto a television?



If given the option, would you rather input streaming subscription login details into an app on the television or wirelessly cast content from your device?



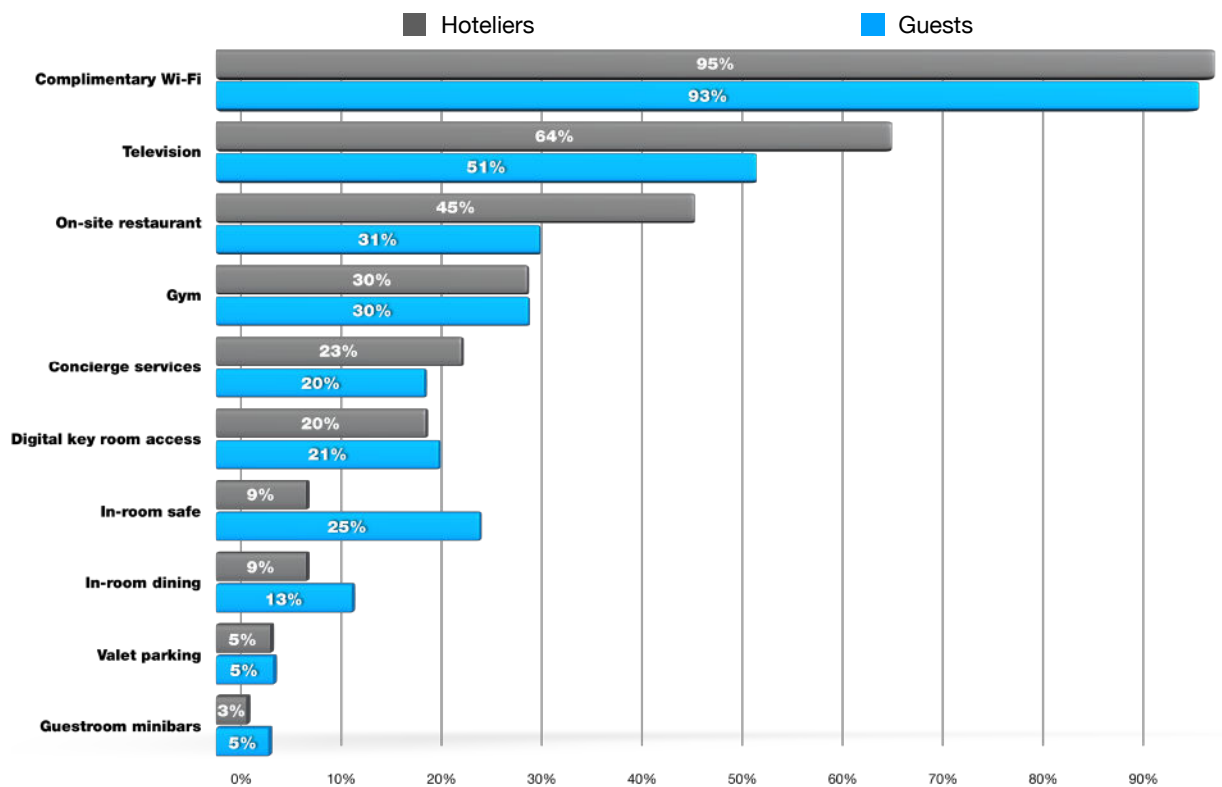
## Which apps do you access when traveling?



# GUESTS & HOTELIERS

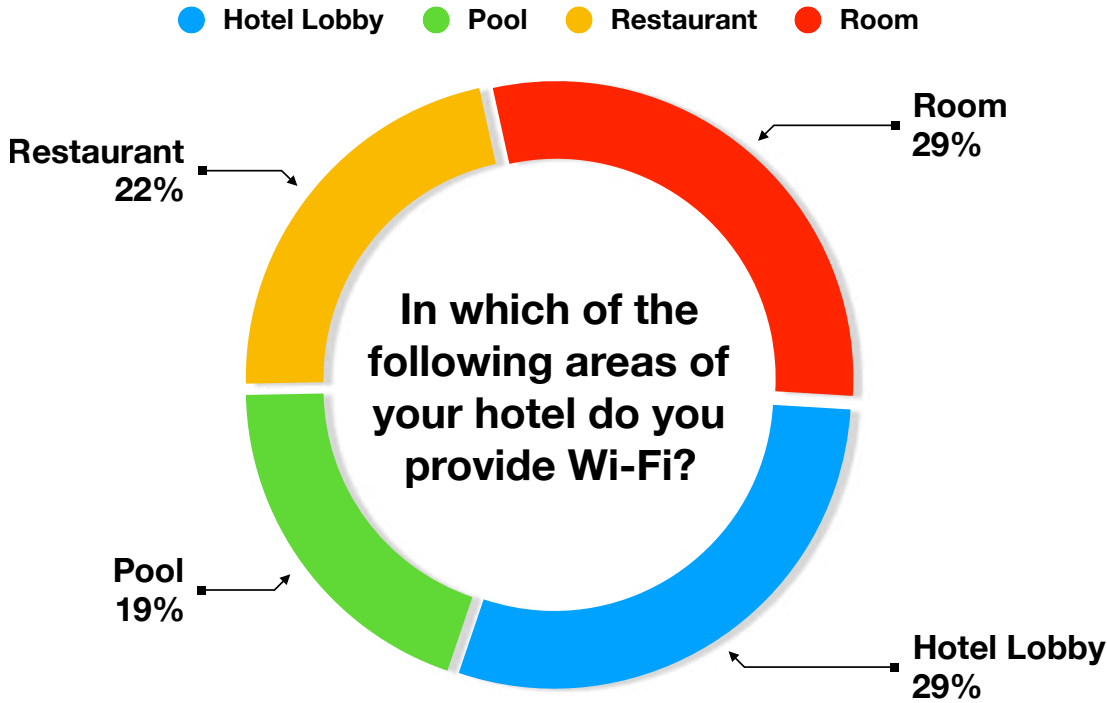
As is now recognized throughout the industry, offering complimentary Wi-Fi is a critical service that consistently ranks as the most sought-after hotel amenity. As demonstrated below, more than 90 percent of hotelier and guest survey respondents agree that complimentary Wi-Fi offerings are essential to guest satisfaction. With so many respondents selecting Wi-Fi as their top choice, hoteliers should also consider how such high usage numbers will affect their property's bandwidth levels.

## Top three hotel services or amenities that you think are most important to you (your guests)



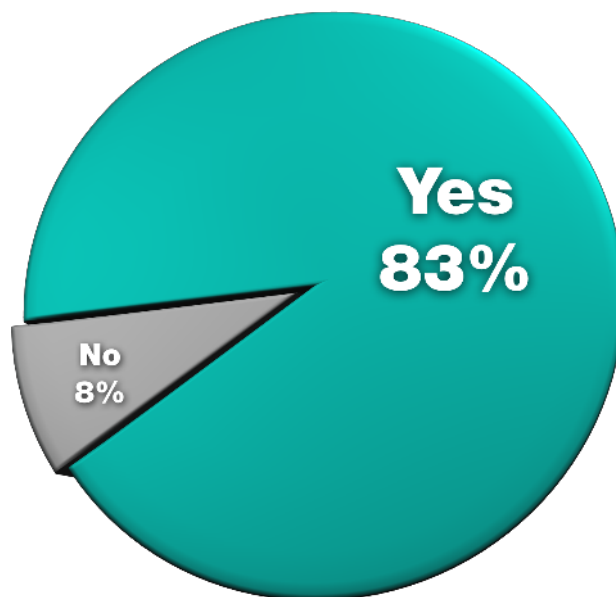
# HOTELIERS

While guestrooms are among the highest areas of Wi-Fi usage, they are not the only locations where guests expect to be able to access an internet connection. As demonstrated by 2019 hotelier survey respondents, other areas that commonly provide Wi-Fi services include lobbies, pool and restaurant areas. Properties should therefore not only consider their network’s ability to offer sufficient bandwidth, but also whether it is able to provide a consistently reliable signal throughout the premises.



