

JANUARY 2019

Horizons

A Golden West Customer Newsletter

Getting the Most From Your **INTERNET**

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Getting the Most From Your IN

Golden West customers use their Internet connection in a variety of ways. Some only log on for emails, many run home businesses and others have large families with numerous connected devices. Whether you use your Internet a little or a lot, it's helpful to understand how your home Internet works and what you can do to get the most out of your connection.

This edition of Horizons is about helping you maximize your Internet connection. While Golden West can bring a fast, reliable Internet connection to your home and/or business, it's up to you to put it to good use. From understanding and optimizing Internet speed, to help desk FAQ's and enhancing Wi-Fi, we've put together a handful of features to help you get the most out of your Internet connection.

Are You Like Josh & Emma?

Josh and Emma are Golden West members subscribed to 25Mbps Internet. They have two kids, Scott 15 and Ivy 13, who spend too much time online, on their phones, on screens. Josh recently called Golden West questioning why his laptop isn't connecting at 25Mbps, the speed for which he pays. The technicians determine that his home is getting 25Mbps, but his laptop is not because ...

Many Factors Contribute to INTERNET SPEED

The most common misconception with Internet speed is that every device in use will receive the maximum speed of the Internet service. However, Internet usage, the number of connected devices and other factors play a role in determining your "real time" Internet speed.



Like a garden hose with holes, each device using your Internet siphons off speed.

Comparing INTERNET to a Garden Hose

One way to illustrate this is to think of Internet like water running through a garden hose. Cranking the tap to unleash water is akin to Golden West providing Internet.

At the source (the tap), you are receiving the maximum speed, up to 25Mbps for example. Once you start adding connected devices, however, that speed slows. Each device using your Internet is like a hole in the garden hose, siphoning off Internet speed. The more connected devices, the more holes, the slower your personal Internet speed.

The size of the hole, or how much speed is allocated to each device, varies depending on the type of online activity. For example, streaming video requires more speed than audio or general online browsing. See "My Optimal Internet Speed" on the facing page for more information.



INTERNET...

Josh & Emma's Connected Devices

If Josh wants faster Internet on his laptop, he needs to determine the number of connected devices in his household and how his family uses the Internet. Then he can select the optimal Internet speed for his home.

Josh uses a phone and laptop for work, an iPad for social media and games, and he monitors his installed security cameras from his phone. Emma also works on her computer and phone, watches Netflix frequently and streams music on her smart speaker. Scott and Ivy are both addicted to their phones, share a computer for school and are avid gamers. The family also has a vacuum cleaner and thermostat connected to their Wi-Fi.

Minimum Usage by Device



PHONE

Video Chat: 1Mbps



COMPUTER

General Usage: 1Mbps
(HD Video Conferencing: 6Mbps)



GAME CONSOLE

Online Multi player: 4Mbps



TV - HD

Streaming Video: 5Mbps
(Ultra 4K HD: 25Mbps)



SPEAKER

Streaming Music: 0.5Mbps



CAMERAS

Standard Definition Video: 3Mbps

Determining My Optimal INTERNET SPEED

While having Internet is necessary these days, determining the best Internet speed to purchase depends on a customer's usage.

Consider the information in the upper right-hand corner when calculating your optimal Internet speed. (Keep in mind these are minimum download speeds that don't take into account time of day, multiple users and devices.)*

In all likelihood, due to the amount of devices sharing Internet connections in homes, the odds of receiving full-speed on any individual device are low. This doesn't mean your devices won't connect and function properly. As the graphics above indicate, most devices (at present) only require 5Mbps and under. This just means you may need to think of your Internet usage in a different way.

Josh & Emma's Peak Internet Usage

According to the information above, peak Internet usage for Josh and Emma's family adds up to about 20 Mbps. If Josh must have 25Mbps - or more speed than he currently experiences on his laptop - he has a few options. He can plug his laptop directly into his modem as wired connections are generally faster than wireless, and power off all other connected devices in his home. Or he can subscribe to a higher Internet speed.

See Page 6 for the five most common Internet-related calls placed to Golden West's Help Desk, and learn about a new service from Golden West to enhance your Wi-Fi signal on Page 4.

* Source - fcc.gov/reports-research/guides/broadband-speed-guide





Ways to Improve Your WI-FI

If you aren't connecting multiple devices or doing many online activities at once and your Internet performance still lacks, the issue could be your wireless network or Wi-Fi. Wireless Internet technology has improved since its inception 20 years ago, but there are still limitations. Following are things that impact performance:

The location of the router. Upon installation, Golden West technicians will help determine the best place to position the router for optimal signal coverage. However, sometimes the layout of a home limits the options. In many homes built more than 10 years ago, the point of Internet access is located in the basement or garage, neither of which are ideal locations for a Wi-Fi router.

