



Wi-fi Survey Summary

For approximately one month, from October 10th through November 9th, 2007, interns working for the Citizens Jury Project of the Fund for Modern Courts carried out a survey of jurors concerning wireless internet access (wi-fi). The following is a summary of the project and its results.

Eleven interns surveyed jurors at eight locations.¹ Interns operate booths at nine locations, but one, in the Bronx, does not yet offer wi-fi. 125 jurors took part in the survey. Others who were approached declined to participate.

Primarily, interns approached those who were using wi-fi. Other jurors, mostly those who struck interns as “tech savvy” (perhaps because they were using other electronic devices), were also approached.

Jurors were asked five questions:

- 1. Did you know that there was wi-fi access before you came to jury duty? How did you find out about it?**
- 2. What do you think of the wi-fi service in the courthouse?**
- 3. How are you using wi-fi – for work, news, entertainment, email?**
- 4. Have you had any difficulty using the wi-fi? (Is it slow/fast?)**
- 5. In general what do you think of the court’s efforts to keep up with modern technology for jurors? How does it affect your perception of jury duty?**

A brief summary of the responses follows.

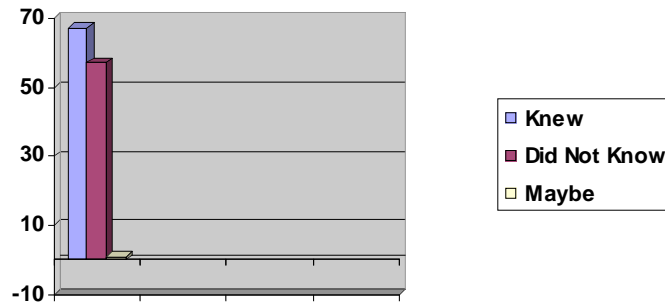
- 1. Did you know that there was wi-fi access before you came to jury duty? How did you find out about it?**

Of the 125 jurors who took part in the survey, sixty-seven (67) answered ‘Yes’ and fifty-seven (57) said, ‘No’. One (1) juror said ‘Maybe, I don’t know.’

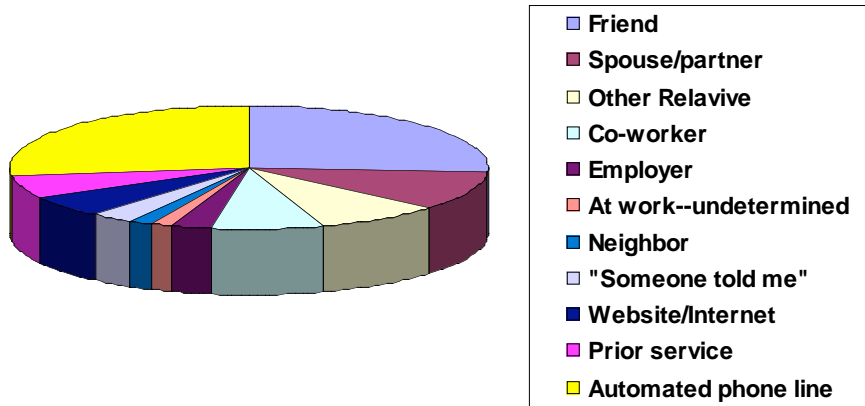
Included in the ‘No’ category were the responses from jurors who said they knew about wi-fi from the clerks—apparently meaning that the jurors who answered this way had found out about the service after arriving at the courthouse.

Of the sixty-seven (67) who knew beforehand, almost half had learned of wi-fi availability from a friend, spouse/partner or other relative. More than one-quarter learned from the use of technology, mostly from the automated phone line. Not all of the jurors who answered this question specified how they knew about the service.

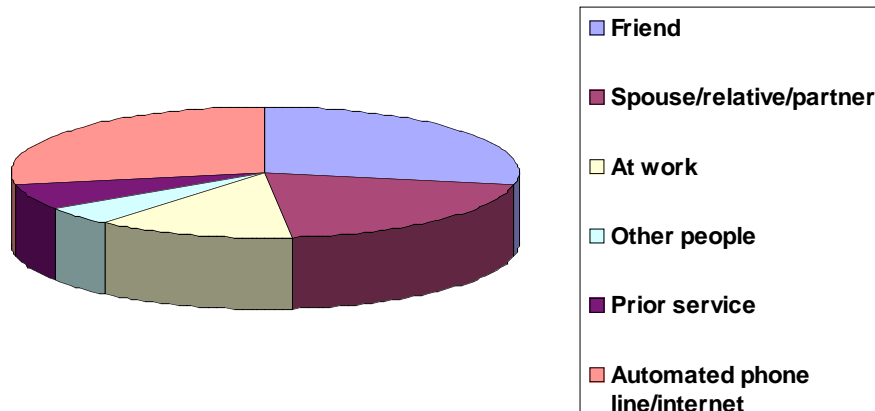
Number of jurors who knew/didn't know



How jurors knew



How jurors knew—another view



2. What do you think of the wi-fi service in the courthouse?

Overwhelmingly, the response to this question was positive, with comments such as “Great,” “Excellent,” “Wonderful,” and statements like: “Something to do while you are waiting” and “It helps. We get work done. The time passes quicker.” One juror qualified his remark, saying “. . . but they need to grant access to more sites. I want to play games on Yahoo but can’t.”

3. How are you using wi-fi – for work, news, entertainment, email?

Many of those surveyed said they use wi-fi for work/business correspondence, email (unclear if this meant for work or personal use), research, news, entertainment and general use. A good number stated all of the above.

4. Have you had any difficulty using the wi-fi? (Is it slow/fast?)

The vast majority of surveyed jurors indicated that they had not had any difficulty using the wi-fi, and that the wi-fi was fast. One juror said “It’s fast, but I can’t access websites I want...”

5. In general what do you think of the court’s efforts to keep up with modern technology for jurors? How does it affect your perception of jury duty?

While there was very positive feedback in regard to wi-fi in particular, there was a split on whether the availability of the service affected perceptions of jury duty.

Some responded as these juror did:

- Wi-fi is great and it helps my perception since it is not a complete waste of time.
- [It] ease[s] the burden of being on jury duty.
- The modern technology for jurors makes jury duty so much better, I can do so much here.
- The court is doing a good job of keeping up with technology. This makes jury duty easier.
- One juror said “Very helpful to get work done while waiting. Public laptops are a start. They need word, excel, acrobat. Should let you open/save attachments on email.s.”

Other jurors, however, while acknowledging the benefits of wi-fi, said that they did not perceive any change in jury service.

ⁱ The courthouse locations were: Manhattan—60 Centre Street, 100 Centre Street, 111 Centre Street 3rd Fl., and 111 Centre Street 11th Fl.; Brooklyn—320 Jay Street and 360 Adams; and Queens—Kew Gardens and Jamaica..