



By **KYLE SPINKS**
Product Management Director

3 THINGS Mobile Operators Need to Know **ABOUT WI-FI ROAMING**

In the face of ever-growing data usage crowding mobile networks and mobile data users requiring consistent high-speed access, mobile operators can preserve the quality of experience by enabling users to seamlessly connect to a Wi-Fi network. By leveraging the following three concepts when implementing Wi-Fi roaming capabilities, operators can ensure a more consistent subscriber experience while easing network strains, particularly on the path to LTE and 4G.

1. **Wi-Fi Is a Win-Win.**

Adoption of Wi-Fi-enabled mobile devices will more than triple from about 550 million in 2009 to nearly 1.7 billion in 2015, according to InStat. This explosive growth curve, combined with Wi-Fi's reliable speeds and an expanding number of hot spots, is turning Wi-Fi into mobile roamers' method of choice for accessing data. Wi-Fi provides an enhanced user experience with faster download speeds and lower usage costs that do not count against a subscriber's monthly usage limits. For operators, Wi-Fi eases network strains and decreases costs to boost customer loyalty and protect brands by delivering access in even high-data traffic areas like event stadiums. A win-win situation for operators and subscribers alike, Wi-Fi is an essential consideration in an operator's long-term mobile data access strategy.

2. **Wi-Fi Is a New Frontier in the Mobile Ecosystem.**

Although operators have explored the complexities of Wi-Fi, most have yet to tap into the potential of Wi-Fi offload and roaming to deliver better service to subscribers at a lower cost than traditional mobile networks. This is because Wi-Fi serves up an entirely new set of complex

technical specifications that have yet to be standardized. Many Wi-Fi providers come from the traditional Internet space and are only beginning to understand the complexities of mobile roaming agreements, file exchange and the like. However, these challenges do not outweigh Wi-Fi's significant benefits. So while quick-fix solutions might seem appealing in the short term, operators must look at their Wi-Fi plans strategically if they are to truly capitalize in the future.

3. **AAA Proxy Ensures Integration.**

One of the best ways to fully integrate Wi-Fi into long-term business plans is to choose a AAA proxy provider to enable roaming and offload. This offers operators several advantages over a traditional aggregator: 1.) One-stop access to Wi-Fi roaming partners across the globe while maintaining a higher level of control; 2.) Better negotiated agreements, such as lower pricing based on volume; and—when the AAA provider also offers robust clearing and settlement services—3.) Elimination of the burden to convert the wide range of proprietary file types used by Wi-Fi providers into operator formats (e.g., TAP), providing a seamless integration into existing accounting services. ●