## Do you provide free Wi-Fi?

Answer Choices	Response %	Responses
Yes	83%	171
No	8%	16
Other	9%	18



With such high numbers of hotelier respondents indicating that they currently provide complimentary Wi-Fi, guests increasingly will view free internet accessibility as an expected requirement for their loyalty and business.

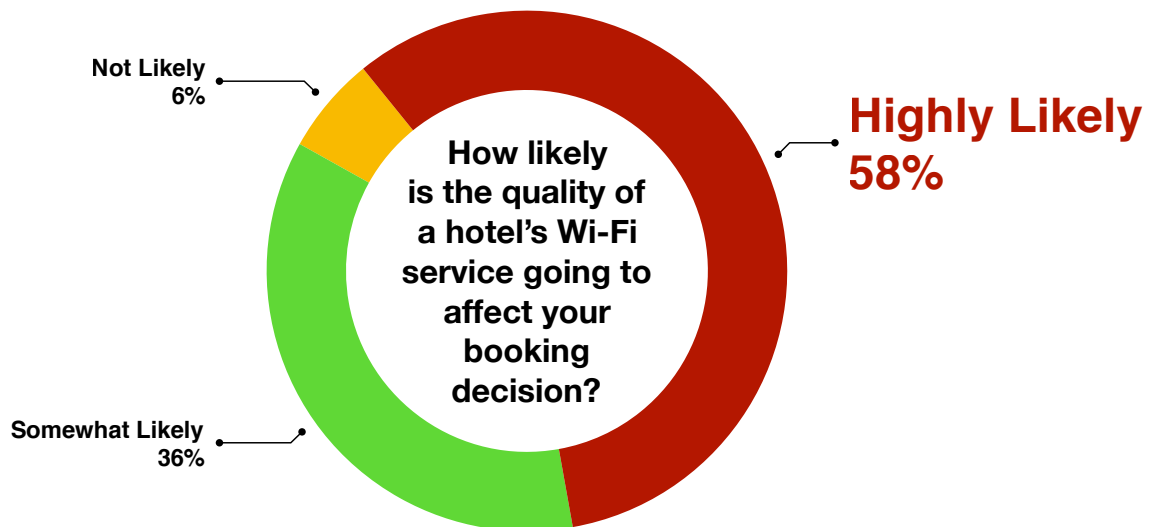
## GUESTS

Echoing the high numbers of hoteliers who understand the need to provide free Wi-Fi, are the 90 percent of guest respondents stating that accessing a hotel's Wi-Fi is very important, compared to only 1 percent who did not consider the amenity to be important. What should be of significant note to hoteliers, is that almost three quarters of quest respondents further indicate that Wi-Fi quality could play an influential role in their booking decision. Properties should therefore always be aware of their reputation on sites such as TripAdvisor regarding their ability to provide a seamless online connection.

### How important is the ability to access a hotel's Wi-Fi service during your stay?



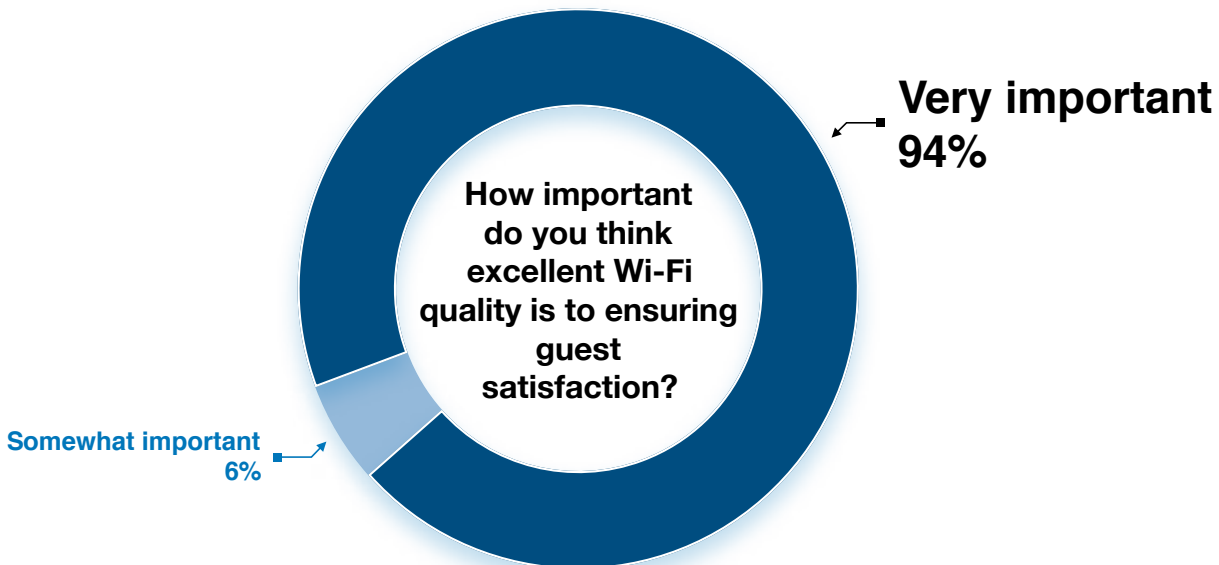
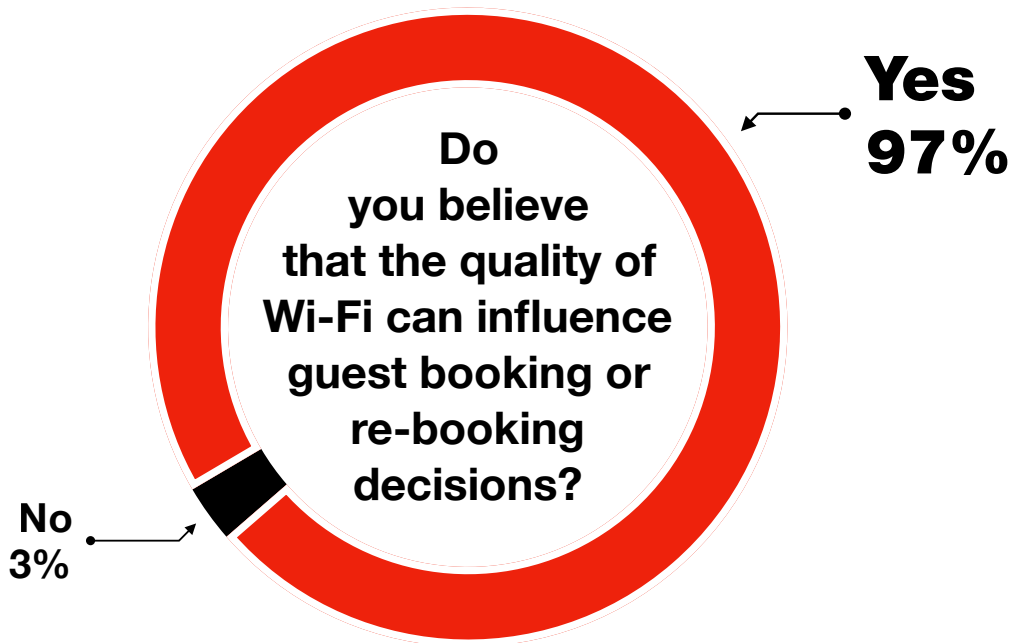
### How likely is the quality of a hotel's Wi-Fi service going to affect your booking decision?



