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Port Columbus' $1.2 million Wi-Fi upgrade boosts internet accessibility and speed for passengers

COLUMBUS – Passengers at Port Columbus are accessing the airport's complimentary Wi-Fi with significantly greater ease following $1.2 million worth of upgrades that result in seven times more access points and three times more bandwidth.

The enhanced Wi-Fi is live in all three concourses and offers improved accessibility and speeds averaging 12 megabits per second, which far exceeds average speeds of the nation's seven busiest U.S. airports as reported in a July 24 report by SKIFT. The new Port Columbus Wi-Fi speeds represent a 140 percent increase over the pre-upgrade, average speed of 5 megabits per second.

"Like many of our airport counterparts, Port Columbus seeks to keep passengers conveniently connected to the world so they can relax and conduct business while waiting to board flights," said Elaine Roberts, President & CEO of the Columbus Regional Airport Authority. "The investment in our Wi-Fi system should make life at Port Columbus easier for everyone."

The airport's first phase of Wi-Fi improvements, which coincides with the airport's four-year, $80 million terminal modernization, incorporates the ticket lobby, baggage claim and curbside arrival and departure levels. Those upgrades are scheduled for completion in time for holiday travelers to sign on and rejoice in greater accessibility and faster speeds.

"When finished with this phase, we'll have installed 334 access points throughout the Port Columbus terminal and tripled our internet bandwidth capacity to 150 megabits, utilizing the newest technology," said Jim Lizotte, Director of Technology Services for the Authority.

Cincinnati Bell Technology Solutions served as general contractor for the airport's technology infrastructure upgrade. The Airport Authority also partnered with Aruba Networks which installed Wi-Fi hardware and access points and configured servers. Cabling was performed by Professional Cabling Solutions.

"We highly value the expertise that CBTS, Aruba and PCS bring to Port Columbus' Wi-Fi improvement project," said Lizotte. "Their solutions will help us stay ahead of data consumption demanded by a growing passenger base. Our strategic plan for 2016 and beyond includes the addition of even more bandwidth and caching technologies. The Wi-Fi infrastructure in place now will allow even greater leveraging of technology in the future to enhance the passenger experience."

"Port Columbus first offered its complimentary Wi-Fi in 2003 when passengers generally carried only one electronic device. Now with many passengers connecting up to three devices, Wi-Fi has emerged as a vital airport amenity that we're happy to continue providing for our loyal passengers," Roberts said.

— **More** —

Port Columbus Wi-Fi timeline

2003 One of first U.S. airports to provide free Wi-Fi service using 5 Mb capacity on a shared internet connection
2007 Upgraded to 8 Mb capacity
2011 Created a dedicated internet connection for consumer Wi-Fi, generating 20 Mb capacity
2013 Upgraded dedicated guest bandwidth to 50 Mb capacity
2015 Upgrading dedicated guest bandwidth to 150 Mb capacity

About Port Columbus International Airport

Centrally located in Ohio, Port Columbus International Airport is one of three airports operated by the Columbus Regional Airport Authority, including Rickenbacker International and Bolton Field airports. Opened in 1929, Port Columbus offers nearly 150 daily departures to 34 destinations from Columbus, the fifteenth largest U.S. city. Nearly 6.4 million passengers traveled through Port Columbus in 2014.

Port Columbus WiFi Upgrade Team

(L-R) Tim Ault, Airport Authority Senior Project Manager; Jim Lizotte, Airport Authority Director, Technology Services; Ken Smullen, Aruba Territory Manager, Mid-Ohio; Brian Wagner, CBTS Account Manager; Ryan Steele, Airport Authority Senior Network Engineer; Tim Weaver, Airport Authority Cable Architect; Rob Muller, CBTS Project Manager; Josh Stinson, CBTS Network Engineer; and Pat Whyte, CBTS Service Delivery Manager.

Aruba Wireless Access Point Equipment

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