

G.S.D. ASSOCIATES, INC.



Why have a Wireless LAN Site Analysis?

This is a common question asked by companies planning the installation of a wireless network or those who already have their wireless network installed. After all wireless is marketed as “Plug and Play”. But remember this marketing is focused primarily on home or single Access Point installations. Multiple Access Point wireless facility networks become part of a company’s network infrastructure. A poorly performing wireless network will cost far more in terms of productivity and user satisfaction than a WLAN Site Analysis.

The WLAN Site Analysis addresses many of the unknown invisible site specific issues that can be encountered with wireless networks. With wired LANs the network layout is known. Cables run from point A to point B and that’s basically it. There are only a few general cabling issues that can impact performance. Not so with wireless, where radio signals are broadcast throughout a facility many site specific concerns may exist which can only be revealed through a comprehensive WLAN Site Analysis.

Common wireless network issues such as:

- Radio Interference from machinery or fixtures
- Signal Blocking walls, racks or product
- Weak Areas and Dead Zones
- Neighboring wireless networks broadcasting into a facility
- Access Point locations
- Access Point channel usage

Are all addressed in a WLAN Site Analysis. These issues apply to both pre-installation and existing wireless networks. What are the consequences of any of these on the performance of a WLAN? Simply put – Poor wireless device performance.

In contrast, with a WLAN Site Analysis Report in hand, not only does it provide a picture of how the wireless network looks, any revealed issues can be overcome by engineering the wireless network to accommodate site specific issues.

This applies to existing wireless networks as well. Having a documented picture of network coverage can be invaluable when planning wireless user additions or relocations. As a reference the WLAN Site Analysis can help predetermine the coverage in any facility focus area. It can also indicate when additional Access Points may be needed to extend wireless coverage.

A sample of an actual WLAN Site Analysis report is available upon request.