



## Overview of NSCA Consumer Research Study April 2008

### Key Findings

- 49% of consumers *have changed* their password within the past year (19% of those within the past month)
- 71% have *never* heard the phrase “botnet” (29% are aware of botnets)
- Only 22% think it *is* at least somewhat likely that your computer’s security could affect homeland security (59% think it is *not likely at all*)
- 53% believe it *is possible* for a hacker to use your computer to launch cyber attacks or crimes against other people, businesses and our nation
- 46% of consumers are *not at all* sure of what to do if they became a victim of a cyber crime
- 48% do *not* know how to protect themselves from cyber criminals

## Key Findings Results by Question

Total interviews = 2,249

### Question:

When was the last time you changed your computer's password?

#### Overall findings

|                          |     |
|--------------------------|-----|
| Within the last month    | 19% |
| Within the last 3 months | 14% |
| Within the last 6 months | 7%  |
| Within the past year     | 8%  |
| More than a year ago     | 15% |
| Don't remember           | 16% |
| Never                    | 20% |

#### Demographic findings for this question:

##### Differences among regions:

- Within the past year 54% in the West have changed their computer's password versus 44% in the Mid-West
- Within the last 3 months 17% in the West have changed their computer's password versus 11% in the Mid-West

##### Differences among age groups:

- Within the last 3 months 20% of consumers among the ages of 35-44 have changed their password on their computer (only 10% among ages 55+, and 13% among ages 18-34)

##### Differences among education:

- Within the past month, 24% of college graduates have changed their password to only 14% who have a high school diploma or less
- And within the past year, 55% of college graduates have changed their password to only 41% who have a high school diploma or less

##### Differences among income:

- Those who earn over \$75K have changed their password within the past year 57% to those who earn less than \$35K at 46%.

### Question:

How familiar are you, if at all with the term "botnet"?

#### Overall responses

|                                                       |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| I know a lot about botnets                            | 3%  |
| I know a little about botnets                         | 10% |
| I have heard of this term, but don't know what one is | 17% |
| I have never heard of this term                       | 71% |

Demographic findings for this question:

Differences among regions:

- In the West 20% have heard of this term, but don't know what one is – whereas the South is even less at 14%

Differences among age groups:

- There are significant differences among men and women in most age groups
  - Majority of male consumers know more about or have heard about botnets by at least 10% over female consumers (in age groups 18-34, 37% men are aware of botnets versus 23% for women; and in the age group 45-54, males know about botnets 34% to females 24%)

Differences among education:

- Not surprisingly, those with a high school degree or less have never heard of this term (75%) to a college graduate (68%)

Differences among income:

- Overall, those making \$75K or more are aware of botnets (31%) to those making \$50K-\$74K (25%)

Differences among employment status:

- Of the very few who do know about botnets, 15% of full time employees know about botnets to the mere 4% of part-time employees

Question:

How likely do you think it is that your computer's security could affect homeland security?

Overall responses

|                   |     |
|-------------------|-----|
| Very likely       | 4%  |
| Likely            | 6%  |
| Somewhat likely   | 13% |
| Not at all likely | 59% |
| Don't know        | 18% |

Demographic findings for this question:

Differences among age groups:

- 64% of the 55+ age group says it is not likely at all for your computer to affect homeland security, to 54% of the 18-34 age group

Differences among education:

- 63% of college graduates believe it is not likely at all for your computer to affect homeland security versus the 53% of those who are high school graduates or less

Differences among income:

- Overall, 65% of those making \$75K believe that it is not likely at all for your computer to affect homeland security while only 56% of those making \$50K-\$74K

Question:

As far as you know, do you believe it is technically possible for a hacker to use your computer to launch cyber attacks or crimes against other people, businesses or our nation?

Overall responses

|                    |     |
|--------------------|-----|
| It is possible     | 53% |
| It is not possible | 10% |
| Don't know         | 36% |

Demographic findings for this question:

Differences among regions:

- In the South 56% versus 49% in the Med-west believe it is possible for a hacker to use your computer to launch cyber attacks or crimes against other people, businesses or our nation

Differences among age groups:

- There are significant differences in three age groups that believe this is possible
  - 60% of the youngest age group, 18-34, scored the highest; 55% of the 35-44 age group believes this is possible, and the lowest of all was the 55+ age group with only 44% believing this is possible.

Differences among education:

- 46% of those with a high school degree or less believe that this is possible, showing a significant difference with the college graduates (60%)

Differences among employment status:

- 13% of full time employees were among the few who believe it is not possible, to 6% of the part-time employees

## Question:

How sure are you of what to do if you become the victim of a cyber crime?

### Overall responses

|                 |     |
|-----------------|-----|
| Very sure       | 11% |
| Somewhat sure   | 43% |
| Not at all sure | 46% |

### Demographic findings for this question:

- No significant differences among the regions

### Differences among age groups:

- No significant differences among the age groups, but there were some among males to females
- In the 35-44 age group, more males know they are very/somewhat sure they know what to do if they became the victim of a cyber crime versus females (61%, 45%)
- The same is said for the 45-54 age group. Males are very/somewhat sure they know what to do if they became the victim of a cyber crime over females (64%, 52%)

### Differences among education:

- More college graduates (62%) are very/somewhat sure they know what to do if they became a victim of a cyber crime. Only 44% of high school graduates are very/somewhat sure.

### Differences among income:

- Overall, 61% of those making \$75K are very/somewhat sure they know what to do if they became a victim of a cyber crime, to those making \$50K-\$74K (48%)

### Differences among employment status:

- Only 46% of full time employees are somewhat sure they know what to do versus the 37% of part-time employees

## Question:

Do you know how to protect yourself from cyber criminals?

Overall responses

Yes, I know how to protect myself from cyber criminals 52%

No, I do not know how to protect myself from cyber criminals 48%

Demographic findings for this question:

Differences among regions:

- More consumers in the South (56%) say they know how to protect themselves from cyber criminals to those in the Mid-west (47%)

Differences among age groups:

- 56% of older males say they know how to protect themselves from cyber criminals to females in this age group (42%)

Differences among education:

- 59% of college graduates say they know how to protect themselves from cyber criminals whereas 43% of high school graduates concur.

Differences among income:

- 55% of those making less than \$35K do not know how to protect themselves from cyber criminals, versus 41% of those making \$75K

Differences among employment status:

- 45% of full time employees do not know how to protect themselves from cyber criminals (versus 55% part-time employees)

## Background

NCSA commissioned statistically valid survey research among US consumers. Collective Strength of Austin, Texas managed the project and Harris Interactive performed the field work.

## Methodology

2,249 online consumers between the ages of 18 and 65 were surveyed using the online panel managed by Harris Interactive. The panel is widely regarded as statistically reflective of the general US online population. The interviews were conducted with randomly selected US consumers. The interviews were split across the following areas in the US: 628 interviews in the North-east, 502 interviews in the Mid-west, 641 interviews from the South, and 478 interviews from the West.