

Technological Impact on Compensation

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Technology plays a bigger role than ever in MT/HDS compensation. Technology is broken into three categories for purposes of this paper.

Back-End Speech Recognition

When traditional transcription is replaced with back-end speech recognition editing, it is important to compare increased production with decreased time spent on transcribing. Many technology companies advertise that MTs/HDSs will be able to increase their production by up to three times their normal production per hour. Note: Results may vary by vendor. In some instances back-end editing will double the production of an experienced transcriptionist. However, this can take months or years to achieve, and this depends on a variety of factors. Some contributing factors include the fact that individual dictator speaking styles impact the ability for the speech engine to learn; it can take time for the technology to learn speech patterns, and dictators who are disorganized in their dictation “confuse” the system (for example, jumping around in the report). It is important to note that the technology differs from vendor to vendor, with some speech recognition engines producing higher quality draft documents for editing than others. With all these factors, it is important for management to play a role in the standardization of voice recognition. If all MTs/HDSs are not following set rules or a style guide to produce reports in the same manner, the speech engine will not learn the profiles correctly—thus making the platform/program less efficient. In addition, not all MTs/HDSs will be able to double their production, and those that do may take different amounts of time to achieve this.

It is important to note that traditional transcription and voice recognition editing are two completely different skill sets. Going back and forth from traditional to speech can affect an MT’s/HDS’s production as they are constantly changing gears. Remember, you are paying the MT/HDS to produce a complete and accurate report, regardless of whether you are utilizing speech recognition technology or not.

High-Speed Internet

High-speed Internet has enabled MTs/HDSs to work remotely, either for a facility or an MTSO. The premise is that the connection is as fast as that in a facility and that MTs/HDSs can produce what they traditionally transcribed onsite, but this may not be the case given that Internet speeds vary. This could affect the speed in which a report is able to be completed and uploaded, dictation downloaded, and research (search speeds), which all affect the production of the MT/HDS—and thus their compensation. It is suggested that facilities or MTSOs have a minimum Internet speed that the MT/HDS must have in order to work from home, but Internet speeds can still vary significantly.

It has also been noted that many organizations do not allow satellite Internet—the concerns being that the speed typically is not fast enough and also questioning the security of the satellite. Be sure to check on your organizational requirements to determine if this is an option.

Transcription Platforms

Electronic transcription platforms allow MTs/HDSs to make corrections on the actual platform rather than a local PC. This eliminates significant down time spent on corrections. Some platforms have built-in spellcheckers, autocorrect functions, and oftentimes a word expander. Using a word expander can substantially increase production of a seasoned MT/HDS, using fewer keystrokes to achieve the same final line counts. In those systems that do not have built-in tools, additional tools and training will be required. Another important aspect of the transcription platform is whether the platform is integrated in such a way that the patient demographic information is pulled in automatically or if the MT/HDS has to put in all patient information manually. Of course, training plays a very critical role in the success of an MT/HDS using any platform.

Another issue would be if the facility or MTSO utilizes multiple platforms in which to transcribe. This creates issues with the time it takes to log out of one system and into another, to switch gears if the programs are different, and to learn the keyboard shortcuts of one versus another. MTs/HDSs are often asked to switch between multiple platforms during a single workday, leading to inefficiency, productivity loss and at times, confusion. Compensation needs to take into consideration the time necessary to switch between platforms, learn multiple processes, and the disruption of concentration and workflow.

Some organizations may require the transcriptionist to transcribe directly into the EHR. This creates an entirely different set of challenges, including the process of counting lines, quality control, and the ability to edit prior to the physician signing the report. Other factors that affect production when using an EHR are having to use multiple screens in order to see all the documents necessary and going back and forth from old reports to the report you are working on, having to save them each time. EMRs were designed with providers in mind, not MTs/HDSs, and this could have an effect on production.

When considering compensation, it is important to remember that learning a new platform is not usually a plug-and-play solution, and it can take a significant amount of time to learn the features and processes of a new platform. A training compensation plan should be in place to ensure fair

compensation for learning new platforms and processes.

In summary, while productivity may be increased by all of the above technologic improvements and changes, it is important to compare hourly production and rates paid using new technology with production and hourly pay on previously-used technology. **It should not be automatically assumed that production will double or triple when moving to a new platform.** It is important to evaluate the amount of the increase prior to altering the MT/HDS compensation rate. Training needs to be comprehensive and the proper amount of time given to this training in order for the technology benefits to be maximized.

What Is Bandwidth?



