TEACHING

Three MacBooks, Same Floor, Two Different Networks

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Three MacBooks Walked the Same Floor and Landed on Two Different Networks

An M1, an M2 and an M4, side by side, same route, same 40 minutes, all logging every hand-off.

They came back with 26, 37 and 39 roams.

The M1 spent all 26 of its roams on 5 GHz, across channels 36 through 165. It has no 6 GHz radio, so it never had the option. The two 6E laptops lived on 6 GHz and handed off 40 to 50 percent more often, because 6 GHz cells are smaller and you cross more of them.

Now the number that changed the design conversation on that job. 4 of every 10 of the customer's laptops on Wi-Fi 6 - but without a 6 GHz radio.

4 in 10 of their laptops can never leave 5 GHz. Ever.

That makes 5 GHz a primary band at that site, carrying a large and permanent share of their clients. It gets planned, budgeted and validated like one. Treating it as the legacy layer would have quietly under-served 40% laptops in their fleet. Your own fleet will come back with its own number.

None of this shows up in a heat map. Coverage looks fine. It only shows up when you walk the floor with the actual client hardware and record every hand-off: which access point it left, which it joined, the signal on both, the channel, the band, the dwell time.

I have started running the Roaming Log in the WLAN Pros Toolbox on live jobs for exactly this reason.

The next time someone tells you the Wi-Fi roams badly, ask which client they were holding. It MATTERS!

How many of you have a current radio inventory of the fleet you support, and would you bet your 5 GHz plan on it?

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