

Guest Wi-Fi – The Most Valuable Marketing Tool for Physical Businesses

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Introduction

Online businesses have enjoyed rock-solid, predictable methods for improving marketing ROI, sales conversion rates, and numerous other metrics. However, in the physical world, there has been a huge gap in the tools businesses have to achieve the same valuable insight for optimizing their business. The explosion of mobile devices has now reached a point where, in general, most of the population has a Wi-Fi enabled smartphone, tablet, watch, etc. This fact has opened the possibilities for marketing teams to gather insights about shopper, guest, and employee behavior in the physical world just as has been done in the digital world for over a decade. The emergence of sophisticated tools for tracking guest activities within physical shop locations via their connection to the store-provided Wi-Fi network is evening the playing field between digital and physical spaces for marketers and business owners who invest in the right Wi-Fi solutions and know how to use them.

We've Got Wi-Fi, Now What?

Every business is unique. Some organizations have deep pockets and sophisticated marketing organizations and others have no dedicated marketing budget and the business owner is the marketing department. Regardless of who you are and what you are selling, if you introduce Wi-Fi into your shop, hotel, or other business you immediately have the potential to unlock powerful new marketing and business analytics tools. At a minimum, you should have thought through and have plans to address the following.

1. **Initial Engagement:** How can I get more people on my Wi-Fi, and when I do, how much information can I get from them to understand who my customer is for future marketing and business decisions?
2. **Engagement Analytics:** Once on my Wi-Fi, where are people spending the most time, what are they doing, and what does this information mean for how I design my store, what I put in the storefront window, and what additional services I may want to provide?
3. **Targeted Marketing:** How can I use real-time analytics to increase engagement with my brand or to drive increased purchasing habits? Furthermore, once a customer has physically left my business, how can I use the information I've collected to encourage them to return again and re-engage with my brand?

What most businesses don't realize is that as sophisticated as it may sound, engagement, analytics, and targeted marketing are all very easy when you chose the right Wi-Fi solution provider.

Initial Engagement

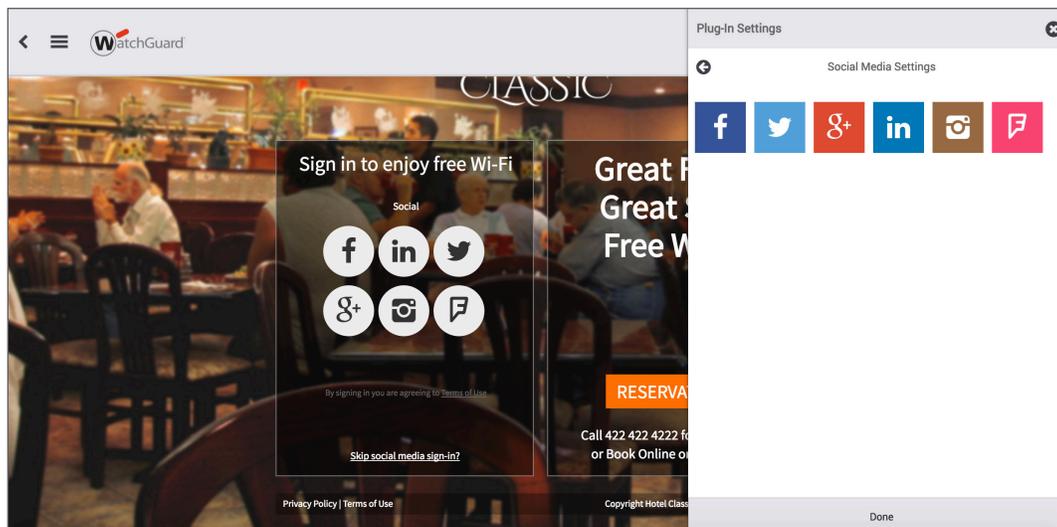
In today's connected world, we find ourselves with fewer and fewer opportunities to touch customers directly. Many people opt to conduct business online, cutting out the personal touch businesses used to have. Take online shopping for retailers, mobile ordering for many dining franchises, and online booking and mobile check-in and -out for hotels, as just a few examples. While businesses have no control over the transformation of those experiences, onsite Wi-Fi is opening the door to create a new brand experience that could be just as valuable. If your consumers are moving online, greet them there and provide them with an experience that is both positive for the customer and beneficial for the company.



