## CHOOSING A SOCKS PROXY 2018-2019

# Introduction

The Internet is no longer the free space it used to be. Most users have constantly have had their activities scrutinized and constantly been banned or had attacks from websites. For this reason, several security measures have been taken. There are many ways in which one can be protected from all this. One precaution measures that stand out in this is Socket Secure; which is most commonly known as "SOCKS" proxies.

Funnily enough, most people have come across SOCKS Proxies, but not many of them really understand its importance. This is in terms of;

* How they work
* The security measures they give
* The privacy levels they offer

# Overview

It's very different from other "normal" proxies since they are application proxies. The most common example is HTTP. When using HTTP, you forward the HTTP request, the HTTP proxy then responds to your request on your behalf. An easier explanation to this would be; asking someone to pass you salt at the dinner table, who then gets the salt shaker, and hands it over to you.

SOCKS protocol is almost equivalent to setting up an IP tunnel with a firewall in it. The protocol requests begin from the firewall.

# Communication process

1. The user contacts the SOCKS proxy server via the SOCKS protocol and negotiates a proxy connection.
2. Once a connection is established, the user comfortably communicates with the SOCKS server using the SOCKS protocol.
3. The external server disseminates information with SOCKS server like it were the actual user

Most people often mistake SOCKS proxies as an alternative to VPNs; thus creating a major confusion and insecurity amongst users. Well, you’re lucky to be reading this today since this article will cover a multitude of major topics relating to SOCKS proxies especially on how to choose SOCKS Proxies and it will clear any questions or doubts that you may have.

# What are the similarities between SOCKS proxy and VPN?

They both can mask your ISP-issued IP address.

# What are the key differences between SOCKS proxy and VPN?

Virtual Private Network (VPN) makes your internet activity unavailable to third parties by scrambling all the information. SOCKS Proxy, on the other hand, has strong encryptions, but it's been rated to be faster than VPN connection. The proxy server doesn't have to scramble any information to outshine traffic.

# What competitive advantage does VPN have over SOCKS proxy?

VPNs have been rated as having a higher superiority privacy technology over SOCKS proxy. They broadly offer a stronger security and anonymity since they encrypt your entire internet connection.

VPNs use a technic known as End-to-end Encryption. This technique prevents anyone including government agencies, public WI-FI, and hackers from monitoring your activities online. The best SOCKS can do is to hide your online identity.

**Point to note!**

Both VPN and SOCKS are totally independent tools thus can't be used simultaneously. A VPN encryption makes the proxy server's roles look outdated, so it's important to treat them separately.

So, let's begin!

# What is a proxy server?

It's an application that acts as an intermediary between the internet and your computer. Any traffic transferred directly via a proxy server doesn't appear from your personal address but from the IP- address.

# What is SOCKS?

It is an internet protocol officially recognized as Socket Secure that is used for proxy servers.

SOCKS5 is an extension of SOCKS that supports technical networking technologies such as UDP protocol and IPv6. It gives you a new IP address in the process. This hides the physical secure location of the user. They are therefore considered the most flexible for server protocols.

# Versions of SOCKS

They are only two; SOCKS5 and SOCKS4.

**Features of SOCKS4;**

* Doesn't support authentication
* Doesn't support UDP proxy
* SOCKS4 DNS Lookups resolve external hosts

**Features of SOCK5**

* Have numerous authentication methods
* Supports UDP proxy
* SOCKS5 servers resolve external hosts.

# SOCKS Protocol

The current version is SOCK5. It has gained wide acceptance among internet-based clients/server solutions and better still, it has passed the IETF standard.

**SOCKS ensures**

* Security
* Reliability
* Accountability
* Manageability
* Enhanced network control

**Unique features of SOCKS5;**

* Ability to interoperate in a wide variety of emerging security models like IPsec and PPTP/L2TP.
* Can be used in emerging advanced authentications and cryptography technologies
* Can handle the most demanding enterprise level of intranet and internet applications.

Choosing the right SOCK5 solution from a proxy list can be confusing, but worry not!

**What's the network size? And reach?**

The network range definitely matters in the provision of this SOCKS5. Therefore, it's important to check if there is enough IP's in the location you live in. A bigger network definitely has more IP's. You're less likely to fail when you have more stealth and accurate results.

Luminati covers over 30 million residential IP's and over 150000 data-center IPs. They have the wide success rate with the highest success rate and with the fastest medium of collecting information. It's also been scaled to be top from country to country.