Metal or water. Wi-Fi signals don't transmit well around metal or water. Don't position a large aquarium between your smart TV and your router, for example, and don't set your router up directly below your metal duct work. Metal frames found in mobile homes, metal sheeting used to finish walls and metal siding and roofing can also disrupt the signal.

Size or layout of the home. Sometimes Wi-Fi issues arise from just the sheer size or layout of a home. The Wi-Fi signal may wane in locations such as third-floor rooms or other distant spots that extend beyond the router's foot print.

Spotty Wi-Fi can lead to dropped signals, buffering and unhappy family members. If you're willing to foot the bill, you could have your home rewired and move your point of access to address many of these issues. However, there is an easier and more cost effective solution.

Golden West's new Enhanced Wi-Fi uses a signal extender in conjunction

with your modem, resulting in stronger wireless connections throughout your home. For \$7.95 a month, you can enjoy a reliable Wi-Fi signal in every room of your home, and on all your connected devices.

Enhanced Wi-Fi also offers you more control over your network name and password and lists all wireless devices using your network. The service provides a second wireless network for guests with a different password, and it can be installed with no installation charges or contracts.

To give Enhanced Wi-Fi a try, call 1-855-888-7777.

New Look for Golden West WEBMAIL

Golden West WebMail will debut a new look and new functionality on January 31. However, you can take a tour of the new changes anytime by clicking on the link at the bottom of the login page you access from GoldenWest.com/WebMail.

Just a few of the new features to look forward to are:

- Increased User Options - Control friends/enemies list from inbox.
- New Filter View - Choose the view that you prefer.
- Mail Quota Usage - A graph displaying usage updates in real time.

If you have any questions about your WebMail, our Help Desk is available

FIBER TO THE HOME 2019 Installations

As we begin 2019, we're proud to say that about 60 percent of Golden West's service territory has been upgraded through Fiber to the Home (FTTH). Of course, this means we've still got about 40 percent remaining. Rest assured that we won't stop until we've finished the job, and the process continues with FTTH 2019.

This year FTTH communities include White River (town), Menno (town), Murdo (town), Kadoka (town), Vivian (town and rural), and Interior (town and rural). We're also starting the first year of a two-year project in Hot Springs (town). Installations in these

areas will result in about 2,000 more subscribers with fiber.

Golden West has long been committed to meeting the need of broadband Internet for all. A recent order by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) will help us continue our infrastructure expansion beyond 2019. The order promotes and sustains funding for broadband installation, further guaranteeing high-quality broadband services in rural America.

Fiber infrastructure not only significantly increases the speed of delivery for broadband Internet, it also offers a

more reliable and more secure connection to the world for all telecommunications services – phone, cable TV and Internet.

Customers in the 2019 communities may have already seen Golden West contractors and technicians out and about preparing for the construction phase of FTTH. These folks are hanging clamshells, surveying, marking utility lines, etc. If you have any questions about the project or a contractor working in your area, please visit GoldenWest.com/FTTH or call 1-855-888-7777 and ask for the Engineering Department.

Need a Website for Your Side Hustle?

Are you really good at woodworking or quilting but not tech savvy enough to build a website to sell your wares?

Golden West Internet customers can easily create their own website with Building Blocks. The platform is designed to build customized

websites without specialized software or web development training. Simply put, Building Blocks offers web design for everyone.

Below are a few features from the recently launched, new and improved, version of Building Blocks:

Personalize Pre-Designed Content Layouts

Select from a variety of professional, pre-designed layouts to jump-start your new website. Personalize them with photos, colors and animations.

Photo Gallery Wizard

Quickly add visual interest to a page with an eye-catching photo gallery. Choose a modern layout and customize with buttons, hover effects, animations and more.

Social Media Wizard

Add social media icons on the fly. Select from different social media layout designs and link to your accounts easily.

Videos On Homepage

Easily insert interesting videos to your website's homepage.

Get started on your new website now to turn your Pinterest hobby into a money-making side hustle. Golden West will serve as a secure host for your Building Blocks website for a small monthly fee. Read more about Building Blocks at GoldenWest.com/BuildingBlocks.



Help Desk FAQ'S



Golden West's Help Desk receives a fair number of calls. Most calls, however, are about a handful of Internet-related topics. According to Help Desk Supervisor Seth Engel, here are the five most common call topics, what may cause these issues and some solutions to try before calling.

1. Slow or Intermittent Connection

Wireless Access Point Location – Many homes are not designed or wired with Wi-Fi in mind. If your access point is located in a basement or garage, adding a signal extender can improve your connection. (see Enhanced Wi-Fi on page 4)

Connected Devices – Many devices stay connected to Wi-Fi even when not in use in order to check for updates and notifications. Check settings on each device to modify how and when updates install.

