



MEDUSA

UNDERSTANDING BANDWIDTH

A GUIDE FOR NEW COWORKS



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FEATURED INDUSTRY EXPERT



Paul Orrock

Wi-Fi Specialist, Yardi Medusa

One of the integral components to a successful coworking space is available bandwidth to suit the needs of all your members. Because this is such a vital component, it is also one that can be monetized to drive additional revenue for you as an operator.

We spoke to Paul Orrock, a Wi-Fi specialist with Yardi whose role is to understand operators bandwidth needs and to accurately match them with the correct configuration of Yardi Medusa Wi-Fi solutions and infrastructure. Orrock explained how to approach bandwidth management in order to maximise revenue.

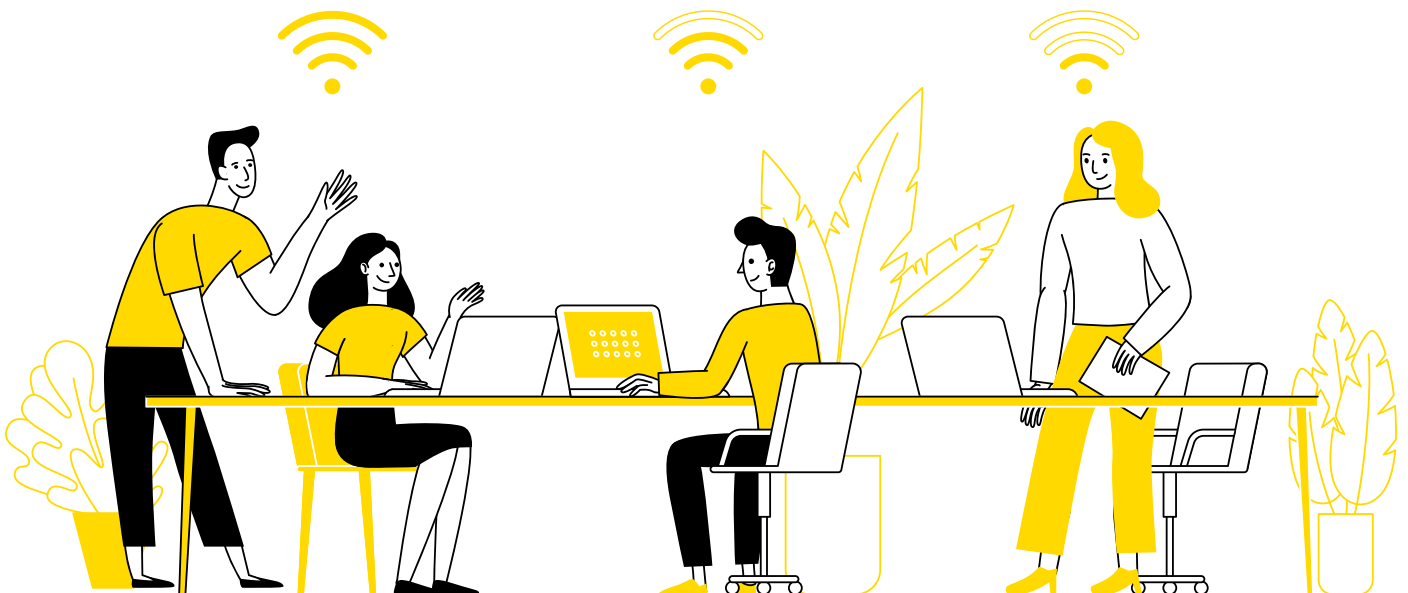
1. ADDED BANDWIDTH PACKAGES

First and foremost, you need to know what your member is trying to achieve with the bandwidth they need. Bandwidth can be presented in many different ways to the consumer, and it's important to be able to put yourself in their shoes in order to attempt to provide the appropriate solutions for them.

"In many instances, a base level entry offering into a coworking space will be an 'all you can eat' style package," Orrock said. This will include your desk space, furniture, lighting, reception services, coffee and beverage options, and of course your internet connection. However, as the number of desks and members increases, so does device usage. Every member is likely to be connecting three or more devices to the internet. Naturally, this causes quite the impact on the bandwidth that each member is expected to receive. You could easily be supporting up to 250 devices wirelessly when there are nowhere near 100 members in your space at a given time.

