

AOL/NCSA Online Safety Study

Conducted by America Online and the National Cyber Security Alliance

October 2004



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Sample Size: 329 homes
(59% broadband, 41% dial-up)

INTRODUCTORY SURVEY QUESTIONS:

Do you keep any sensitive information on your home computer, such as personal correspondence, resumes or professional records, or health or financial information?	Yes	84%
	No	16%
Do you use the Internet for "sensitive" transactions from your home computer, such as banking, stock trading, or reviewing personal medical information?	Yes	72%
	No	28%
In general, how safe do you feel your home computer is from online threats?	Very safe	28%
	Somewhat safe	49%
	Not very safe	19%
	Not at all safe	4%
How safe do you feel your computer is from viruses?	Very safe	14%
	Somewhat safe	59%
	Not very safe	24%
	Not at all safe	3%
How safe do you feel your home computer is from hackers?	Very safe	13%
	Somewhat safe	47%
	Not very safe	35%
	Not at all safe	6%

SECURITY PERCEPTIONS AND RISKS –KEY AREAS

VIRUS PROTECTION:

FROM SURVEY: Have you ever had a virus on your computer?	Yes	63%
	No	19%
	Don't know	18%
FROM SURVEY: Do you currently have any viruses on your computer?	Yes	6%
	No	44%
	Don't know	50%
FROM SCAN: Does the respondent currently have one or more virus infections on their computer?	Yes (all users)	19%
	No (all users)	81%
	Yes (dial-up users)	25%
	No (dial-up users)	75%
	Yes (broadband users)	15%
	No (broadband users)	85%

SECURITY PERCEPTIONS AND RISKS –KEY AREAS

VIRUS PROTECTION: *(continued)*

FROM SCAN: How many different viruses are on each infected computer (average)?	2.4
FROM SCAN: Most viruses found on single machine during scan:	213
FROM SURVEY: How well do you understand the difference between a firewall and anti-virus software?	Very well 16% Somewhat well 26% Not very well 36% Not at all well 22%
FROM SURVEY: Do you currently have anti-virus software on your computer?	Yes 83% No 8% Don't know 9%
FROM SCAN: Does the respondent currently have some type of anti-virus software on their computer?	Yes (all users) 85% No (all users) 15% Yes (dial-up users) 84% No (dial-up users) 16% Yes (broadband users) 86% No (broadband users) 14%
FROM SURVEY: [Of users with self-described virus protection] How did you obtain it? (base: 276)	Self 44% Included with ISP 3% Came with computer 50% Other 3%
FROM SURVEY: [Of users with self-described virus protection] How often do you generally update your anti-virus or virus scanning software? (base: 276)	Weekly/daily (incl. automatically) 71% Monthly 12% Yearly 5% Never 12%
FROM SCAN: When was the anti-virus or virus scanning software on the respondent's computer last updated?	Within past week 33% Within past month 34% Within past six months 6% Longer than six months 12% No virus protection on computer 15%
FROM SCAN: Percent of respondents who either have no anti-virus protection or have not updated their protection within the past week:	67%

SECURITY PERCEPTIONS AND RISKS –KEY AREAS

SPYWARE:

FROM SURVEY: Have you heard the term “spyware” before?	Yes 91% No 9%
FROM SURVEY: Spyware and adware are software programs that quietly sit on your computer and can deliver pop-ups or other advertisements to you based on where you go and what you do online. Based on this description, do you think you have any spyware or adware on your machine right now?	Yes 53% No 47%
FROM SURVEY: [OF USERS WHO SAY THERE IS SPYWARE ON MACHINE] Can you name any of the adware or spyware programs that are on your machine right now? (base: 174)	Yes 15% No 85%
FROM SCAN: Does the respondent have any known spyware/adware programs installed on their computer?	Yes (all users) 80% No (all users) 20% Yes (dial-up users) 88% No (dial-up users) 12% Yes (broadband users) 74% No (broadband users) 26%
FROM SCAN: Average number of spyware/adware components found on infected computer:	93
FROM SCAN: Most spyware/adware components found on a single computer during scan:	1,059
FROM SCAN: Most commonly found pieces of spyware/adware on users’ machines:	Alexa 42% Claria/GAIN/Gator 26% WhenU software 12% VX2 12% Precision Time 11% 2020 Search 10% iWon 7% 180 Solutions 6% Cydoor 5% Ebates 5% Ibis Toolbar 4%
FROM SURVEY (post-scan): [AFTER SHOWING RESPONDENT RESULTS OF SPYWARE SCAN] Did you know that [all of] these programs were on your computer? (base: 263)	Yes 11% No 89%