When making a Wi-Fi purchasing decision make sure that portal personalization, customer engagement, analytics dashboards, and push marketing tools are not only offered, but are included in base pricing and are not a premium upgrade.

Custom Splash Screens and Captive Portals

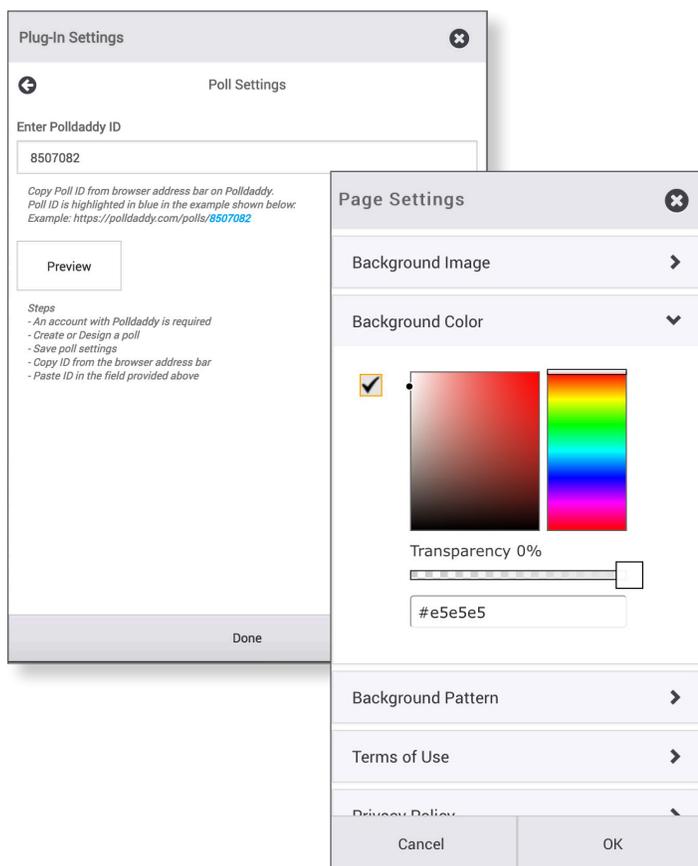
An overwhelming number of visitors to most businesses will connect to the Wi-Fi network. Don't miss the opportunity to connect with your customers – brand the Wi-Fi login experience, offer the opportunity for visitors to use their social accounts to authenticate to your network, and make it easy. Doing this alone tells your customers that you are proud of your Wi-Fi network, that you want them to use it, and that you want the experience to be professional and easy for everyone involved. This delights the Wi-Fi-addicted consumers of today.



Enabling customers to connect via their social media accounts is not only convenient for the end-user but will result in more demographic information for you to use in your marketing efforts later!

Polling for Feedback

Think your business is thriving? That customer satisfaction is soaring and that there is just nothing else that could be done to boost sales? Well, why not find out? The Wi-Fi generation loves to give feedback; just look at the enormous adoption of sites like TripAdvisor, Yelp, and GlassDoor have seen. In fact, when was the last time you saw an online shopping site that did not include customer reviews? Use your Wi-Fi as a powerful tool to engage customers in your business. You can ask for feedback on what visitors are shopping for upon connecting to your Wi-Fi, send “Can We Help” assistance for long-term visitors who may need help finding what they are looking for, or send post-visit satisfaction surveys. This not only provides your business with invaluable feedback, but also adds to the overall impression the visitor will have of your business. Whether the experience was good or needs improvement, the customer will leave with the impression that you care and the satisfaction that they got to provide feedback.

