

Cuba, amid the censorship, wades into WiFi

January 10 2015



Cubans visit a cybercafe in Havana on June 21, 2013

Cuba, where Internet access is largely limited to government employees and pricey pay-by-hour public access, plans to start offering wireless service for the first time this month, officials said Saturday.

Wireless Internet connections—for laptops, smartphones or tablets—will get a limited rollout through state-run Etecsa in Cuba's second-largest city, Santiago de Cuba.

"Santiago (de Cuba) has been picked by Etecsa to test wifi service late this month," read a statement on the website of the Union of Cuban Journalists, a government association.

Cuba, the only communist-run country in the Americas, allows some locals such as journalists, doctors and athletes to have Internet access at home.

But anyone who wants their own router—for a WiFi signal—needs permission from the Communications Ministry first.

Tech-savvy young Cubans often piggy-back on the signals of hotels and government offices.

The journalists' site said WiFi access—unclear where for now—will cost \$4.5 an hour. That is the same rate, unaffordable to many, as that offered at public Internet cafes.

Most Cubans make under \$20 a month.

Last year, 3.4 percent of homes in Cuba had Internet access — one of the world's lowest rates, according to international technology authorities.

© 2015 AFP

Citation: Cuba, amid the censorship, wades into WiFi (2015, January 10) retrieved 1 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2015-01-cuba-censorship-wades-wifi.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--