CAPACITY *SPEED?*



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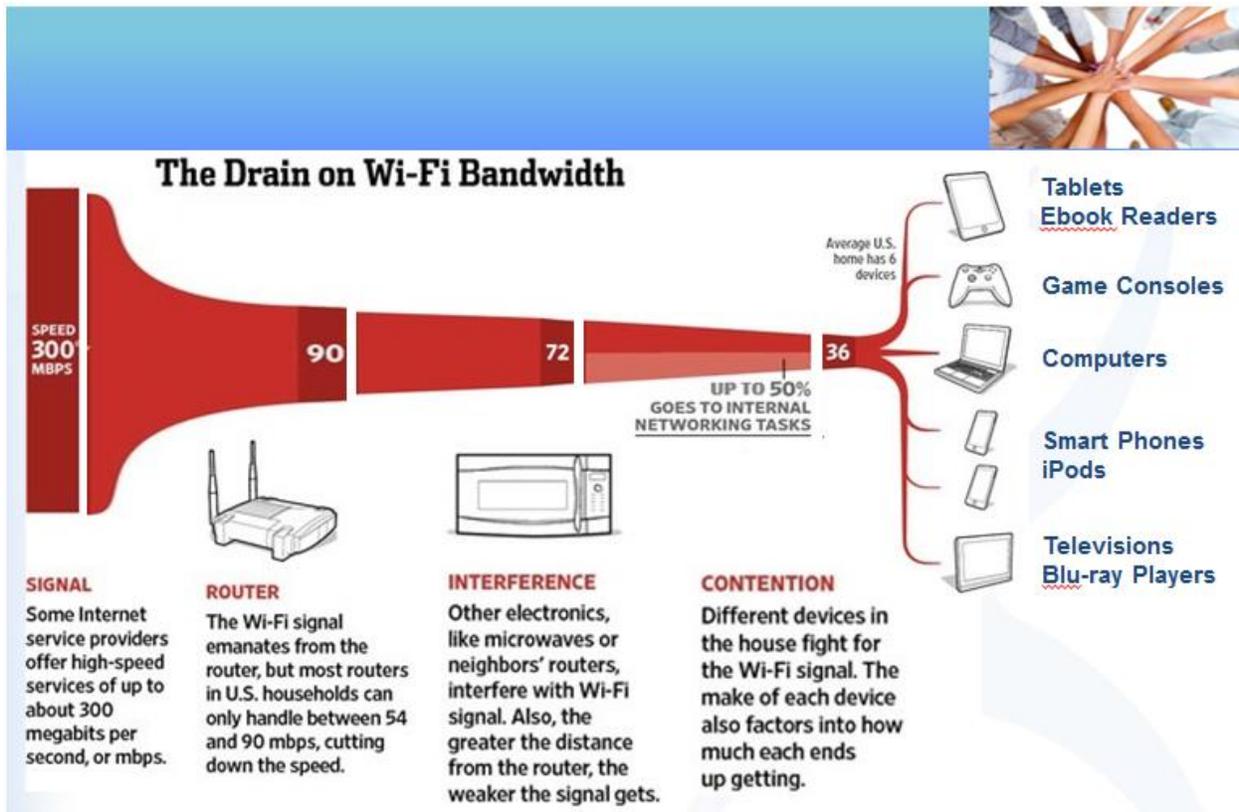


How many people think they have a speedier Internet connection today than 5 years ago?

What if I were to tell you that the speed hasn't changed? Your data has always moved at nearly the speed of light.

Capacity is what bandwidth is all about. You can do more simultaneously and move bigger files in less time.

Thank you to [Just Associates](#) who has provided the information on bandwidth.



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What Can I Do About It?



Understand Your Data Needs

- Web applications & email vs. VOIP & video sharing

Refresh Your Environment

- Reboot your computer
- Reboot your router

Remove Limitations

- When possible use a wired connection instead of WiFi
- Eliminate bandwidth contention & wireless interference

Verify & Increase Your Bandwidth

- Verify using a site like www.speedtest.net
- Increase your data plan

Understand your needs:

- OWA and IDM are low bandwidth users while Go To Meeting and Groove are high bandwidth users.

Refresh:

- Reboot your computer at least once every 3 days and your router every couple of months (routers are just specialized computers).

Limitations:

- Contention: Be aware of the other devices using your bandwidth.
- Interference: Look for a better location for your Wireless router.

Increase your Bandwidth:

- Speedtest can be misleading when ISPs use “speed boost.”
- 99% of DSL plans have limited upload speeds (less than 1Mb/s). Consider options with faster upload speeds if you use programs like Groove and Go-To-Meeting.
- COMCAST Modem upgrade – Docsis 3 for faster speeds and re-activate.

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