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Assignment #3
Project Comparison

Compare at least three solutions to solve the problem presented below. Conclude with a recommendation with justification of which one to purchase.

College faculty need to access various internet services when traveling on official business. Some hotels, etc. that they go to provide free internet access, some do not. Some airports and other venues have free access but many do not.

Please make a justified recommendation for a solution that the College could implement to facilitate internet access by traveling faculty. Your justification should factor: cost; coverage; supported platforms; required system configuration; security and other factors you might think important.

I chose to use AT&T, Alltel and T-Mobile as the three wireless internet providers to possibly provide unlimited access to wireless internet to the faculty at the college while they travel.

I found the following information when researching what each could offer competitively:

AT&T
Alltel
T-Mobile

When I looked at the cost(s) associated with providing this service to the faculty, I found that it was fairly difficult to do so without more information on the traveling that's being done. I chose to assume that these faculty members consisted of about 5 people who travel frequently throughout the month. Next, I did not know if these faculty members were equipped with their own laptops. So, I am assumed they did and they all had the same laptop with the same OS and hardware.

So, I am looking at finding alternate methods of connecting to the internet via wireless connection, for 5 Dell laptops that use Windows XP.

All three companies offer about the same monthly pricing plan for wireless internet access. This was around \$59.99 a month for unlimited access anywhere the provider covers in the US. Additionally, each company required that a access card be purchased in order to connect to their network. Each of these averaged about the same cost wise which was around \$100 give or take.

The coverage options was deal breaker was for me. Alltel and T-Mobile only offer coverage within the US. AT&T provides this service outside the US. (Although different rates apply when you travel outside the US. If the faculty would need to do this often, we would need to reevaluate the plans.)

They all supported the same platforms. So I chose to use the USB card to provide access to the internet. Since this card is compatible with Windows XP and the minimum requirements for ram was around 128 mbps. The configuration for the hardware was issued with the card when the card is sent.

As far as the security on the networks. They each had several security measures in place to ensure the safety of their networks. The only risk might be associated with the laptop itself. I think that providing additional login codes to prevent any security breaches if the computer were to be misplaced or stolen.

Based on this information, I chose AT&T as the wireless internet service provider. I did so because they seemed to be the only company that was tailored to the individual needs of colleges. They also provided international wireless internet connection. All in all, feel that they would be the most effective choice for what we want to do.