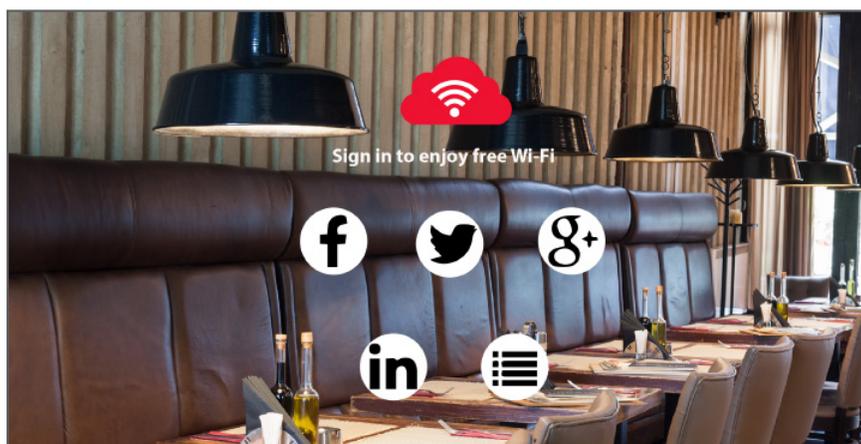


Engagement Analytics

A customer stepping into your physical business is just like one visiting your website. Knowledge as to how they got there, where they go, how long they stay, and what they take with them is invaluable to immediate and long-term marketing and business decision making. When it comes to Wi-Fi analytics, different types of insight may be valuable to different types of businesses. Some of the most common include guest demographics, dwell time, zone analytics, and traffic flow.

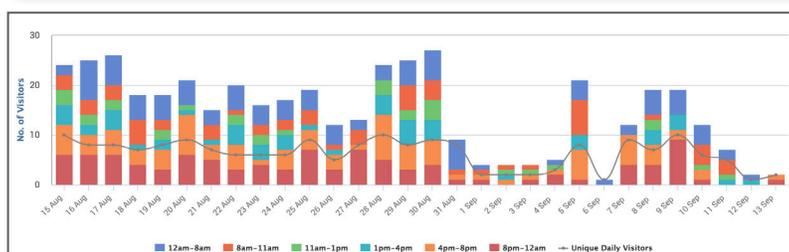
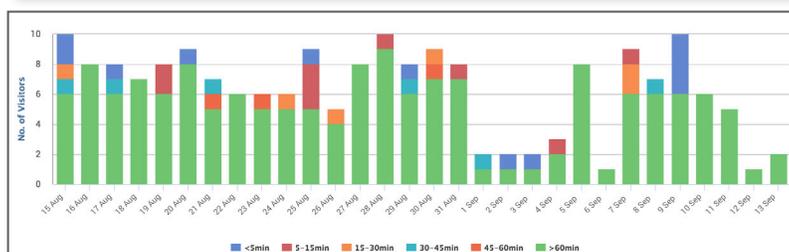
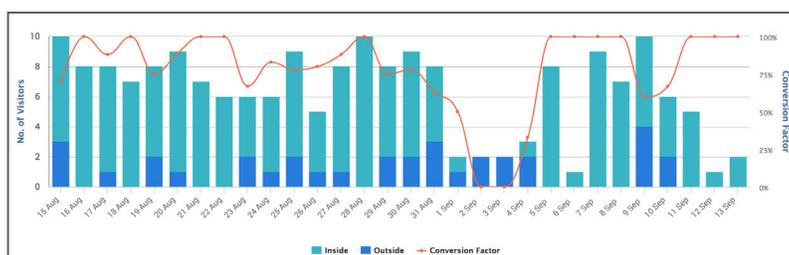
Demographics

At the most basic level, just knowing who is walking through the doors of your business can provide you with the information needed to better cater to that demographic or try to use targeted marketing efforts to diversify that customer base. Basic demographics include gender and age and are easily obtained upon sign-in or by allowing authentication to your Wi-Fi network through popular social media channels like LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. When you enable social sign-on you also open the door to more sophisticated demographic information such as hometown, schools attended, and more.