Interference – Metal walls, aquariums and other electronic devices (microwaves for example) can contribute to connectivity issues. Moving a router to another location away from these obstacles is a good option.

2. Scam Messages in Email

A good rule of thumb is, if you aren't expecting an email, it is probably a scam. Never click on links from emails you were not expecting, even if they appear to be from a person or company with whom you regularly communicate.

3. Pop Up/ Scare Ware

Pop up messages themselves typically will not harm a computer. The danger lies in calling phone numbers on the pop up or clicking links. A forced restart of the computer or installing ad block and pop up blockers will help prevent this in the future.

4. No Internet

The fastest solution is usually to unplug a router and/or modem for at least 30 seconds. Plug them back in and let them reboot before making another attempt. It may also help to restart any devices to refresh their Internet connection.

5. Outdated Devices

While Windows XP and older operating systems may partially work with today's websites, some websites will not load at all on devices running outdated software. Using them to browse the Internet is a risky endeavor due to the vulnerabilities left when companies stop supporting and updating older operating systems. Luckily, computer prices have dropped significantly in the past few years.

If these solutions aren't helpful for you, remember that Golden West Internet customers have access to an Internet Help Desk 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Our highly trained Help Desk Technicians are available to help customers resolve any and all issues related to their Internet service. For more information call 1-866-833-6683 or email us at HelpDesk@GoldenWest.net.

COMPUTER SUPPORT

from the Comfort of Home

If you're experiencing computer trouble, give us a call and one of our A+ certified technicians will remotely connect to your computer and fix the problem. Our technicians can help you with everything from virus removal and operating system repair, to software installation and PC training. We're here to make sure your computer is working great, so you can focus on family, work and fun.

General Services

- Virus, Adware, and Malware Removal
- PC Optimization
- Generic Services
- Quick Service
- Operating System Repair

Configuration Services

- Advanced Router Setup
- Device Install
- Software Install

Training Services

- PC Training



*Your computer can be fixed affordably
and in the comfort of your own home!*

Call 1-866-264-7397 or email GoldenWest.com/goldenshield

CONGRATULATIONS to Our 2018 Customer Appreciation Giveaway Winners!

GRAND PRIZE WINNER, \$500 Local Shopping

Allen Devish Winner Shopko

20 WINNERS, \$100 Local Shopping

Rita Bierle	Menno	Total Stop Grocery Store
Jean Beck	Hartford	Golden West
James Borchert	Dell Rapids	County Fair
Owen Cornelius	Hot Springs	Lynn's Dakotamart
Christina Decker	Winner	Shopko
Terry Dickerson	Hartford	Sunshine Foods
Terrie Fischer	Olivet	Norm's Drug Store
John Fitzgerald	Hot Springs	Shopko
Gladys Gay	Martin	Lynn's Dakotamart
Connie Hlavac	Tyndall	Flower's and More

Genny Houston	Bridgewater	Meyer Motor
Clyde Johnson	Hot Springs	Sonny's Super Foods
Marvin Johnson	Freeman	Freeman Shopping Center
Pat Jones	Burke	Greens Grocery
Barb Murphy	Dell Rapids	County Fair
Karen Naasz	Winner	Super Foods
Sarah Ringstad	Hot Springs	Lynn's Dakotamart
Leann Schulz-Thomas	Marion	Jamboree Foods
Sara VanZee	Armour	Krulls Market
Cindy Willert	Kadoka	Peoples Market

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2019 Golden West SCHOLARSHIPS

Golden West is proud to offer \$1,000 scholarships to 45 qualifying students!

Each year the Golden West scholarship program awards a \$1,000 scholarship to a qualifying student from each of the 44 Golden West area high schools. One at-large scholarship is also given to a student whose parents receive Golden West services but who is either homeschooled or attends high school outside of Golden West's service area.

High school seniors interested in applying for the regular or at-large scholarship must meet these requirements:

- The student's parents or legal guardians must reside within one of Golden West's telephone service areas and subscribe to at least one Golden West service (phone, cable TV or Internet).
- Applicant must be a high school senior.
- Applicant must take either the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), the American College Test (ACT), or Accuplacer Vocational Entrance Exam by December 31st of their senior year.
- Scholarship awards may only be applied to post-secondary institutions.
- Recipient must take 12 or more classroom credits (or equivalent to full-time course load) in the fall semester following high school graduation.

The deadline for returning all applications is March 15th, 2019.

Students interested in applying for a scholarship should contact their local high school. At-large applicants can obtain the same information at goldenwest.com/scholarships.

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