So, what is the solution? There has to be some sort of acceptable use policy implemented in your space. This will ensure that members aren't abusing or hogging the bandwidth to themselves or to a given company in the space. From the base package, you can then increase bandwidth for those who need it.

For example, you may be offering 10mbps as the standard. But if a business comes to you with needs such as website hosting, graphic design, heavy uploads and downloads, you can then upsell additional bandwidth to their team. You can even lay out staged packages for the appropriate member type such as "conventional worker", "media worker" or a "highly interactive worker", in which services and speeds increase, but make sure that the majority of your members who will still be at the base level, still receive adequate services



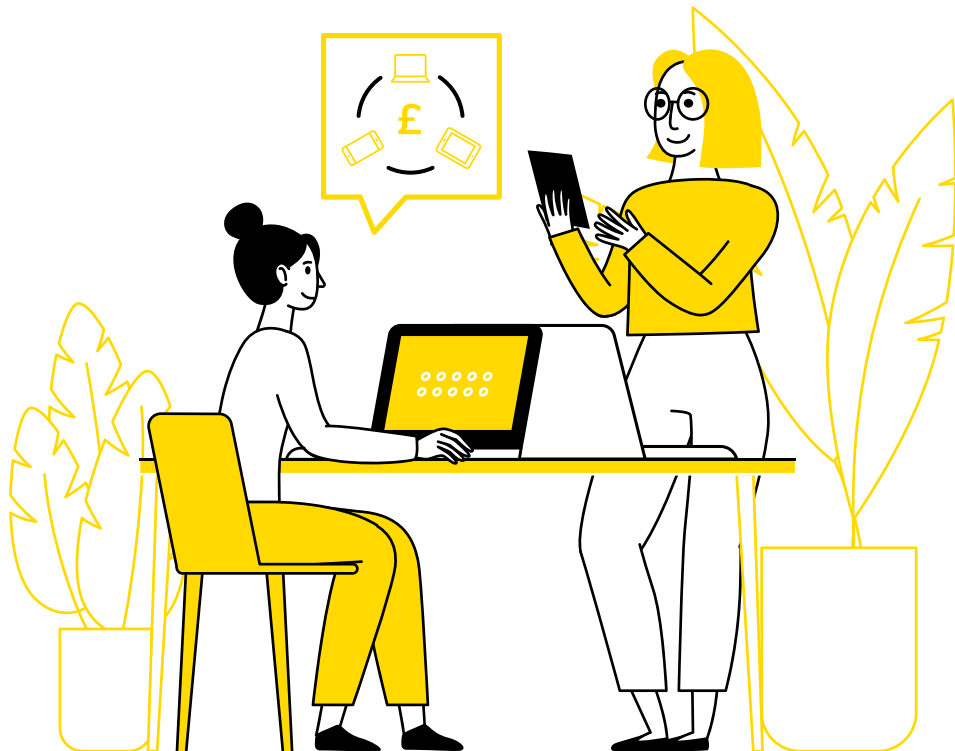
2. VOICE PLANS

Providing voice services to your members is absolutely a revenue opportunity. We've reached the point where some coworking operators are no longer offering landline handsets on every desk. They are simply offering an app for the member's mobile device(s) that will jump onto the Wi-Fi and be a direct dial into the mobile device for external callers. That's a service you can offer and monetize based on its simplicity and convenience. It also aids in the modern tech feel of your coworking operation as a whole.



4. ADDITIONAL DEVICE PLANS

Have an up-front conversation with your members. If you allow 3-4 connected devices per desk, or 20 connected devices per conference room, possibly, there could be additional device charges that the member incurs. “The Medusa solution allows us to allocate the number of devices within a member account, and if they go over, there’s an alert to the operator in which he/she can then offer the additional device package to the member,” Orrock explained. If the member is in fact using a device for business purposes, such as a table or wireless printer, they are unlikely to decline a charge for this service.