# HOTELIERS

Hotelier respondents are virtually unanimous in their belief that the quality of guest Wi-Fi can play a leading factor in guest re-booking decisions. With large majorities of guests now traveling with at least one personal device, almost 95 of hoteliers likewise recognize the importance that high quality W-Fi can play on ensuring guest satisfaction.

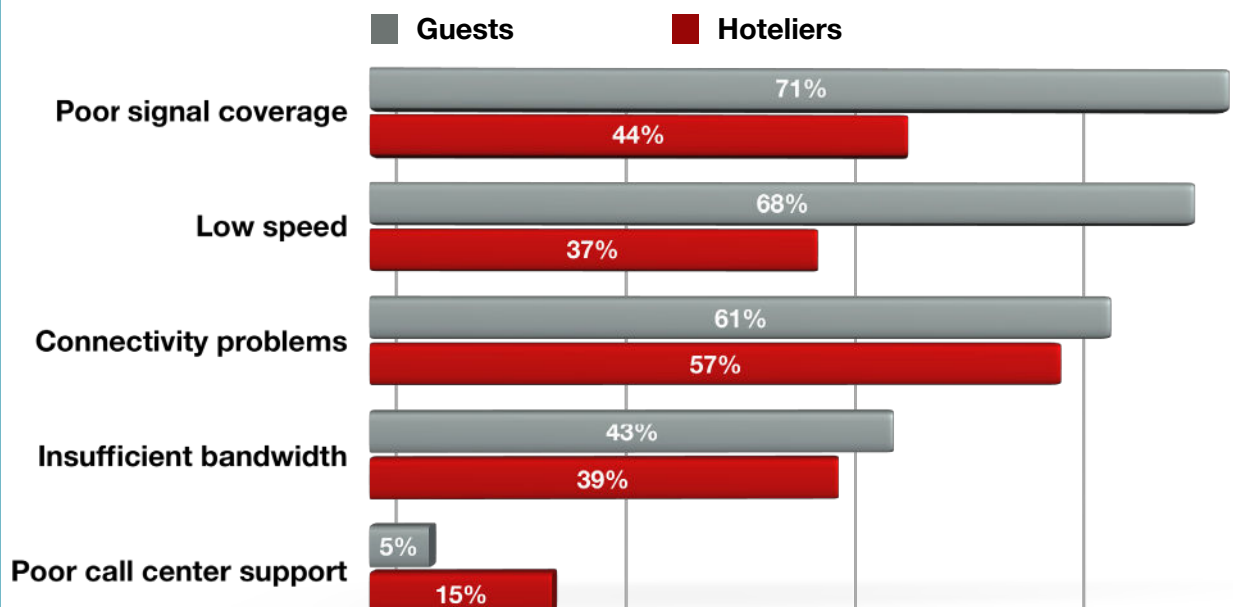
**Do you believe that the quality of Wi-Fi can influence guest booking or re-booking decisions?**



## GUESTS & HOTELIERS

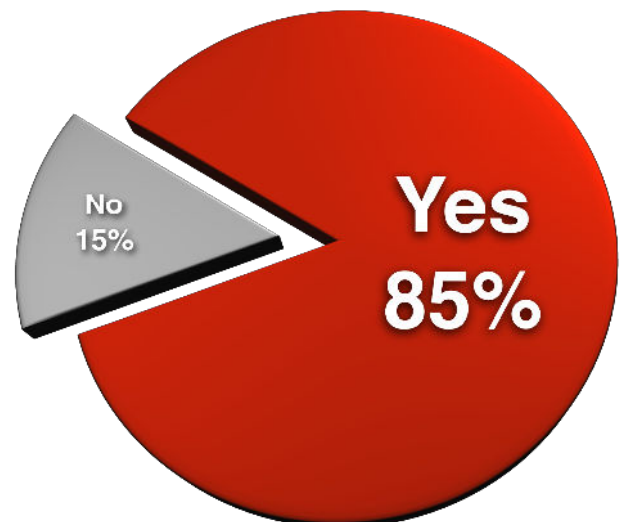
While an overwhelming 85 percent of guest respondents disclosed that Wi-Fi quality would affect their rebooking decision and despite hotelier feedback recognizing its importance, high numbers of guests continue to report an unsatisfactory experience. From poor signal coverage to low speed and connectivity issues, such responses are in fact up in almost every category by as much as 10 percent when compared to the 2015 survey results. This can possibly be attributed to newer devices and services requiring more from a hotel's Wi-Fi than older networks are capable of providing.

### What are the biggest problems regarding Wi-Fi that your guests encounter?



## GUESTS

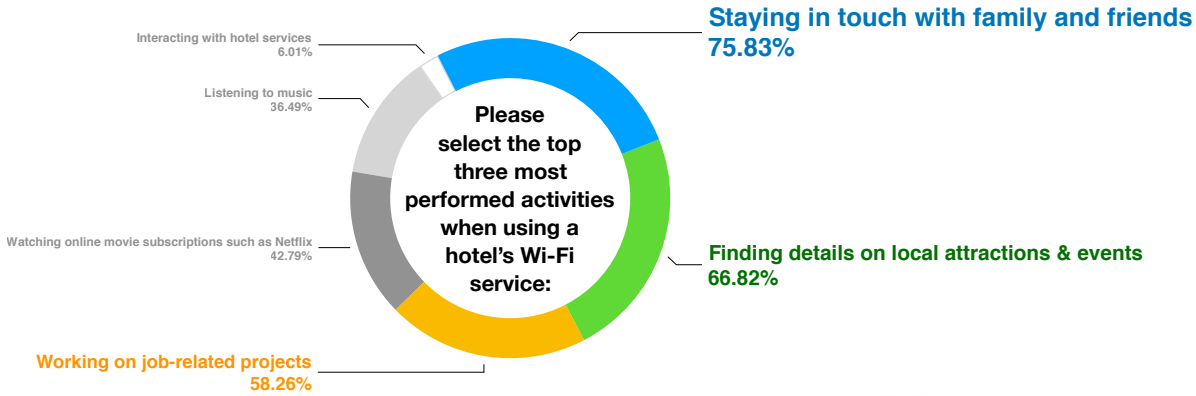
Would the quality of a hotel's Wi-Fi service affect your decision to rebook at a specific hotel location or hotel brand?



