by Alan J. Pierce, EdD

Is it Time to Replace Your Old Wireless Router?

"If it ain't broke don't fix it" is terrible English but a good motto to live by. Few of us have the funding to replace material things in our lives on a whim rather than based on need. When an item stops working it is a no brainer that it is time to determine if the correct action is to get it fixed or replaced. It is much harder to determine when it is time to replace an item that is still functional but perhaps no longer capable of meeting your needs.

Before telling you about the new D-Link DGL 5500 Gaming Router (photo 1), I want to first help you determine if your should consider replacing your current one. If your wireless router is more than a few years old there is a good chance that when you purchased it your goal was for it to only support a laptop computer and perhaps one game console. If you are an average household your old router is now possibly supporting smartphones, iPads, multiple video game consoles, Netflix/Hulu streaming boxes, wireless printers, wireless security cameras, and some Smart TVs. When these devices are on they all share the Wi-Fi bandwidth that your wireless router provides. If they all perform adequately there is no reason for you to consider upgrading your system.
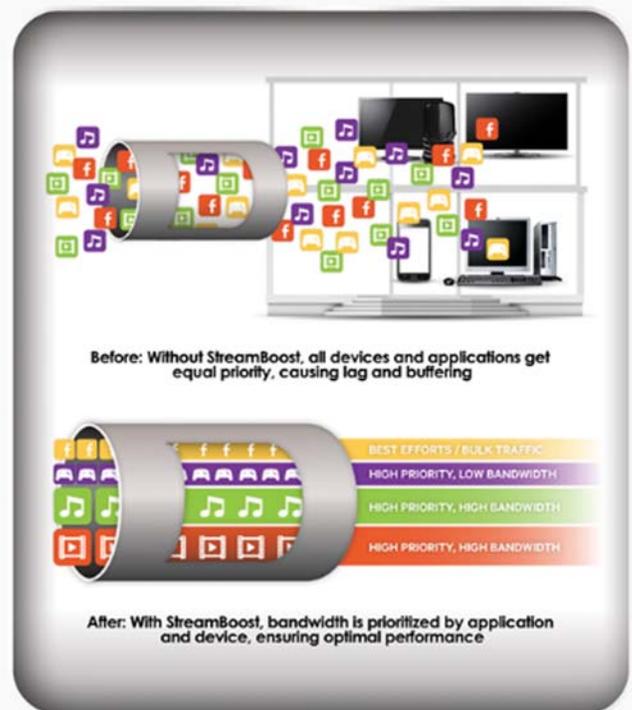
If you are not a gamer you probably are ok even if all of these other devices, at times, are using your bandwidth. When playing a video game over the internet the action takes place moment by moment. I am not a gamer but I would expect that if your opponent has a faster wireless router you just might be able to blame your loses on the speed of your equipment. Other signs of a wireless router no longer meeting your needs could include very slow website uploads, streamed video freezes, and lost sync between video and sound.

If you decide now is the time to purchase a new router you will want one that can allocate and prioritize bandwidth to the different devices running on your network. The D-Link AC1300 (DGL-5500) Gaming Router has a performance technology created by Qualcomm called Streamboost ™ . See photo 2. This technology lets this D-Link router act like a traffic cop

Photo 1 D-Link AC1300 (DGL-5500) Gaming Router

allocating bandwidth to your different network devices based on their moment to moment needs. This traffic shaping is not limited to identifying the kind of devices on your network, it also takes into account the actual application or games that are running on your different devices. This router also has automatic cloud updating which means its performance will further improve over time.

Before: Without StreamBoost, all devices and applications get equal priority, causing lag and buffering

BEST EFFORTS / BULK TRAFFIC
HIGH PRIORITY, LOW BANDWIDTH
HIGH PRIORITY, HIGH BANDWIDTH
HIGH PRIORITY, HIGH BANDWIDTH

After: With StreamBoost, bandwidth is prioritized by application and device, ensuring optimal performance

Qualcomm's StreamBoost™ in Action
Photo 2

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