SECURITY PERCEPTIONS AND RISKS –KEY AREAS

SPYWARE: *(continued)*

FROM SURVEY (post-scan): [AFTER SHOWING RESPONDENT RESULTS OF SPYWARE SCAN] Do you know what [all of] these programs are and what they do?	Yes 10% No 90%
FROM SURVEY (post-scan): [AFTER SHOWING RESPONDENT RESULTS OF SPYWARE SCAN] Did you give permission for someone to install [all of] these programs on your computer?	Yes 5% No 95%
FROM SURVEY (post-scan): [AFTER SHOWING RESPONDENT RESULTS OF SPYWARE SCAN] Do you know how to uninstall [all of] these programs?	Yes 24% No 76%
FROM SURVEY (post-scan): [AFTER SHOWING RESPONDENT RESULTS OF SPYWARE SCAN] Would you like us to remove [all of] these programs from your computer?	Yes 86% No 14%

SYMPTOMS OF SPYWARE:

FROM SURVEY: Approximately how many pop-up ads do you get in the typical week?	Average response (all users): 28 Average for respondents with spyware/adware on computer: 31 Average for respondents without spyware/adware on computer: 15
FROM SURVEY: Do you use a pop-up blocker as part of your Internet service or a browser toolbar?	Yes 47% No 53%
FROM SURVEY: [Of respondents who said “yes”] Do you still get pop-ups even when using your pop-up blocker? [base: 153]	Yes 63% No 37%
FROM SURVEY: Has your browser home page – the web site you see when you first go online – ever suddenly changed to a different page without your permission?	Yes 43% No 57%
FROM SURVEY: When you perform a search, have you ever been redirected to a different search engine or received a pop-up offering search results from a different web site?	Yes 40% No 60%

SECURITY PERCEPTIONS AND RISKS –KEY AREAS

FILE SHARING PROGRAMS:

<p>FROM SURVEY: Have you or anyone in your household ever downloaded a file sharing or music sharing program like Kazaa, LimeWire, or E-Donkey?</p>	<p>Yes 47% No 53%</p>
<p>FROM SURVEY: When you installed the file sharing software, did you give it permission to install software on your computer that tracks your behavior or delivers ads to you based on where you go online? (base: 156)</p>	<p>Yes 10% No 90%</p>
<p>FROM SCAN: Does the respondent's computer actually have a file-sharing program installed on it?</p>	<p>Yes 27% No 73%</p>
<p>FROM SCAN: Average number of pieces of spyware/adware found on an infected computer:</p>	<p>...without file-sharing program(s) installed on it: 82</p> <p>...with file-sharing program(s) installed on it: 120</p>
<p>FROM SCAN: Does the respondent's computer have a file sharing program that is currently active or open on it?</p>	<p>Yes 23% No 77%</p>

FIREWALL:

<p>FROM SURVEY: How well do you understand what a firewall is and how it works?</p>	<p>Very well 11% Somewhat well 36% Not very well 33% Not at all well 20%</p>
<p>FROM SURVEY: Do you currently use a firewall to protect your computer and Internet connection?</p>	<p>Yes 37% No 63%</p>
<p>FROM SURVEY: [If answer was 'yes'] Do you believe your firewall is set up correctly? [base: 123]</p>	<p>Yes 87% No 13%</p>
<p>FROM SCAN: Does the respondent's computer have a firewall currently running on it?</p>	<p>Yes (all users) 33% No (all users) 67%</p> <p>Yes (dial-up users) 7% No (dial-up users) 93%</p> <p>Yes (broadband users) 51% No (broadband users) 49%</p>

SECURITY PERCEPTIONS AND RISKS –KEY AREAS

FIREWALL: *(continued)*

FROM SCAN: [Of users with a firewall] What type of firewall protection does the respondent have on their computer? (base: 107)	Hardware 35%
	Software 58%
	Both 7%
FROM SCAN: [Of users with a firewall] Does the firewall have any open ports? (base: 107)	Yes 14%
	No 86%
FROM SCAN: Percent of all users who do not have a properly configured firewall on their computer (no open ports):	72%