Dwell Time, Zone Analytics, and Traffic Flow

Understanding how long customers are spending in your business and where they are spending their time can be a game changer, especially for retail and hospitality business owners. For example, if a certain display is attracting high volumes of traffic for a retail location then the business may decide to promote that product or service in the storefront to attract maximum visitors, but then to put that display at the back of the store to force all visitors to experience the full store prior to reaching the popular display. This could lead to an increase in initial traffic, as well as an increase in spend on products and services that may never have been noticed in the previous store layout. Additionally, a hotel may notice that traffic to their hotel bar or other amenity is low and decide to provide a promotional coupon or flier to that bar or amenity at check-in to test whether or not the lack of success was due to location or lack of interest.

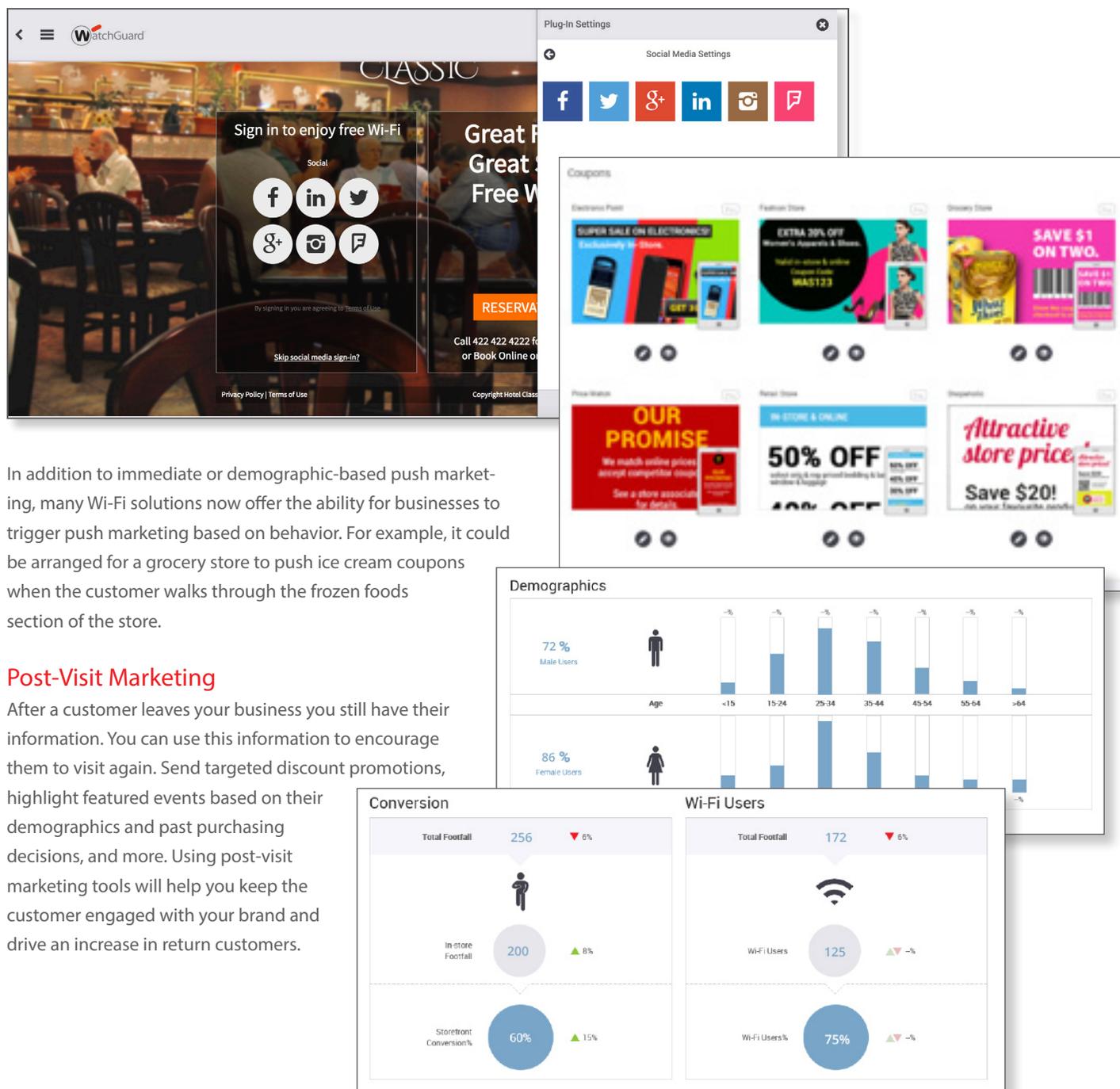


TARGETED MARKETING

Once you understand who is walking through the front doors of your business and what they are doing on-site, you can use that information to engage with them directly.

Real-Time Marketing

When a customer connects to your Wi-Fi you can push real-time promotions to encourage increased purchasing. For example, a retailer may wish to push a 20% off coupon to all visitors who connect to their store Wi-Fi. Or if they have a specific product they need to move, they could push a special product promotion to help move through that inventory. Getting a little more sophisticated, the retailer could sell these push promotions to brands they represent in their store as a means for that brand to gain greater visibility and ultimately increased sales.



In addition to immediate or demographic-based push marketing, many Wi-Fi solutions now offer the ability for businesses to trigger push marketing based on behavior. For example, it could be arranged for a grocery store to push ice cream coupons when the customer walks through the frozen foods section of the store.

Post-Visit Marketing

After a customer leaves your business you still have their information. You can use this information to encourage them to visit again. Send targeted discount promotions, highlight featured events based on their demographics and past purchasing decisions, and more. Using post-visit marketing tools will help you keep the customer engaged with your brand and drive an increase in return customers.

