

**The Great Disasters of Community Wireless**  
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**ABSTRACT**

One useful way of understanding how community wireless initiatives might succeed is to ask, "How do they fail?" This talk presents and analyzes stories of noble and ignoble failure from a study tracking 60 community wireless initiatives in six countries, and from the last hundred years of the history of related cooperative action in other communication networks. Points of failure are technical, but also organizational and political: expect trouble ahead from your people, laws, radios, and trees.

**BIO**

Christian Sandvig is an Assistant Professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign where he studies communication technology and public policy. He currently leads a research project funded by the National Science Foundation to study the cooperative provision of wireless broadband. He recently served as Markle Foundation Information Policy Fellow at Oxford University and has been named a "next-generation leader in science and technology policy" in a junior faculty competition sponsored by the American Association for the Advancement of Science.