

U.S. Wi-Fi Offload Traffic Forecast, 2014 – 2019: *Uh-oh 5G!*

Market Study
First Quarter, 2016





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A Market Study

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Abstract

This market study presents *iGR*'s forecast for U.S. Wi-Fi Offload, which *iGR* defines as only that Wi-Fi activity/usage that occurs **outside** of home/school/work. Put another way, it is the “mobile data” that does **not** go over the cellular data network.

iGR has three categories for Wi-Fi Offload, which include:

1. **Wi-Fi Only:** Data traffic that occurs on Wi-Fi-only devices on Wi-Fi networks outside of the home or office on. So, a Wi-Fi-only laptop connected via Wi-Fi in Starbucks would be “Wi-Fi Only” traffic. But, that same laptop tethered to a smartphone’s LTE connection would count as mobile/cellular data usage.
2. **User Driven:** A subscriber/end user who chooses a Wi-Fi connection rather than use their 3G/4G mobile broadband connection. If the non-home/non-work Wi-Fi network did not exist, this traffic would have gone over the mobile operator’s cellular data network. This is the predominant form of Wi-Fi offload today.
3. **Carrier Driven:** This is data traffic that the operator steers from its 3G/4G RAN to a carrier-managed Wi-Fi network.

This market study provides an overview of Wi-Fi, its key standards, how it will be affected by upcoming 5G standards, and the recent developments related to it. It also provides a five-year forecast for the number of connections and the amount of data for the three types of Wi-Fi Offload, as defined by *iGR*.

Key questions addressed:

- What is Wi-Fi?
- Where is the Wi-Fi standard headed?
- How is Wi-Fi used?
- What is Wi-Fi offload?
- What is the difference between user-driven Wi-Fi offload and carrier-driven Wi-Fi offload?
- What are some of the key standards efforts associated with Wi-Fi offload?
- What are the potential benefits associated with Wi-Fi offload?
- What are the potential issues associated with Wi-Fi offload?

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- What is Wi-Fi only? How is it commonly used?
- How much Wi-Fi offload traffic is expected through 2019 in North America?
- What percentage of total “mobile” data traffic is Wi-Fi traffic in North America?

Who should read this report?

- Mobile operators, including those with Wi-Fi networks
- Device OEMs
- Content providers and distributors
- Cable MSOs and those offering Wi-Fi services
- Financial analysts and investors.

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