WIRELESS ACCESS:

FROM SCAN: Does the respondent use a wireless connection to access the Internet?	Yes 12%
	No 88%
FROM SCAN: Of respondents using a wireless connection, what percent use WEP or WPA-PSK to encrypt their wireless communication? (base: 39)	WEP 62%
	WPA-PSK 0%
	No encryption 38%
FROM SCAN: Of respondents using a wireless connection, does the respondent use MAC filtering to protect the wireless communication? (base: 39)	Yes 51%
	No 49%

PARENTAL CONTROLS:

FROM SURVEY: Do you currently have any children under the age of 18 living in your household or children under the age of 18 who visit your household regularly?	Yes 40%
	No 60%
FROM SURVEY: Do you currently use any parental control software on your computer?	Yes (all users) 8%
	No (all users) 92%
FROM SCAN: Does the respondent currently have parental controls software enabled on the computer?	Yes (all users) 9%
	No (all users) 91%
	Yes (dial-up users) 16%
	No (dial-up users) 84%
	Yes (broadband users) 4%
	No (broadband users) 96%
	Yes (with kids) 17%
	No (with kids) 83%

SECURITY PERCEPTIONS AND RISKS –KEY AREAS

PARENTAL CONTROLS: *(continued)*

FROM SURVEY:

Did you purchase or acquire the software on your own, or was it provided by your ISP?

Self	1%
ISP	8%
N/A	91%

DEMOGRAPHICS

GENDER

Male	48%
Female	52%

AGE

18 - 20	2%
21 - 30	27%
31 - 40	41%
41 - 50	15%
50+	15%

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION OBTAINED

Partial High School Education	2%
High School Diploma	13%
Partial College Education	27%
Associates Degree	8%
BA / BS	43%
MA / MS	8%

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Less than \$20,000	9%
\$20,000 – \$35,000	12%
\$35,001 – \$50,000	23%
\$50,001 – \$75,000	27%
\$75,001 – \$100,000	15%
\$100,001+	15%

CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLD

Children under 18	45%
No children under 18	55%

EXPERIENCE LEVEL (self-described)

Novice	35%
High-End Novice	23%
Intermediate	35%
Expert	7%

MISCELLANEOUS

Number of years online	6.79
Number of computers in household	1.7

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Methodology:

The AOL-NCSA Online Safety Study was conducted through in-person interviews and technical analyses with a typical sample of 329 dial-up and broadband adult computer users, at least 18 years of age, from September 15 to October 8, 2004. The sample included 194 broadband users (59%) and 135 dial-up users (41%). The margin of error for the survey portion of the study was +/- 5.4% with a 95% confidence level.

Study participants were interviewed in more than 22 cities and towns and a dozen different states and metropolitan areas. Metropolitan areas in which participants took part included Los Angeles, California; metropolitan Washington, D.C.; Naples, Florida; Atlanta, Georgia; Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota; Rochester, New York; Raleigh, North Carolina; Houston, Texas; Seattle, Washington; and Virginia Beach, Virginia. Subjects were questioned on various aspects of online security to assess their understanding and awareness of the issue. The subjects' computers were then examined by technicians using commercially-available products to examine their firewall settings, anti-virus software, potential virus infections, parental control software, and spyware. Participants were selected by an independent market analysis organization.

About The National Cyber Security Alliance

A not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization, the National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA) is the go-to resource for cyber security awareness and education for home user, small business, and education audiences. A public-private partnership, NCSA sponsors include the Department of Homeland Security, Federal Trade Commission, and many private-sector corporations and organizations. NCSA provides tools and resources to empower home users, small businesses, and schools, colleges, and universities to stay safe online. For more information, and to see the top 10 cyber security tips, visit www.staysafeonline.info <<http://www.staysafeonline.info/>> .

About America Online, Inc.

America Online, Inc. is a wholly owned subsidiary of Time Warner Inc. Based in Dulles, Virginia, America Online is the world's leader in interactive services, Web brands, Internet technologies and e-commerce services.