

TECH TUESDAYS

MY INTERNET ACCESS IS DOWN – HOTSPOT 101

(your “Plan B”)

THE PROBLEM

Stable, fast Internet connections are required for the efficient operation of law firms (physical and virtual), home offices, and remote work. However, there is no such thing as 100% uptime, and Internet access is often interrupted by power outages, storms, cut lines, faulty wireless routers, and tech issues experienced by the Internet providers themselves. And unfortunately, legal professionals tend to lose their Internet connection right before an important virtual hearing, during a client meeting on Zoom, while attending an online mediation, etc.

Therefore, what “Plan B” can be relied upon to access the Internet when your standard connection is temporarily unavailable?

THE SOLUTION

Setup a Hotspot on your mobile phone or tablet. Your cellular data connection will then be shared, which allows computers and other devices to securely connect to the Internet. Hotspots are your “Plan B” when your Wi-Fi network is down or inaccessible, or when public (unsecured) Wi-Fi is the only option.

QUICK STEPS

1. Ensure you first exhaust all potential fixes for your Wi-Fi Internet connection, time permitting. At a minimum, re-boot your computer, wireless router and modem, as applicable.
2. Confirm that your mobile phone or tablet is connected to your cellular network (e.g., Verizon or T-Mobile) – simply locate the cellular network icon on the device and note the number of bars (signal strength).
3. Setup your Hotspot (also called a Personal Hotspot) on your Apple, Samsung, or other device. Regardless of your device manufacturer, the process is quick and painless.
4. On Apple devices, click Settings – Personal Hotspot – Allow Others to Join (and create a password). Note: the phone will create a default network name, which can be changed.
5. On Samsung devices, click Settings – Connections – Mobile Hotspot and Tethering – Mobile Hotspot – Click OK (and create a password). Note: the phone will create a default network name, which can be changed.
6. For more details on setting up Hotspots on Apple devices (iPhone & iPad), click [HERE](#). For Samsung devices (Galaxy S, Note & Tab) click [HERE](#).
7. On your desktop, laptop or other device, connect to the “new” Wi-Fi Network (created by your mobile or tablet) by finding the network by name, choosing that network, entering the network password, and connecting.
8. Your desktop, laptop or other device can now securely access the Internet through this new network (the Hotspot).

PRO TIPS

- ✓ Internet access via your mobile device's cellular data connection is actually MORE secure than a traditional Wi-Fi Network.
- ✓ Hotspots will quickly drain your mobile device's battery – ensure you have access to an electrical outlet or portable charger during prolonged periods of use.
- ✓ In addition to emergency situations, Hotspots also provide secure communications when public (unsecure) Wi-Fi is the only available option and/or when “private” Wi-Fi is not trustworthy, e.g., domestic Starbucks locations, international hotels, car trips, remote cabins, etc.
- ✓ Ensure Hotspots are included in your cellular plan (e.g., Verizon or T-Mobile).
- ✓ Confirm Unlimited Data is included in your cellular plan (e.g., Verizon or T-Mobile) if your Hotspot will be used for a prolonged period of time (or be sure to monitor your data usage to avoid overages).
- ✓ Internet access via Hotspots is much slower than traditional Wi-Fi connectivity at your office or home. For asynchronous applications (think email, accessing your CMS & surfing the web), speed will not be an issue (some lag or latency will not be noticeable), but for synchronous applications (think Zoom & Skype) you might experience some delays and freezing. However, as long as your cellular signal is strong, most video communications work without issue.
- ✓ A Hotspot can accommodate multiple computers/devices simultaneously, but limits will be enforced per your cellular carrier, type of device, operating system, etc. (typically, 5 – 10 computers/devices can connect to the Hotspot at one time).
- ✓ Reminder: ensure you protect (secure) your Hotspot with a password, which should be required.

MORE SUPPORT

- Have questions about any of the material presented above?
- Any questions about law firm technology in general?
- Craving to see archived copies of the entire Tech Tuesday series?
- Want to vote on next week's topic?
- Care to share these lessons with your staff, colleagues, and buddies from law school?

Click [HERE](#) to access the Tech Tuesday Home Page and make all your tech dreams come true.

SPREAD THE WORD!

- ✓ Share these practical tips with colleagues, staff, family and friends.
- ✓ Show you care and share the knowledge.
- ✓ Click [here](#) to add recipients to HTM's Tech Tuesdays.



All HTM Members are encouraged to vote for the topic to be explored on the next HTM's Tech Tuesdays.

Click [here](#) to view the trending list of topics, suggest your own topic, and place your vote!

JOIN THE DISCUSSION

Have question, hit a roadblock or figured something out that you want to share? Join the discussion forum [here](#)!

SEE YOU NEXT WEEK!

ROB



Robert J. Leitner, JD, MBA, MS CEO,
How To Manage A Small Law Firm
Law Firm Management & Marketing Advisor
RobertL@HowToManage.com
www.HowToManage.com