

## What is a Mesh Wi-Fi Router System?

At the center of traditional Wi-Fi networks is the router, the key piece of equipment that seamlessly routes internet traffic between a connected modem and Wi-Fi-enabled devices such as computers, tablets, and phones.

The main issue with traditional routers is that the reach of their Wi-Fi signals is limited. Large buildings that need internet access on multiple floors can have areas with limited or nonexistent service, often called dead zones.

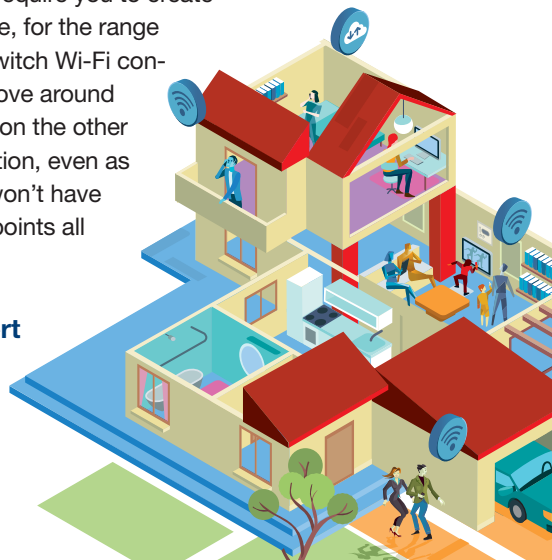
By contrast, a mesh Wi-Fi router system has multiple access points. One node links to the modem and acts as the router, while one or more other access points, often called satellites, capture the router's signal and rebroadcast it.

If you have a large home — at least 3,000 square feet — or one that has an unusual layout, more than two stories, or interior brick walls, you may experience Wi-Fi dead zones with a traditional Wi-Fi network. If so, your home might be a good candidate for a mesh Wi-Fi router system.

In addition to providing strong and reliable Wi-Fi signals, a mesh Wi-Fi router system offers benefits including these:

- **Easy network management** – Many mesh Wi-Fi router systems are totally automated, allowing for easy remote management through a mobile app. Users can quickly test their internet speeds, create guest networks, install firmware updates for better security, and more.
- **Streamlined connections** – With traditional routers, devices known as range extenders are often used to repeat the signal so Wi-Fi can be accessed from long distances. However, even the best Wi-Fi extenders require you to create a separate network, with a separate name, for the range extender. This means you may have to switch Wi-Fi connections, sometimes manually, as you move around your home. A mesh Wi-Fi router system, on the other hand, doesn't require constant reconnection, even as you move from room to room. You also won't have to deal with as much lag, as the access points all broadcast the same signal.

**Huxley Communications offers Expert Wi-Fi, which is a mesh Wi-Fi router system, for a low monthly price. For details, call 515-597-2281 or visit [www.huxcomm.net](http://www.huxcomm.net).**



### HUXLEY HAPPENINGS



**Monday, September 5**  
Labor Day - Office Closed

**Friday, October 7**  
Huxley Communications Cooperative  
Members BBQ – Office Closed

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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[www.huxcomm.net](http://www.huxcomm.net)  
[huxt@huxcomm.net](mailto:huxt@huxcomm.net)

**Free Internet Tech Support**  
515-597-HELP (4357) • Available 24/7

**Report an Outage**  
515-597-2281

**Call Before You Dig**  
Iowa One Call • 800-292-8989

**Levi Bappe**  
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**Terry Ferguson**  
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**Brant Strumpfer**  
*Plant Manager*

**SUMMER 2022**

## Fighting Robocalls Compared to a Game of Whack-a-Mole

The arcade game Whack-a-Mole is often used to describe a situation characterized by a series of repetitious and futile tasks, where the successful completion of one task just results in another popping up elsewhere. Attempts to fight against robocalls fall into this category.

Like a game of Whack-a-Mole, whenever industry regulators or law enforcement smack down on one way of making robocalls, scammers change tactics and use a different method. This is currently happening as robocallers move away from using spoofed phone numbers made to look like a call is coming from a neighbor. Now they're buying lists of real phone numbers to trick spam-blocking software into letting the calls through.

Scamming people is a lucrative business, which is why robocallers work so hard to stay one step ahead of the regulations and technology designed to stop them. But the FCC continues to address the issue.

"With coordinated activity—with many more mallets smacking this problem—we're going to be more capable of bringing it to a stop," FCC Chair Jessica Rosenworcel said.



## Do You Know What These Internet Terms Mean?



Even though you've been online for years, it's understandable if some internet terms remain confusing. After all, Mbps and MBps look almost alike. What does that capital "B" mean anyway?

To clear things up, here's a handy list of definitions:

- **Bandwidth** – Bandwidth measures the total number of frequencies, or capacity, a network connection can handle at any given moment. With more bandwidth, more data can be transferred through a specific network at the same time.
- **Bit** – Internet speed is measured in bits per second (bps). This is the smallest unit of computer information, so you'll often see internet speeds referred to as megabits per second (Mbps).
- **Byte** – 1 byte is equal to 8 bits. We use bytes to refer to how much memory is available or being transferred.
- **Gbps** – "Gigabits per second" is a measure of ultra-fast internet speed. 1 Gbps is equal to 1,000 Mbps.
- **Latency** – Latency measures the delay in data transfer, telling you how fast data gets from a source to its destination. Internet connection types vary considerably when it comes to latency. For instance, 100 Mbps with a fiber optic connection will have far fewer delays than 100 Mbps with a satellite connection.
- **Mbps** – "Megabits per second" is a common way of expressing internet speed. This number represents the bandwidth of an internet connection, which is how much data can be transferred each second.
- **MBps** – "Megabytes per second" measures the file size when talking about how much data can be transferred each second. You might also see this figure represented as MB.
- **Ping** – A ping is a test which determines if a server is reachable. The test sends a data packet to the server to see if the data comes back.
- **Ping time** – Measured in milliseconds, ping time tells you how fast a data packet travels to the server and back. If your connection doesn't register the data request for a couple of seconds, you may see a lag in your connection.

