

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Viya Mobile Hotspot Devices Finally Arrive. You'll Have To Enter A Lottery For Your Chance At One

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Viya has finally received what it said was a "large inventory" of mobile hotspot devices that are available at its customer experience centers in St. Thomas and St. Croix. The devices were [supposed to arrive earlier](#), but Viya has blamed the delay on shipping bottlenecks.

According to the company, because the devices are in high demand and the large inventory will not be enough to service all customers, it is launching a lottery system that's open to current Viya customers (both business and residential) until Wednesday. The move is an attempt to distribute the WiFi hotspot devices as fairly as possible, Viya said through a release issued Saturday.

Once the names are submitted, Viya will on Monday, Dec. 11 start randomly selecting names and assign 150 appointments per day for as long as supplies last, the company said. "This system was developed to match customer demand with the estimated number of orders which can be processed in a day," it said.

Interested customers can signup [here](#) to enter their names in the lottery. Viya said customers must have a valid email address and account number to enter the lottery. Lottery winners will be contacted directly and invited to come in for scheduled appointments, according to the company.

As for the data plan for the hotspot internet devices, called MiFi, Viya developed what it is calling "restoration mobile data price plans", which the company said are temporary plans until it can fully restore its wired customers.

"We crafted these plans to offer our current customer base a temporary Internet solution as we continue to repair the wired network. These restoration mobile data price plans will provide an alternate means to access the Internet to as many customers as possible on both St. Thomas and St. Croix," Viya said.

According to the release, there are two plans: The first costs \$50 and offers 6 megabits per second (Mbps) and up, according to Viya. The company did not clarify whether the 6Mbps speed is realized for both upload and download. The second plan costs \$60 and offers 12Mbps and up, again with no clarity on whether these speeds are equal for uploading and downloading content.

The \$50 plan comes with a limit of 3 gigabits of data use per day, after which the speed with slow considerably to 256 kilobits per second (Kbps). The maximum monthly available gigabits per month for the \$50 plan is 20.

For the \$60 plan, the speed slows to 256 Kbps after 5 gigabits of use per day. The monthly available gigabits per month for this plan is 30, according to Viya.

Compared to the AT&T mobile hotspot devices, Viya's offering is extremely attractive. For example, AT&T offers 8 gigabits per per month for \$75. You can use as much data as you please, and consume your entire data in a day. If you run out of data in the AT&T plan, you can purchase more -- \$10 for 2 gigabits -- until the next renewal date of your plan.

Viya did not say whether there's an option to purchase more data if one's monthly data cap is consumed.