Q&A – *Learn All About a VPN*
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Presented by Don Arrowsmith, President
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Q - Mel: Do the percentages on slowdown apply across the speeds? (I have 600 MB)
A – Don:. If you are using a commercial service, your home speed won't be involved at all. Rather, speed will depend on getting from the, say, café to the VPN service and then their outbound speed, the number of their other users at the same time, the destination URL, and many more factors.

If you set up your own VPN server at home, your effective speed from a remote location will depend on both your download and upload speed, destination URL, etc. You will see some slowdowns at any speed. I recommend trying any VPN before making a long-term commitment – all of the commercial VPNs have a monthly rate before you sign up for a year or more. Many have a free trial period of a week or a month so that you can see if it meets your expectations..

Q - Sikander: What is torrenting?
A. Torrenting is a file-sharing protocol that lets you gather pieces of a file from many different sources rather than just one download site. It has nothing to do with VPN. Google it for more information.

Q - John: Can the PI do double duty as a PI hole and VPN?
A. Definitely yes. See about half-way into the article I reference about setting up a VPN server on a Pi as he includes a note about including Pi-Hole and gives a link to installation instructions.

Q – Nan: Once installed on your router, can you enable and disable the VPN as needed (perhaps when streaming on your TV)?
A. The VPN software on the router is just enabled and then it's up to the client software on the remote device (your laptop, smartphone, …) to start a VPN tunnel or not. So, yes, you can start and stop using VPN at will. There's no appreciable time delay to get it started or stopped.

When streaming on your (smart?) TV, a VPN would only be involved if you set up an outbound (client) VPN on your home router. Among smart TVs, I am only aware of Android TVs having a VPN client available – in the Play Store.

Q - is it advisable to install a VPN between a laptop and our home wifi router (mac Airport)?
A. If you have 'questionable' neighbors who live within range of your Wi-Fi, it might be a good idea. Under normal conditions I don't think it would be good to always use a VPN because of the speed penalty.