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## EVDO - Broadband Wireless That Isn't Wi-Fi?

If you've been in a Verizon or Sprint wireless store lately, you might have seen advertising for services that use EVDO and how they will change the way you use your phone, or laptop, by getting "broadband" speeds through a wireless network. What is EVDO? And what does it *really* deliver?

EVDO stands for Evolution Data Only or Evolution Data Optimized. It is a wireless access technology that is based on the 1xRTT standard (also known as CDMA2000, IMT CDMA Multi-Carrier) and can support speeds from 144Kbps to 2Mbps. The idea behind it is to provide high speed wireless Internet access from within the footprints of wireless carriers, providing a way to get high speed Internet access without the need to be in a Wi-Fi "hotspot".

For home-based business owners, the "upside" of EVDO-based wireless access services, is that you'll be able to get broadband-like Internet access for your "smartphone" or notebook in your car, at a customer site or on a park bench. The "downside" is that EVDO services tend to be a bit more expensive (Verizon's service is \$59.99 per month versus Wi-Fi services that average around \$21.99 per month) than traditional Wi-Fi services from a "hotspot" and, are somewhat slower as well (2MB tops versus 11, 54 or 158Mbps from a wireless "hot spot"). Additionally, EVDO services require a special wireless access card for your laptop (some newer laptops come with them or offer them as options - Lenovo ThinkPads providing a good example - Verizon's card retails for \$49.99) that is more expensive than a traditional 802.11a/b/g wireless access card (and since most notebooks now come with 802.11b/g standard...).

The bottom line is that if your business requires Internet access from anywhere, at any time, EVDO-based services are a good fit. But be prepared for higher costs than those of Wi-Fi "hotspot" services. Maybe a quick drop into the local Starbucks for coffee - and access - is still the way to go...

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