

# OUR INCREASINGLY CONNECTED LIVES

Survey conducted by ESET in collaboration with National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proliferation of connected devices is staggering, with projected *growth of more than 2.5-fold* by 2020, with Internet of Things (IoT) devices the fastest growing in the category. As the use of these devices in our everyday lives continues to increase, we wanted to understand the concerns and perceptions everyday Americans have about IoT and other commonly used connected devices.

Conducted by ESET in collaboration with the National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA) in support of National Cyber Security Awareness Month, the survey's findings are published below.

## TOPLINE TAKEAWAYS/KEY MESSAGES

- **50% of consumers indicate that concerns about the cybersecurity of an IoT device have discouraged them from purchasing one.**
  - Furthermore, more than 40% of respondents are “not confident at all” that IoT devices are safe or secure and protect personal information.
  - Consumers are aware, though: 88% of respondents have thought about the potential for hacking associated with IoT devices.
- **More devices are connected to the home router, yet the majority of people are not taking some basic precautions.**
  - In fact, almost 22% of respondents had 4-7 devices connected to their home router and 14% had no idea how many devices were connected.
  - Meanwhile, 29% indicate they have not changed their home router password from its default setting, and almost 15% do not know if they have.
  - The router when not protected is an entry point for malware. Changing the default factory password is one of the basic steps for protecting the home network.
- **A growing number of American households feature connected appliances, toys and other home systems, and cybersecurity risks associated with the devices remain a concern for consumers.**
  - 24% of consumers report using an app to control a connected device, such as an appliance or thermostat, in their home.
  - Toys are one category consumers are wary about—more than 36% were “very concerned” about internet-connected “smart toys” and their security and privacy risks, followed by 40% who were “somewhat concerned.”
  - Furthermore, nearly 77% of consumers are aware that some cars may be vulnerable to hacking. And 45% are very or somewhat concerned that their own car might have the potential to be hacked.
- **Webcam hacking continues to be a problem—but good news is people are aware of it.**
  - People are aware of the possibility, with 85% indicating that they know their webcams have the potential to be accessed by an unauthorized party.
  - 29% of Americans believe their webcam has been accessed by an unauthorized party; however, 36% have not taken any protective measure.
  - Some people do take precautions: 14% of people still tape their webcam, and 21% use security software to protect it.
  - Furthermore, data security concerns trump spying concerns: 82% of respondents are more concerned about someone stealing their personal sensitive data than someone spying/watching them through their webcam.

- **So what's worse, a rat or hacker infestation?**

- Most people (72% of respondents) are more concerned with hackers getting into their computer and/or smartphone than rats getting into and living in their house without their knowledge.

## METHODOLOGY

- Dates conducted: August 28, 2016–August 29, 2016
- Sample size: 1,527 (U.S. adults, age 18–60+)
- Methodology statement: The data for this survey was collected using SurveyMonkey Audience. A series of multiple-choice questions were asked, with answer-options randomized. SurveyMonkey runs regular benchmarking surveys to ensure its members are representative of the U.S. population. Information on how respondents are recruited to SurveyMonkey is available here: [www.surveymonkey.com/mp/audience](http://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/audience).
- Citation: "Our Increasingly Connected Lives." Survey conducted by ESET in collaboration with the National Cyber Security Alliance (October 24, 2016).

## GRAPHICAL ASSETS

Please also see the accompanying "Internet of Stranger Things" infographic available for download and reuse with credit to ESET and National Cyber Security Alliance.

