



Mountain Telephone

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# CONNECTION



**Protect  
and serve**

ProtectIQ keeps you  
secure online

**CHRONIC PAIN  
CONQUEROR**

**CHRISTMAS  
TREE FARMS**



# DIGITAL DEFENSE

## Mountain employee sees firsthand the benefits of ProtectIQ

Story by JEN CALHOUN | Photography by WILLIAM LEMASTER

Paul Cantrell says his co-workers at Mountain Telephone like to give him a hard time about being a techie. “I don’t think I am,” he says with a chuckle. “But I guess I was one of the first people around here who used a smart-phone. And when everybody else had one laptop, I maybe had two or three.”

So, when his co-workers learned the ProtectIQ security service had been fending off thousands of potential malware attacks through Paul’s home network, they just shook their heads. “They were like, ‘Yep, it figures it would be Paul, because he’s got the most gadgets,’” Paul says.

### FAMILY, CHURCH AND FARM

When he was growing up in Eastern Kentucky in the 1980s and ’90s, Paul’s family didn’t have much use for technology. They were focused on three things — family, church and farm. They worked hard and then hung out together on the front porch in their downtime. “We were those people sitting on the porch and waving at everybody who went by,” he says.

It stayed that way for years, too. When Paul’s neighbors were getting the latest gadgets and television sets, the Cantrells stayed firmly stuck in a world of black-and-white TV. A lone air conditioning unit cooled one room, and a powerful

green fan served the rest of the house. “I think we got our first VCR when I was 16,” says Paul, who is 44 and a plant engineer at Mountain. “It was a present for the whole family at Christmas.”

### THE DIGITAL AGE ARRIVES

But things changed when he started studying engineering and surveying. He started paying more attention to the newer technologies that dominated the field.

As a roaming maintenance man in the early days of his career at Mountain, Paul needed a way to find locations quickly. “If someone was sick or off, it was kind of hard to figure out where I needed to be in all four of those counties,” he says. “Then, I learned there were digital maps, so I got one of the early smartphones to help me pull them up while I was out on the road.”

He admits that’s probably where he started getting his techie reputation at work. At home, his family is no different than most when it comes to devices and gadgetry. Paul, his wife and their son use about 10 devices on their home Wi-Fi system, including security cameras, mobile phones, gaming systems and smart TVs.



◀ Paul, an engineer at Mountain who uses technology to his advantage, has been branded a techie by his co-workers.



## MALWARE ATTACKS

One day earlier this year, Paul was surprised when he learned that ProtectIQ — a digital security service that comes with his Mountain WiFi Advantage plan — had deflected more than 2,000 attempts to spread malware onto his wife’s phone. Once malware gets into one device on a Wi-Fi network, it can spread throughout all connected devices. Hackers can then access passwords and other sensitive information, a process that can lead to identity theft.

But that didn’t happen to Paul’s

family. As fast as the hits came, the ProtectIQ system knocked them back. Paul says he asked a buddy at work to take a look. “Those hits just kept coming and coming,” he says. “We still don’t know what it was.”

What they do know is that they’re protected in a world that can make people feel more exposed every day. Paul also likes that he can feel safe using the gadgets he’s grown to appreciate. “I was glad I had it,” he says of ProtectIQ. “It filters everything out, so I don’t really have to worry about anything.”



▲ Paul uses multiple devices at home and at work.

### WiFi Advantage includes:

- Wi-Fi 6 router
- ExperienceIQ suite
- ProtectIQ suite
- Remote support
- Free repair or replacement
- Wi-Fi assessment
- MRTC Total Command App
- On-site support for Wi-Fi
- Wi-Fi 6 cutting-edge technology
- Device connection assistance
- Extend for whole-home coverage



## Get protected with WiFi Advantage

Not too long ago, our devices were tethered to wires. Whole-home Wi-Fi systems have freed us up to do a wide range of things wirelessly, like keeping tabs on our homes while we’re away and running multiple devices at the same time. But as revolutionary as Wi-Fi systems have been, they still need protection from cyber criminals who can gain access by spreading malware.

Malware can spread through a home’s Wi-Fi system just like a biological virus, eventually infecting everything it touches. Once it’s in there, hackers can find bank accounts and other valuable personal and business information. Mountain Telephone offers ProtectIQ through its WiFi Advantage system. For just a few dollars more on your bill each month, you’ll have access to a Wi-Fi 6 router and a whole host of repair services, support and protection, including ProtectIQ.

ProtectIQ is a digital security service that protects all the devices connected to your home Wi-Fi network. That means it can keep your family safe from hackers and identity thieves on your smart TVs, security systems, laptops, mobile phones, gaming systems, tablets and anything else that uses your home’s Wi-Fi.