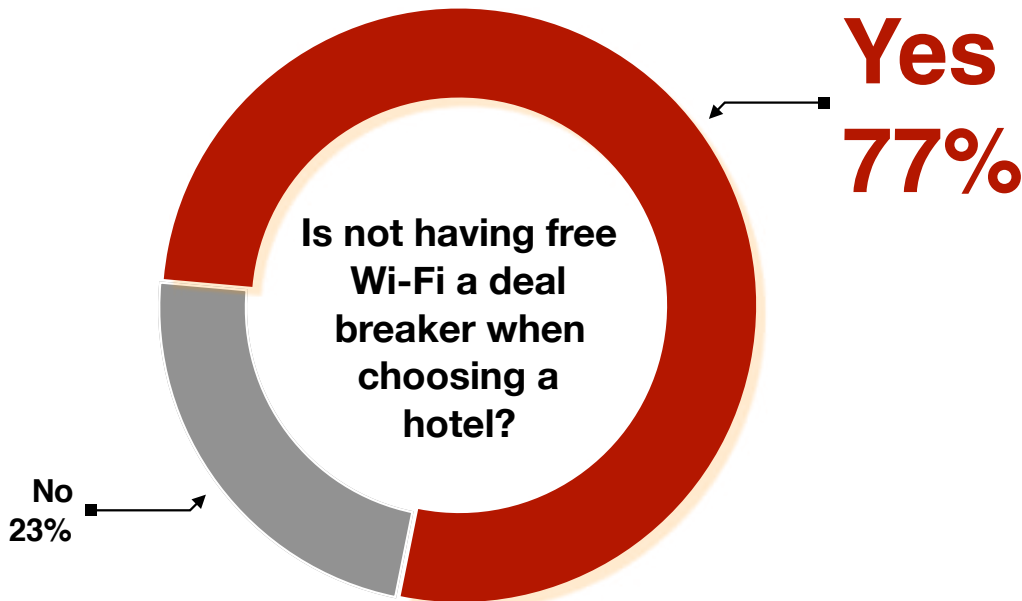
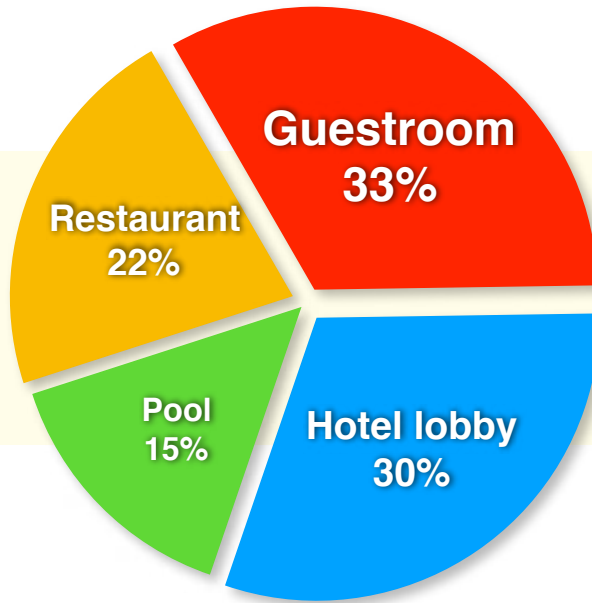


# GUESTS

Please select the top three most performed activities when using a hotel's Wi-Fi service:



When you check into your hotel, do you expect Wi-Fi in?



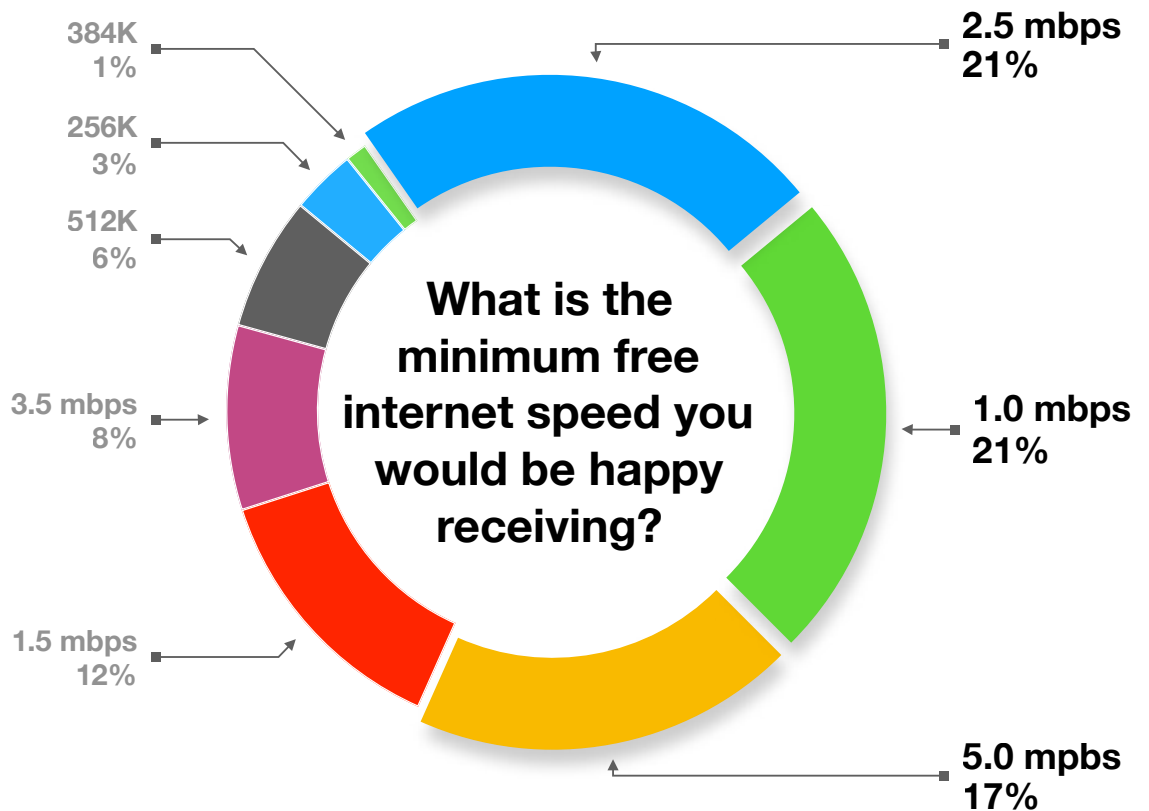
## GUESTS

While more than three quarters of guests view the availability of free Wi-Fi as deal-breaking when it comes to selecting a hotel, of further note is the fact that more than a quarter of guest respondents would additionally purchase faster speeds if made available. When comparing minimum acceptable free Wi-Fi speeds to 2015's survey results, it is also relevant to point out that increasing numbers of guests are opting for speeds of at least 1.0 mbps or above, with anything below that figure having experienced a decrease in acceptance.

