

The good folks at Wi-Ex have been asking us to review their zBoost devices for a while now. We kept declining because we felt we couldn't do it justice in a metropolitan environment. Like many cities, cell towers in the Philly area are quite plentiful. It's sort of like Johnny Towerseed spent time here. Fortuitously, we were contacted by a friend in the Tucson, Az. area who was suffering from 'cellus signalus diminimus', commonly known as poor signal strength. It seemed like a perfect fit. We welcome Terry Van Wie as a guest contributor with his review of the zBoost from Wi-Ex. Terry is the ideal tester for this product, for as you will see in the images below, he lives well outside the beaten path in a place where cell towers are as rare as waterfalls. - The Editor

## Desert, Mountains & zBoost...A love story

By Terry VanWie

Life with a cell phone in the boondocks is an interesting endeavour. You're talking to your wife on the phone and the conversation is mostly "what did you say?", and "Huh?". This does not promote good communication, which we all know is a key to a good marriage. When you do get good reception, it usually entails holding an arm over your head and a leg pointing due south, after which...you don't move. Hopefully you complete the conversation before the wind shifts.



When we heard about a device that would boost cell reception without a lot of hassle, it sounded too good to be true. Upon receiving the [Wi-Ex zBoost YX545 SOHO](#) and opening the box, my first thoughts were, nothing this small and simple could possibly work.



The installation instructions were clear & easy to follow. Placing the external antenna had several simple options. They did say the antenna could be set next to a window indoors, but I chose the edge of the roof to have the clearest view of the mountains where the nearest cell tower is located (about 15 miles as the buzzard flies).

After reading the instructions it seemed the hardest part would be setting up the ladder to get to the roof. The unit comes with 50 feet of coax so there was plenty of cable.

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Setting the unit up is as simple as:

- mounting the external antenna
- running the coax cable
- picking a location for the base unit
- plugging in the coax and power supply to the base unit



After that....you are ready to go. The zBoost started working immediately. The strength bars jumped up. Yes, the reception was fantastic, immensely improved clarity and no more holding an arm over your head to talk.

As far as the technical aspects, there's only 3 things you need to know. The [zBoost YX545 SOHO](#):

- Increases indoor signal coverage-up to 3000 sq ft
- Supports multiple users simultaneously
- Compatible with all U.S. carriers and mobile devices using 800 & 1900 MHz (except Nextel/iDEN or 4G, 2100MHz phones)

I have had the unit up and running for 2 to 3 weeks now and it is working great. It has not only improved the reception in the house but also in the back yard, where we spend a lot of time. There is no maintenance or upkeep on the unit, it sits in the corner and does its thing. An interesting side effect is that my wife and I don't seem to spend as much time yelling.

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↑ *These images tell the whole story!* ↑

Simply put, the [zBoost from Wi-Ex](#) does exactly what it claims to do. What more could you ask?

The Wi-Ex zBoost YX545 SOHO retails for \$399 and can be found online for under \$250.

