

## Awareness of Wireless Fidelity Taking Off

**2003 a telling year for 'speed and convenience' technology,  
Ipsos research shows**

**New York, February 25, 2003** – Wireless Fidelity or Wi-Fi may still be a fuzzy term to a majority of Americans. Tech-savvy consumers, however, are already using the technology in their homes, and the total number of users is expected to increase by almost 50% in the next six months alone, according to Ipsos, the global marketing research firm.

Ipsos conducted telephone interviews with more than 1,000 adults between January 21-23, 2003. Among its findings:

- Two-fifths (41%) of respondents are aware of the term Wi-Fi. Of these, more than one-third (38%) are at least somewhat familiar with the technology.
- Among respondents familiar with Wi-Fi, 13% have a Wi-Fi network at home (representing 3% of the general population). An additional 14% of the respondents aware of Wi-Fi said they were likely to purchase a Wi-Fi system in the next six months (which translates into a 50% increase in Wi-Fi adoption).

“While Wi-Fi is now used by just 3% of American consumers in the home, the population’s overall awareness and familiarity with Wi-Fi is excellent for an emerging technology,” said Mark Laver, an author of the study and a specialist in technology and wireless research at Ipsos.

“As Wi-Fi becomes embedded on new portable devices, prices for Wi-Fi will decline. As consumers become more aware of Wi-Fi’s capabilities and benefits, more people will be drawn to the marketplace. At this point, we consider our estimates to be extremely conservative.”

Almost two-thirds (61%) of Americans who have a Wi-Fi system installed (or intend to install one) are using Wi-Fi to connect a PC or laptop to the Internet.

### **Surmountable challenges ahead**

Still, while over half of those familiar with Wi-Fi understand its key benefits -- namely speed surpassing broadband and ease of home installation -- many are concerned or uncertain about home installation cost, as well as network security.

Additionally, two-fifths are unsure if there is a Wi-Fi access point close enough to their home. These pose significant, but surmountable, challenges to increasing market awareness and consumer use.

“Wi-Fi is poised for a telling year,” noted Laver. “Clearly people see Wi-Fi as a technology that will enable them to stay more connected to the Internet. This is a reflection of how truly engrained the Internet has become in our daily lives.”

Earlier Ipsos research has shown that advances in existing technology are quicker to be adopted by the public than new products. Wi-Fi is a hybrid, falling somewhere between Internet access, and cellular phone service, Laver said.

As more public areas add ‘hot-spots’, and more people adopt Wi-Fi in the home, the technology should move beyond its present nascent stage. As new laptops, cellular phones and PDAs include standard Wi-Fi capability, cost will become less of an issue, helping Wi-Fi technology take root in the U.S. Wi-Fi is poised to become a ‘must have’ technology for fast and convenient Internet use.

## **Methodology**

Data for this release was collected between January 21<sup>st</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2003, via a nationally representative U.S. sample of 1,008 respondents aged 18 and over. With a total sample size of 1,008, one can say with 95% certainty that the results are accurate to within +/- 2.94%.

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