**Would you purchase upgraded Wi-Fi speeds if the price was reasonable?**

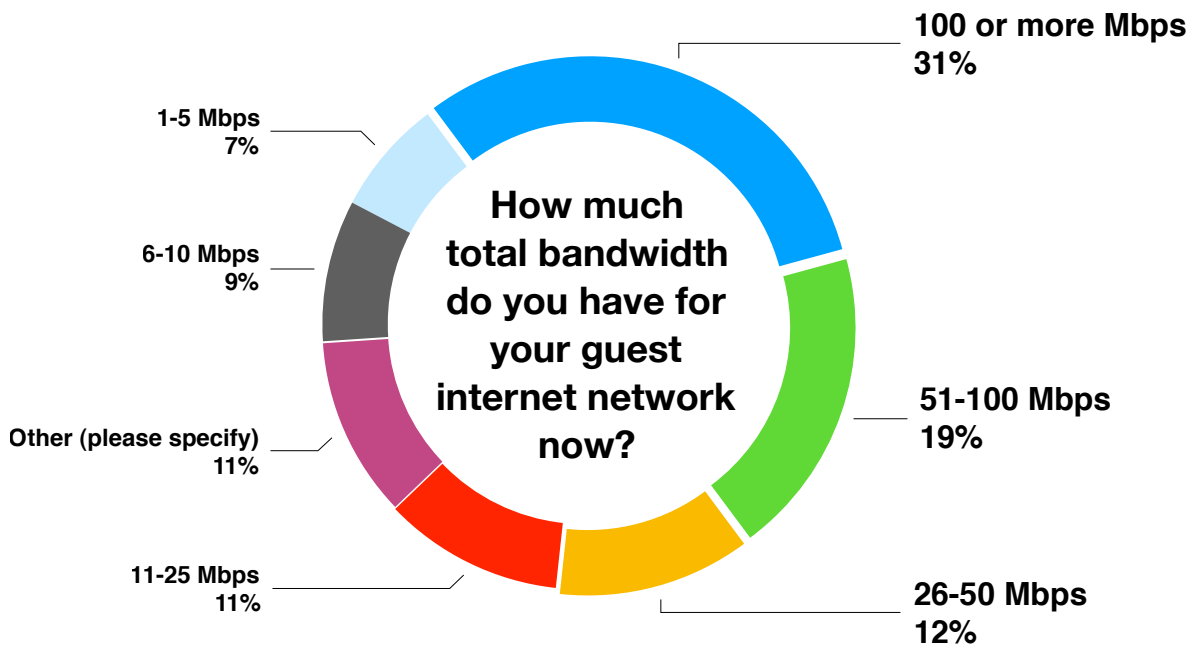
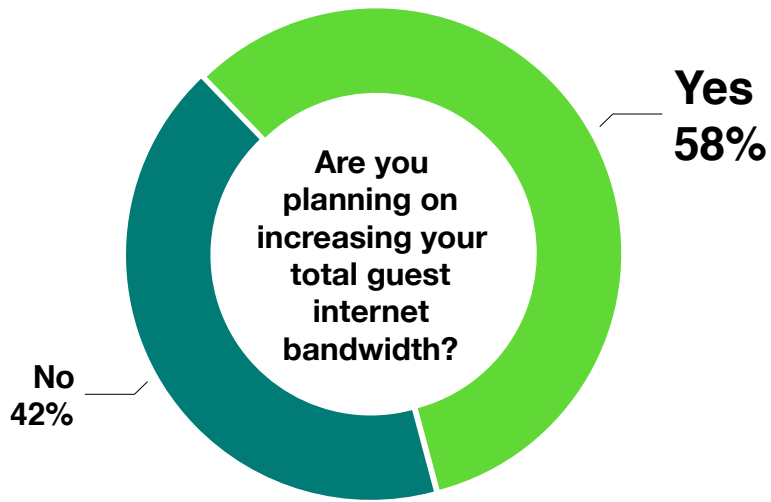
**YES 27%**

**NO 67%**

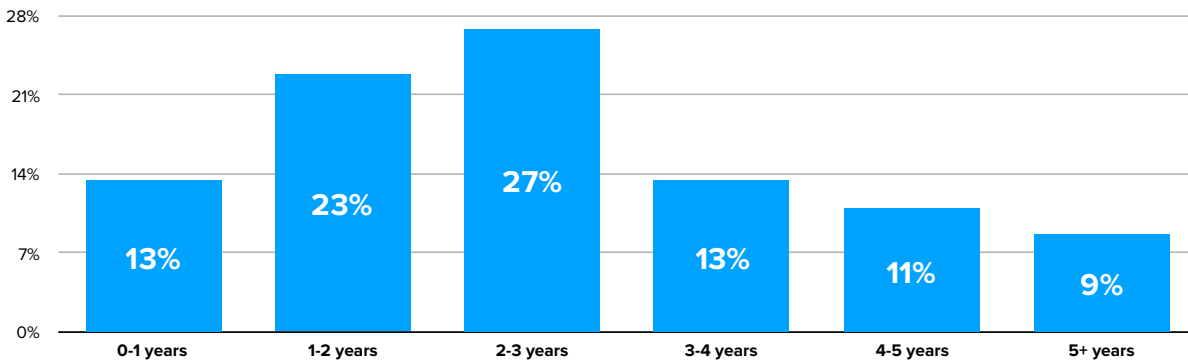


# HOTELIERS

58 percent of 2019 hotelier respondents disclosed that they plan to increase bandwidth levels, an almost 20 percent increase from 2015's results. Since 2015, more hoteliers are additionally opting to offer 100 or more mbps, at an increase of almost 10 percent. Such results again reflect the growing presence of more guest devices and online activities that require a greater share of network resources.



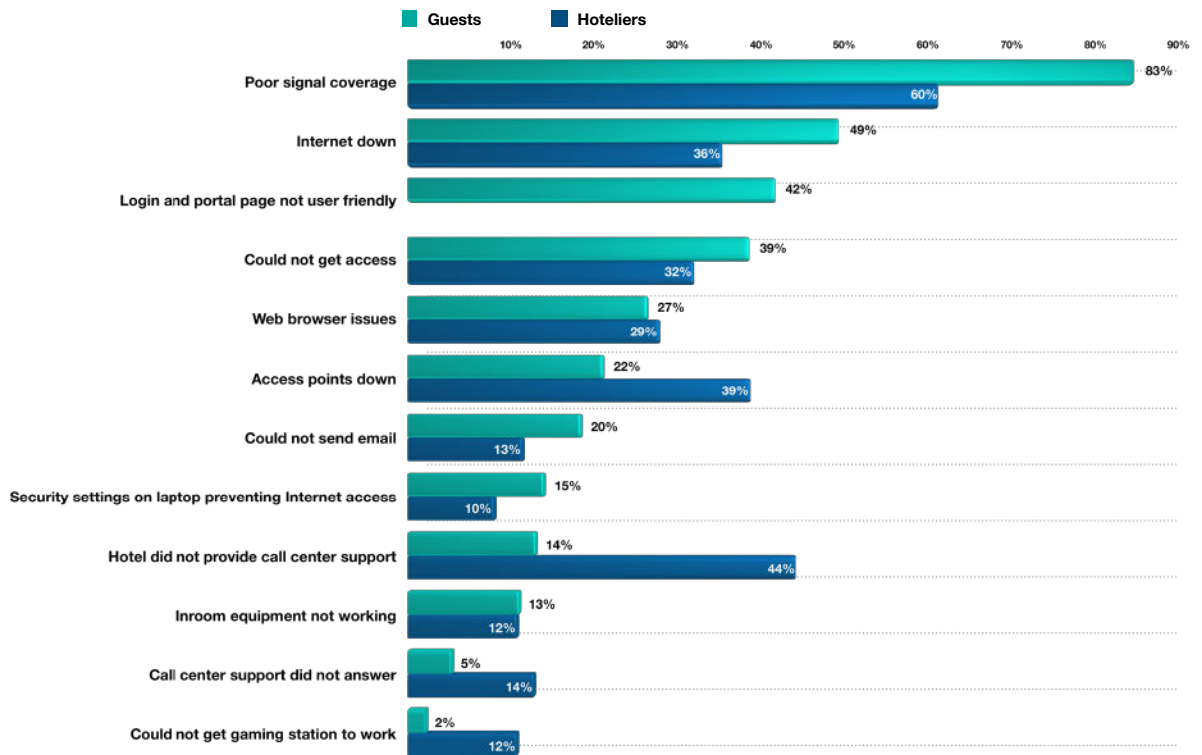
## How old is your current Wi-Fi network?



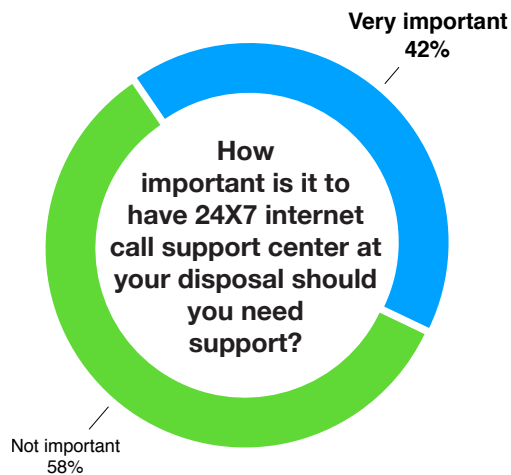
## GUESTS & HOTELIERS

As the array of devices available to guests continues to grow and more online features become available, partnering with a network provider capable of offering high quality support 24/7 becomes increasingly vital. This trend is demonstrated by the nearly three quarters of hotelier respondents that rate such services as 'very important.'