THE WATCHGUARD WI-FI CLOUD – MARKETING’S BEST FRIEND

WatchGuard offers a full suite of Secure Wi-Fi solutions including the WatchGuard Wi-Fi Cloud, a secure, scalable, and feature-rich Wi-Fi management platform and a family of high-performance, cloud-ready access points. The Analyze and Engage feature sets of the WatchGuard Wi-Fi Cloud levels the playing field between online business and the physical, brick-and-mortar world.

With the WatchGuard Engage dashboard – a web-hosted, interactive design app – you can create modern splash and landing pages for guest networks that engage with your guests before and after they connect to your Wi-Fi network. WatchGuard’s Wi-Fi Analytics couples tightly with the Engage feature to empower business owners, marketing teams, and operations teams with location-based information and valuable insight into everything from dwell times and the number of new vs. repeat visitors for a business, to demographic information on gender and age.

Wi-Fi Analytics and Engage are both available with WatchGuard’s cloud-ready access points when managed by the WatchGuard Wi-Fi Cloud. And unlike competing Wi-Fi products, WatchGuard includes full analytics and engagement functionality with every Wi-Fi cloud license tied to a WatchGuard cloud-ready access point.



Summary

Communicating with mobile users over Wi-Fi – and gathering valuable insight on guest behavior and demographics – is no longer reserved for high-priced marketing departments. WatchGuard’s Engage and Analyze feature sets provide SMBs and enterprises with total visibility into all activity within the corporate WLAN and Guest Wi-Fi networks.

About WatchGuard

WatchGuard® Technologies, Inc. is a global leader in network security, secure Wi-Fi, and network intelligence products and services to more than 75,000 customers worldwide. The company’s mission is to make enterprise-grade security accessible to companies of all types and sizes through simplicity, making WatchGuard an ideal solution for distributed enterprises and SMBs. WatchGuard is headquartered in Seattle, Washington, with offices throughout North America, Europe, Asia Pacific, and Latin America. To learn more, visit WatchGuard.com.

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