**When it's time to consider upgrading the speed of your internet service, call Huxley Communications at 515-597-2281.**

# Smishing Attacks Take Advantage of Texting Habits

Smishing is short for SMS phishing. It combines SMS (which stands for “short message service” or texting) with phishing (scams designed to steal your data). Smishing is to text messages what phishing is to emails.

Here’s how smishing typically works: You receive a text on your phone with a message that appears to be serious and needing immediate attention. For example, the text may say your debit card has been suspended, or there’s abnormal activity or a new user on your bank account. Sometimes scammers take the opposite approach, and promise you a gift card, cash back, or some other reward.

The goal of smishing attacks is to trick you into immediately clicking a link by saying bad things will happen if you don’t. That link will take you to a fraudulent website, and if you enter your username and password there, the scammers could steal your money or your entire identity.

Why are smishing attacks on the rise? One reason is that they’re easy to execute. All scammers need are phone numbers and a tricky way to get people to respond to the texts. Working in their favor is the fact that people love texts, and most texts are opened and responded to within a few minutes. By comparison, the average open rate for emails is only about 10-20 percent.

Should you get a suspicious text, don’t reply. Don’t even text “stop.” Any kind of communication tells the scammer that your phone number is active and makes you ripe for targeting again.

You can reduce the number of these texts you receive by setting up spam filters. For an iPhone, go to the Settings app, tap Messages, find the Filter Unknown Senders option, and turn it on by swiping the button to the right. For an Android phone, go to the Messaging app, tap the three dots icon in the upper right of the screen, choose Settings, tap Spam Protection, and turn on Enable Spam Protection by swiping the button to the right. If your Android phone doesn’t offer the Spam Protection option, consider installing one of the many spam blocker apps on the market.



## Great Customer Service Starts with Great Employees

We should know! Huxley Communications has an amazing team of 19 employees, who bring strong experience, specialized skills, and a positive attitude to their jobs each day. If you’re one of our employees — or you have a friend or family member who works for us — consider this a public thank you for everything!

It’s because of our employees that Huxley Communications is able to consistently provide an excellent customer experience. Our goal is to make things easy for you, whether you’re signing up for service, getting service installed, or seeking answers to a technical issue or account question. Because our employees are local, their help is never far away and always responsive. You can also count on neighborly friendliness that stands out compared to the lackluster service from so many national providers.

# Relay Iowa Helps the Hearing Impaired

## What is Relay Iowa?

The State of Iowa offers an important public service called Relay Iowa. It serves the thousands of people who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or speech impaired. Relay Iowa is a program of the Iowa Utilities Board and ensures that all citizens have access to convenient, reliable services for communicating by telephone.

## How does Relay Iowa work?

Call 711 from any phone in Iowa or the appropriate toll-free number at the end of this article to connect to Relay Iowa. Give the Communications Assistant (CA) the area code and number you are calling from. During the relay call, the CA will voice everything typed by the TTY (TeleTYpewriter) user and type everything said by the telephone user. Calls handled by Relay Iowa are strictly confidential.

## CapTel

CapTel is ideal for people with some degree of hearing loss, but who can speak clearly. CapTel works like any other telephone with one important addition: it displays every word the caller says throughout the conversation. CapTel users can listen to the caller and read the captions on the display window built into the CapTel phone.

## How do I apply for special equipment?

The Iowa Equipment Distribution Program is called Telecommunication Access Iowa (TAI) and it helps pay for special equipment for residents who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired. Qualified individuals can receive a voucher for approximately 95% of the average cost of special telephone equipment. To apply online, go to [www.relay-iowa.com/tai/](http://www.relay-iowa.com/tai/) or call 1-800-606-5099 V/TTY.

## Call 711 OR

**TTY:** 1-800-735-2942

**Voice:** 1-800-735-2943

**VCO:** 1-800-735-4313

**Speech to Speech:** 1-877-735-1007

**Spanish:** 1-800-264-7190



## Reminders on the National Do Not Call Registry

Are your busy days being interrupted by annoying telemarketing calls? The National Do Not Call Registry, managed by the Federal Trade Commission, offers you a choice about whether to receive these types of calls. Most telemarketers should not call your number once it has been on the Registry for 31 days (the length of time telemarketers are given to remove the number from their call lists). If they do, you can file a complaint at [www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov).

Keep in mind, however, that registering with the National Do Not Call Registry will not stop calls from:

- Political organizations
- Charities
- Companies conducting surveys
- Companies with whom you have done business within the last 18 months

You can register your home and wireless phone numbers, but business numbers are not covered by the Registry. Registration is effective until your number is disconnected and reassigned or until you choose to remove it from the Registry.

**To register with the National Do Not Call Registry, call 888-382-1222 or visit [www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov).**