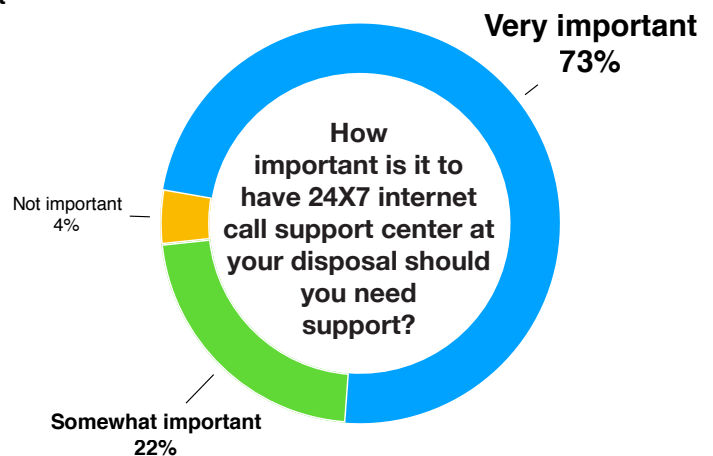
**What problems have you (your Guests) encountered in the past (whether the hotels system or your computer's problem) while trying to use the guest room internet system at the hotels you have stayed at?**



### GUESTS



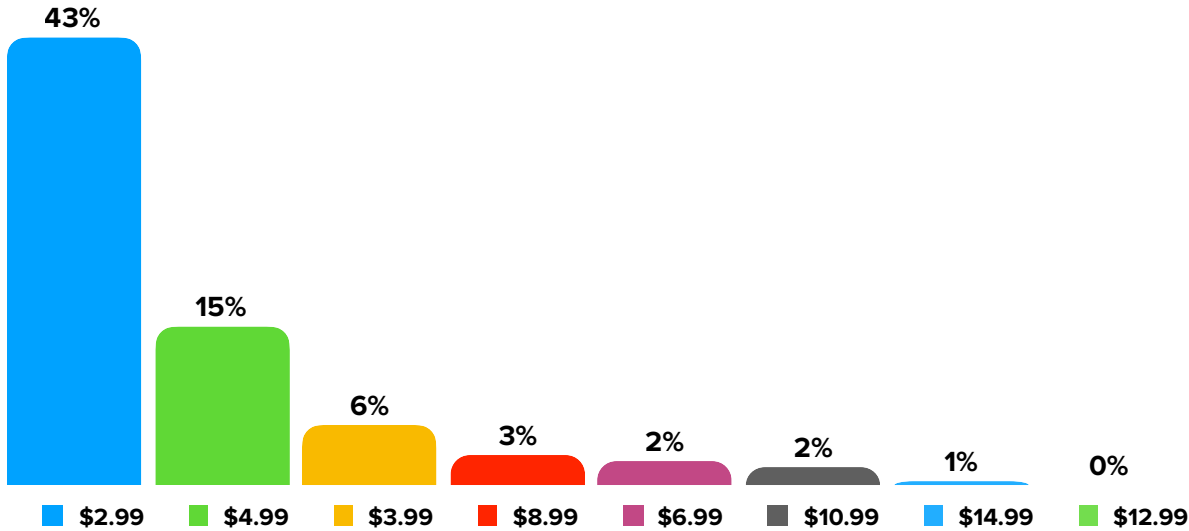
### HOTELIERS



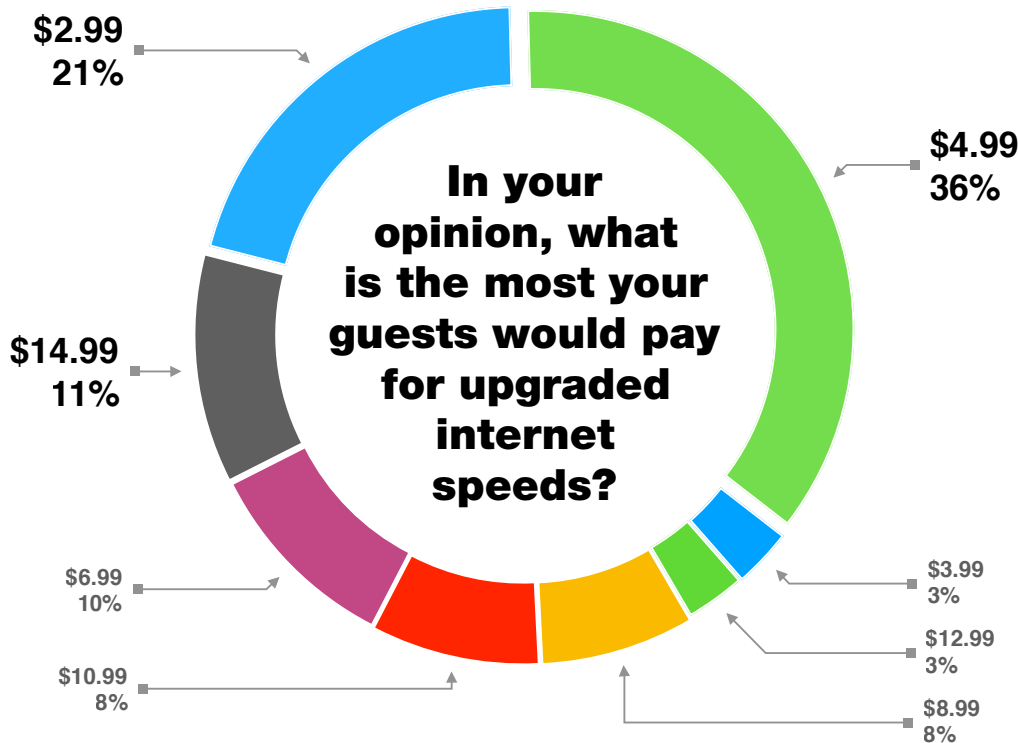
# GUESTS

With guests increasingly traveling with multiple high-powered devices, those willing to pay a higher fee in order to access faster speeds has increased since 2015. For example, guests willing to pay a maximum price of \$2.99 has risen by more than 10 percent.

