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AT&T, Verizon bolster WiFi offerings

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AT&T and Verizon appear to be ratcheting up their WiFi strategies, with each announcing expanded WiFi offerings for their current customers.

First, Verizon announced earlier this week that customers of its wired FiOS and high-speed Internet services will be able to access for free more than 100,000 hotspots through a renewed agreement between Verizon and Boingo Wireless.

However, the deal does not include customers of Verizon Wireless. A Verizon Wireless spokeswoman noted the wireless carrier was not referenced in the announcement (which originated in the carrier's wireline division) and declined to comment further.

However, that's not to say Verizon Wireless remains opposed to WiFi. Indeed, the carrier offers a number of smartphones that feature WiFi and has said it considers the technology complimentary to its wide area wireless network.

As for AT&T--which has long offered WiFi access to both its wireline and wireless customers--the carrier announced yesterday a new agreement with retailer Barnes & Noble to offer free WiFi to all of the store's shoppers (previously it was only available for free to AT&T customers). Interestingly, the deal also includes an e-book component; WiFi users (as well as iPhone and BlackBerry owners) will be able to access 700,000 Barnes & Nobel e-books. The news trails on the heels of AT&T's WiFi performance in the second quarter. The carrier said it handled nearly 15 million WiFi connections on its network, a 41 percent increase over the first quarter.

For more:

- see this [release](#) [1] from AT&T
- see this [release](#) [2] from Verizon
- see this *Denver Business Journal* [article](#) [3]
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