**What's the network uptime? Crash rate?**

A good socks proxy should have above 99% uptime. Look for the one that gives you peace of mind. Typically, a good one never goes down for more than 2 minutes. You should look for it in the solution's SLA, as it will have an effect on your SLA (if you have customers). In judging for a good network uptime, consider the following;

* Country
* Port
* SOCKS version
* Maximum delay in seconds
* Minute speed in Kbits and minutes
* Uptime percentage

Luminati has a developed and unique engine providing the best and high-quality SOCKS5 proxy servers. The engine runs 24hours per day and 7 days per week in good conditions. It can check for other available servers in more than a hundred threads. Their site also checks the SOCKS proxy server every 30 seconds and updates SOCKS5 proxy lists, every one minute.

**Average connection speeds?**

The network should have the ability to do online orders on behalf of customers (e.g account management, limited products, and travel orders).

For this purpose, Luminati proxy has a smart inbuilt rotation management system that directs you to one of the super proxies. They in turn load balancing servers providing you with an IP address that's most suited to your location. A high number of parallel sessions speed up Luminati servers and in turn giving a super success rate. With the right architecture, you can outshine any other solution.

**How is the support?**

You might think it's not necessary, but wait until something goes wrong. It's crucial to have quick solutions so you can move on and get stuck. Good networks such as Luminati; have real engineers that have a part in building the platform. This makes it smooth and easy to resolve any issue faster.

Things that stand out in the Luminati proxy system is that;

* Users can always monitor their network status from the dashboard.
* Users don't have to worry about the unavailability of IPs or proxies being shut down
* They have a 24hour team that ensures there are no system crashes.
* They react quickly to fix problems
* Their support team takes less than 10minutes to respond to requests

**Who answers support requests?**

Requests are handled by a well-established team of the original developers. Since they have a vast knowledge of Luminati products and they are the business managers, they have all the necessary ins and outs of the services.

**What is the networks' IPs reputation?**

Be mindful of how transparent the company is, before trying it out. Some SOCKS proxy solutions out there don't take the seriousness in screening their customers. This constantly leads to many IPs that you might be using being flagged, or the network going down because of other customers' abuse.

With the use of Luminati IP's which are real residential IPs, you can rest assured that;

* You'll get the best IP to support your needs and with a high success rate
* You'll get high-quality IPs; meaning they aren't blocked
* You'll get the best, efficient and well-managed IPs

**What's the product like? And is the company legit?**

Choosing a better product is always worth the premium price! On top of that, if you use a company that infringes on registered patents, you might just get yourself sued for using the service (Google it!)

Luminati has since been named as the game changer since it's been named as the largest business proxy network. It enables you to route your HTTPs requests through millions of residential IPs located in every country and city around the world.

**Does the solution allow SOCK requests?**

Duh!

**Do they have multi-type IPs?**

If you need more than one, it's better to have the 3 type of IPs;

* Datacenter
* Residential
* Mobile

All these should move through one entry point. This allows flexibility and also saves you money. Some solutions offer a "waterfall model" - which starts with the cheapest IPs, and only uses the premium ones if you actually need them.

Luminati offers over 300,000 data center static IPs worldwide. They also offer over 30million residential IPs per month. The IP address used for a residential IP is the one a website will see when you browse the web. These IPs are directly drawn from an ISP and straight to your home! Last but not the least, the mobile IPs are assigned directly to mobile devices by mobile internet users. Any mobile user can view their IPs in the same way as a user browsing the web would, through their mobile service.

**Do they offer Mobile IPs?**

The answer is YES! But again, this wholly depends on your needs.

Luminati proxies have a competitive advantage in that;

* They have the largest network of mobile IPs with an access of 2million IPs worldwide.
* Their mobile experience is also very good. You can test them on 3G and 4G networks to confirm this.
* They have a Single integration point that is simple and unified for Data-center, Residential and mobile
* You can easily switch between networks to optimize your work

**How convenient is the usage?**

We each have our way of using the proxy - whether it is an extension, a desktop app, API or even a mobile browser. Ensure that your comfortable using the network. If more than one person is going to use the network make sure the interface is developed and it's user-friendly.

**Have you been frustrated before by your previous proxy service provider? Look no more!**

We highly recommend that you contact one of the best SOCKS5 proxy providers known as Luminati. Most of their customers have attested to their;

* Mind-blowing costs
* Great customer support
* Millions of unduplicated IPs which can be easily changed by the use of a"Luminati-Proxy-Manager."
* A 7-day free trial to give you a chance to test their proxy speed!

 Yes, you heard that right! With all these facts in mind, I believe you now have the technical know-how on how to purchase yourself a good and reliable SOCKS5 proxy.