## What is the most you would pay for upgraded internet speeds?

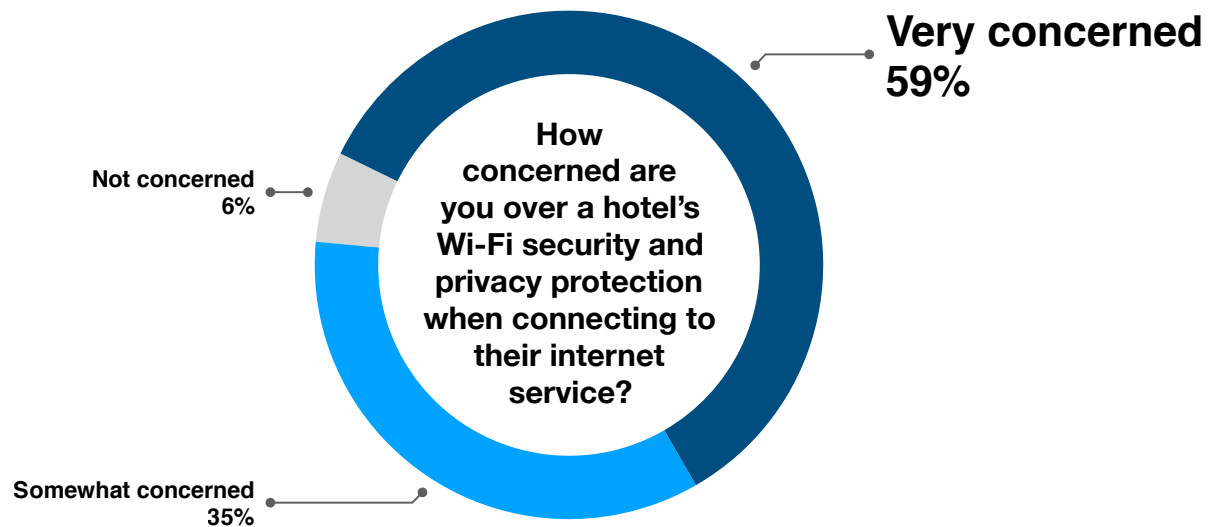


# HOTELIERS



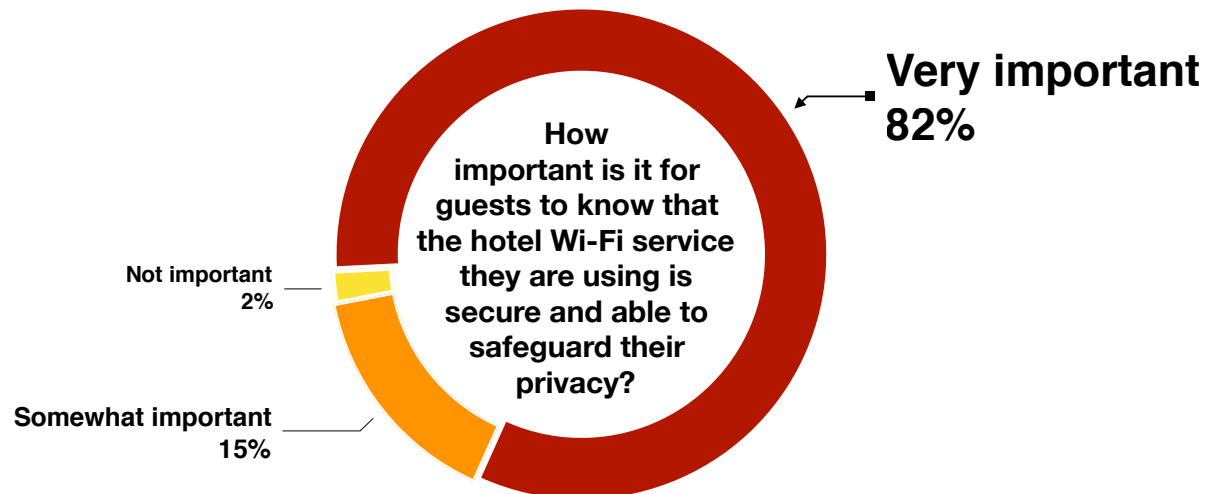
## GUESTS

With more personal and sensitive information accessible online than ever before, today's guests are understandably concerned over the security protocols in place at hotels to keep their data safe at all times. With a substantial majority of guests indicating that they are 'very concerned' over a property's ability to provide effective security and privacy measures, a network's ability to offer adequate data protection is as important as service quality when it comes to maintaining reservation numbers.



## HOTELIERS

With frequent reports of data theft occurring at properties around the world, a majority of hoteliers likewise understand the critical need for effective Wi-Fi network security, with 82 percent of survey respondents identifying such measures as being 'very important.'

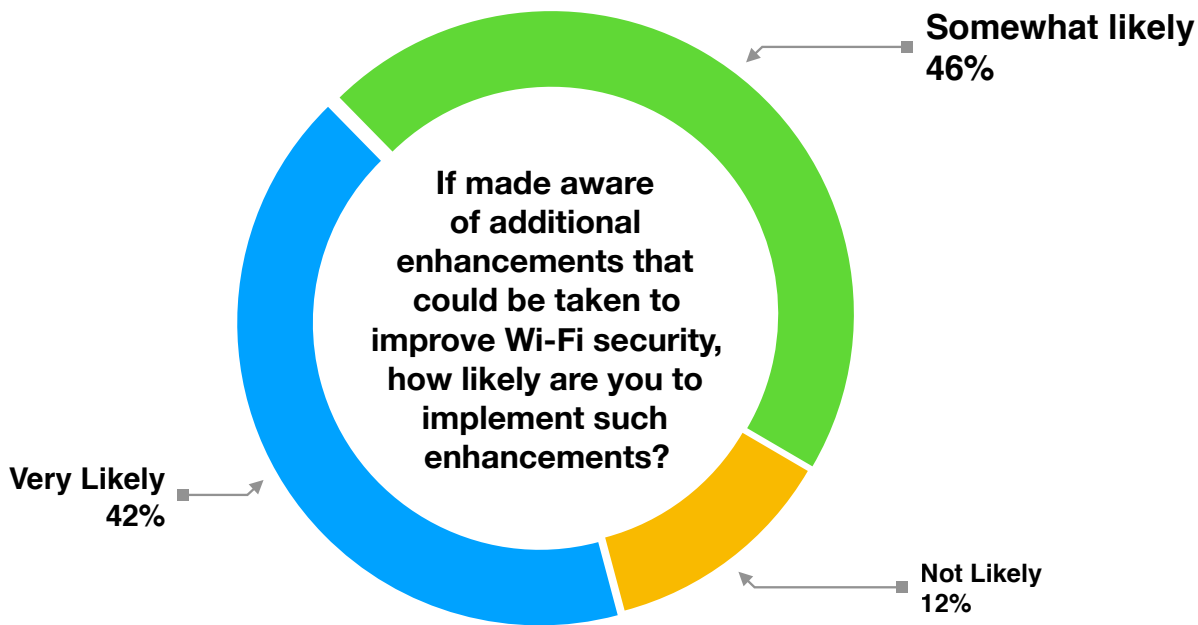
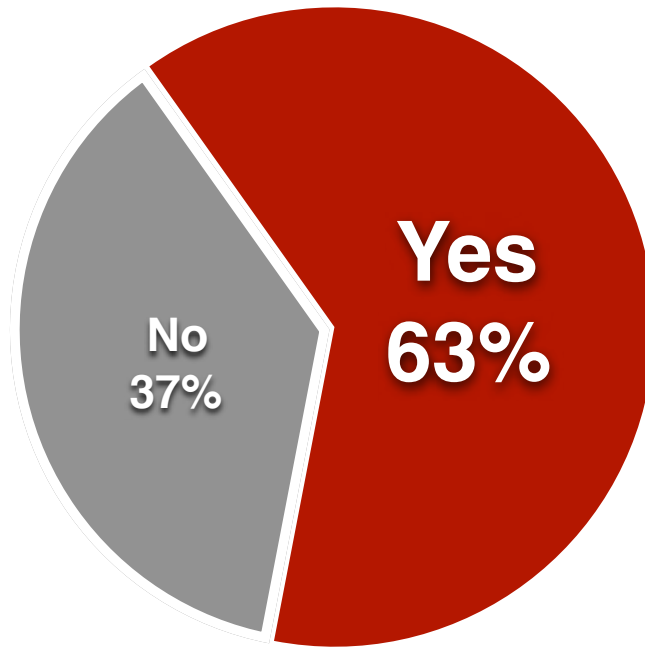




# HOTELIERS

Despite a near universal agreement on the importance of Wi-Fi security among hoteliers and their guests, 63 percent of hotelier respondents disclosed that they felt they could still make additional enhancements to security and privacy abilities. However, of further note is the fact that a majority of respondents would at least be ‘somewhat likely’ to implement improvements if made aware of such technology. With advancements in online connectivity and potential threats evolving at a faster pace than ever before, and with the severe risk to reputation that can occur after a data breach, it is therefore critical for today’s hoteliers to partner with a reputable network provider that can identify and implement the latest and most effective protocols.