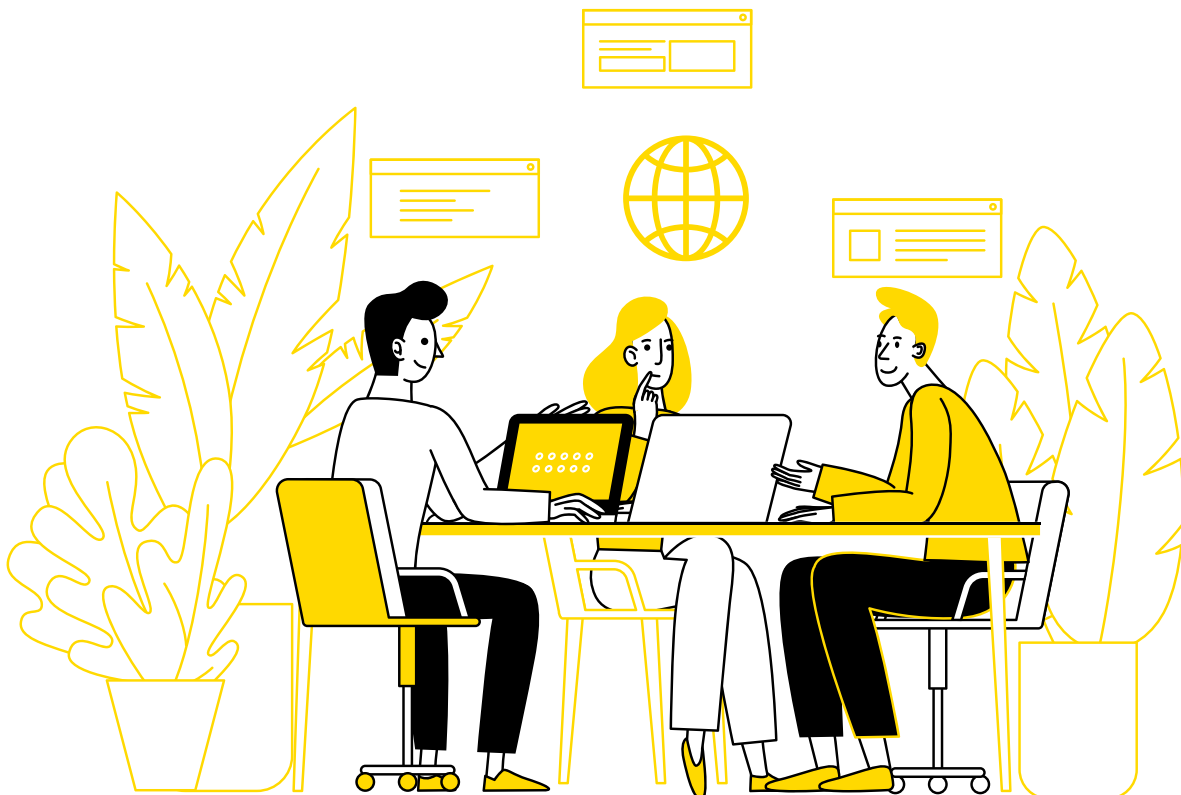


5. CONTENT CONCERNS

The workplace, as fun and engaging as you may be able to make it, is still in the end primarily a space for business. There has to be content restrictions as to what is appropriate or inappropriate use of the internet in the workspace. “Establish enhanced service plans for users who want the minimum number of restrictions,” Orrock explained.

This can be tricky. While there are sites widely considered inappropriate for a workplace, there are members who will need to access social media sites or news and entertainment sites for their business. Shaping use with the Medusa platform is a significant way to maximise bandwidth albeit not a revenue driver per se. It is common to have a menu of a few bandwidth plans where peak bandwidth available is the main control.

Maximising the revenue from your bandwidth comes down to tailoring packages and add-on amenities based on your members’ needs while maintaining a baseline offering that still satisfies the majority of members who will stick with the initial “all you can eat” concept that has popularised coworking spaces to begin with.



coworking@Yardi.com
YardiKube.co.uk