TEACHING

Most Wi-Fi Problems Are Not Wi-Fi Problems

By **Keith Parsons, CWNE #3** · 2026-06-29 · originally on LinkedIn

Most "Wi-Fi" problems aren't Wi-Fi problems. The ticket says Wi-Fi. The fix is wired.

After 25 years in the field, I've stopped being surprised by it. The slow connection, the clients that won't get an address, the SSID that's "down", trace it back and the radio is usually doing its job. Something else, perhaps the cable, the PoE, the VLAN, the DHCP scope, the DNS, or the gateway are not.

Wi-Fi 6E and Wi-Fi 7 make this trap worse. Faster radios don't remove the wired-side. A fast air rate means nothing behind a flaky cable drop or a mis-configured DHCP pool.

Before you mount the next Access Point, do the boring work first:

Before installation: verify cable quality, PoE budget, the VLAN and DHCP scope, the gateway, DNS, and your management access. Confirm all of it BEFORE the AP gets power.

Installation: mount it.

After installation: document the AP, then confirm the SSIDs are broadcasting on the right VLANs with the correct IP pools.

A good cable tester earns its price. If the budget isn't there, ping, nslookup, and ipconfig verify the same wired path for free. The tool matters less than the habit.

Measure twice, cut once. Power the AP last.

Full checklist: https://lnkd.in/eyN__Jji

When you pull the last batch of "Wi-Fi" tickets you closed, how many actually lived on the wired side?

By Keith Parsons, CWNE #3, Wireless LAN Professionals. Free to read and share. Facts