# Step by step process of using the SOCK5 proxy.

Using a SOCKS5 connection is very easy! This is simply because its not run by an automated system like the IPVanish VPN apps, but it's a multi-step process.

1. Login to your IPVanish account Control Panel
2. Select the "SOCKS5 Proxy" tab.
3. Generate IPVanish proxy credentials.
4. Create a new username and password (separate from your general IPVanish VPN account)

**Note!**

Creating a new set of IPVanish may take some time simply because SOCK5 proxies are not encrypted.

1. Configure the proxy server with the software client you wish to use. E.g. If you happen to use SOCK5 to hide your identity using a Bit Torrent app, you'll have to key in the IPVanish proxy logins directly into the client's connection settings.

# Why should one use a SOCKS5 Proxy?

1. **Best in the execution of tasks unlike other proxies**

Many proxies fail miserably in performance since they rewrite data packet headers. This is most cases causes mislabeling of data. SOCK5s proxy servers don't rewrite data packet headers thus reducing chances of making errors. This automatically increases its performance.

1. **Reliable and effective connections**

SOCKS5 uses both TCP and UDP.

TCP is an internet protocol that serves as a link between the user and the server. It ensures packets connect from one point to the other. The good fitting is essential so that it can be easily transferred.

UDP is an internet protocol that disregards connecting in the right sequence from one point to the other.

From this, we can conclude that UDP is more effective than TCP since it doesn't waste time converting data to a proper stream or fixed packets that are sent on the establishment of a connection. A combination of the two warrants a reliable and efficient performance from his internet connection.

1. **Combines both SOCK5 and a VPN**

Top notch security and encryption with a bonus of unlimited and uninterrupted connection. SOCK5 has a great support system in the case of VPN connection. A SOCK5 proxy continues to guard your data with UDP or TCP protocol even in the case of disconnection from VPN.

1. **It’s useful on restricted sites.**

Most workplaces and schools; are often monitored and limited to accessing social media, games amongst many other irrelevant things. If you need to access these sites, you definitely could use this tool.

1. **Access to services limited to certain countries.**

Widely known services such as Netflix have more content in US more than other regions. BBC iPlayer also operates only from a UK IP address. A SOCK5 proxy would really come in handy in expanding your viewing catalog.

1. **Torrenting especially for home network users.**

Home users must make privacy their top option. SOCK5 proxy ensures a fast download speed on top of protection against copyright. Most Bit Torrent users support the frail form of encryption, preventing further obstacles.

1. **It can give a cryptic connection directly from your PC.**

One can perform fast P2P downloads while still using unimaginable locations such as Google Maps! Download rate remains the same as any other browsing or streaming.

1. **It’s been widely supported internationally**

A number of leading internet solutions such as Attachmate Corporation, Bay Networks, Hummingbird Communications Ltd. Oracle Corporation amongst others has supported SOCKS5 products.

# Disadvantage of SOCKS5

* Unauthorized parties can still view/monitor your download activity.
* User program must have a SOCKS user capability
* Its server must be run and maintained

# Free Proxy Vs. Paid

Premium SOCKS 5 proxies are obviously the best to use, but it's still possible to get one free of charge. The choice is solely yours. It's more tempting to grab the free SOCKS5 proxy but here are some few things to watch out for;

**Common features of a free anonymous proxy;**

* It's not fast
* It's less reliable
* It lacks security and its prone to hackers
* It keeps logs which may cause issues during P2P downloads

With all those features, it's necessary if you prioritized on protecting your image first. Paying will be crucial. Opting to pick a full VPN service for the same price or less than for the SOCKS5 proxy would still be much better. Subscription-based proxies would definitely save you from a lot!

# Conclusion

SOCKS5 is widely used by IT experts to give Internet access for troubleshooting and testing. Some firms also use SOCKS5 to provide IM users access, however, this is slowly changing since the IM users need to be inspected and written down. Even though SOCKS5 proxies offer better protection than HTML, they still don't shield the user from being investigated or being spied by ISP or government.

The prices of SOCKS5 proxy is high compared to other proxies. VPN subscription, IPVANISH or Private Internet Access mostly have the same monthly fee. This still gives users access to good security and same speed as the SOCKS5.

SOCKS5 is mostly controlled access by authentication and authorization. Engineers and System Admins have found this feature very useful to them as they are able to secure internal or external networks securely. This prevents illegal access to firewall and hinders direct access to your security policy. Well, there you have it! Go knock their SOCKS off!