Snapshot of Cyber Security Awareness by Older Australians

Ipsos research June 2012

Following the 2012 National Cyber Security Awareness Week (held 12 to 15 June) Ipsos research surveyed 1044 Australians on behalf of the Department. The survey included 410 respondents aged 50 years and over (11 per cent). It should be noted that, as the survey was conducted online, the results will not provide information about older Australians who are not engaged, or have little engagement, with the internet.

Findings

Age did not appear to be a factor in using different passwords for different websites. While there were fewer in the older age group that used the same password for everything, the differences were not significant in the proportions of each age group either using a different password for every website and application or using several different passwords, with some used more than once, as shown in the table below.

Table: Use of online passwords

Age	18 to 29 years %	30 to 49 years %	50 years and older %
Use different password for everything or several passwords	83	84	87
Use the same password for everything	15	11	10
Don't know	3	5	3
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**

However, Respondents aged 50 years and older were far more likely (84 per cent) than those in the younger age groups to have installed security software on the main device they used and to have it set to automatically update (68 per cent of 30 to 49 year olds and only 53 per cent of 18 to 29 year olds).

Older respondents were also more likely to use safe payment methods than those in younger age groups (86 per cent, compared to 72 per cent of 18 to 29 year olds and 74 per cent of 30 to 49 year olds).

DBCDE commissioned research

Woolcott Research 2010 and 2011

Seniors are understood as Australians aged 55 years and above.

DBCDE commissioned Woolcott Research to survey the level of cybersecurity awareness among Australian internet users across all age groups. While this research did not focus specifically on seniors, some useful statistics could be drawn from the results.

Survey date	Number of respondents	Percentage of **senior** respondents
2010	3,700 respondents	31 %
2011	3,401 respondents	32 %

More seniors (22 %) were characterised as 'fearful avoiders' than other age groups (13%)
- Fearful avoiders are respondents who described themselves as either 'not particularly' or 'not at all confident' online. This group responds to this lack of knowledge by avoiding using the internet.

Seniors have a high awareness of specific online risks
- Implications of loss of financial information.   2010   66%   2011   70%
- Implications of loss of personal data   2010   63 %   2011   N/A

Seniors protect themselves online by:
- Being careful about sharing personal information   82%
- Always thinking carefully before clicking on links   71%
- Only shopping online when using secure web pages and payment   84%
- Seeing friends & family as reliable sources of information   73%

Quantum Market Research – June 2011

According to Segmentation research commissioned by the Department with 650 Australian internet users across all age groups:

Seniors are significantly:
- **more likely** to have '*heard/read about unsafe online situations in media reports*'   62%
- **less likely** to have '*personally experienced such situations*'   11%
- **less likely** to have had a '*peer experience such situations*'   28%