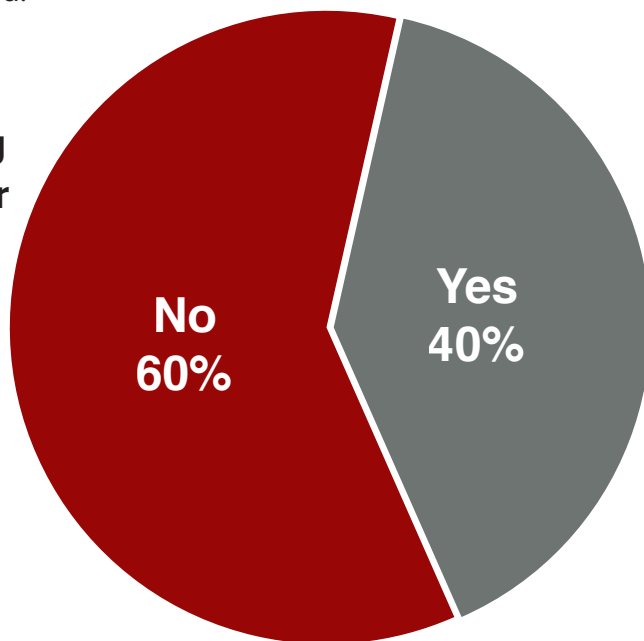
**Do you feel that your hotel could make improvements on Wi-Fi by adding additional security and privacy technology?**



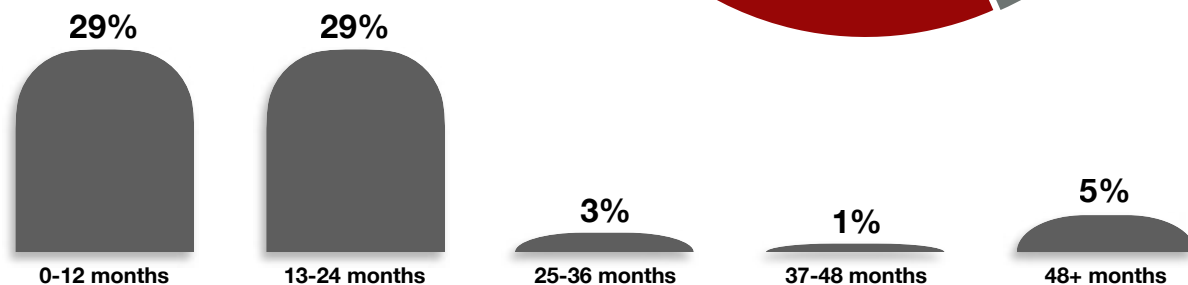
## HOTELIERS

As overall hotel security abilities attain a greater focus than in previous years, more hoteliers are implementing solutions that enhance safety and response times during an emergency. For example, despite being a relatively new technology, staff panic buttons are already being considered for potential implementation by 40 percent of hoteliers. As more of such online-based platforms become adopted at properties, however, hoteliers also need to consider the increased strain placed on existing Wi-Fi networks, and ensure that guest connectivity experiences and other operations are not negatively impacted.

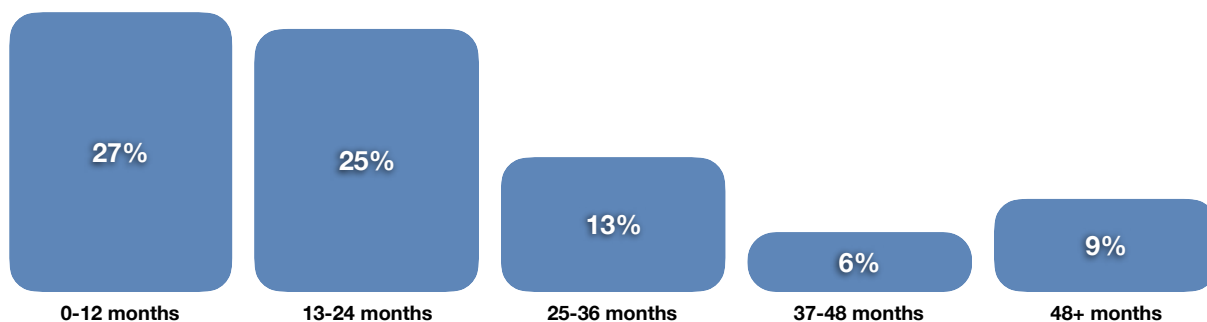
**Are you considering adding panic button technology for your hotel staff?**



**If yes, when do you plan to implement such technology?**



**Do you intend to upgrade your WiFi network? If so when?**



## CONCLUSION

With the skyrocketing increase in bandwidth-hungry guest devices present at a hotel during any given time period, and with the growing diversity in online features that guests expect to access during their hotel stay, today's demands on Wi-Fi networks are greater than ever before. Such trends can only be expected to continue as demonstrated by the increase in guest responses since 2015's survey, and with many pre-existing networks originally designed for one device per guestroom no longer able to keep up. Yet unlike other technology-based areas where the hospitality industry traditionally lags behind the consumer market by a number of years, the need for enhanced Wi-Fi connectivity is among the highest concerns of today's guests. With significant majorities suggesting that they will base their booking decision on a property's Wi-Fi reputation, hoteliers simply cannot afford to overlook the vital importance that keeping networks up-to-date can have on future revenue and business success.

For their part, hoteliers are almost universally in agreement on the critical role that Wi-Fi capabilities play in regard to guest booking, satisfaction and loyalty. Yet as this survey demonstrates, guests are continuing to report common issues with poor connectivity, signal coverage, low speeds and insufficient bandwidth. Adding to this is the fact that substantial numbers of hotelier respondents themselves are recognizing the frequency of these problems. Other third-party sources further bolster this feedback, including one finding stating that more than 81 percent of guests have experienced a poor Wi-Fi connection during the last 12 months.

Clearly there appears to be a considerable disconnect between guest expectations, hotelier acknowledgment of those expectations along with an understanding of the critical need to meet such demands, and the reality of what guests often encounter when staying at a hotel. What frequently lies at the source of such a divide, is a need to be better informed on how today's guests routinely interact with the internet. Whether at home or when traveling, guests expect to be able to connect all of their devices and access the same apps, content streaming and casting abilities as demonstrated by this survey. Such behaviors when carried out in significant numbers, are bound to place a considerable strain on a hotel's network.

With a majority of hotelier respondents indicating that they plan to increase bandwidth levels and enhance security to address guest concerns if made aware of the existence of such technology, hoteliers are certainly attempting to make efforts to enhance the online guest experience. Yet critical to such attempts is the need to work with a reputable and competent provider that can keep hoteliers informed on the latest technological trends and needs. In doing so, hoteliers can also be sure of their ability to simultaneously address any infrastructural and budgetary concerns, while always ensuring that guest connectivity and security expectations are consistently met.



**Corporate**  
**866-265-7575**

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**Hotel Internet Services – East**  
Address: 600 Cleveland Street, Suite 830  
Clearwater, Florida 33755

**Hotel Internet Services – West**  
Address: 4590 Ish Drive, Suite 120  
Simi Valley, CA 93063

[www.hotelwifi.com](http://www.hotelwifi.com)