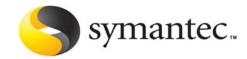# NCSA-Symantec National Cyber Security Awareness Study
Newsworthy Analysis
October 2008

Americans Still Lack Necessary Cyber Security Tools

Americans are overwhelmingly aware of the losses that can occur due to gaps in their home computer's security protection measures. While anti-virus software use has skyrocketed, a new national study conducted by Symantec and the National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA) found that Americans, by and large, still don't utilize ALL three of the necessary foundational cyber security protections: anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software.

1) Consumers Are Aware That They Are at Risk

Americans know they need to do more to protect themselves and their computers. Only 26% felt that their home computer was very safe from viruses and just 21% felt very safe from hackers.

- **American Believe They Have Protections In Place.**

  - 93% believe they have anti-virus software.

  - 83% believe they have anti-spyware.

  - 81% believe they have a firewall.

  - 75% believe they have a Spam filter.

  - 50% believe they have anti-phishing protection.

2) Perceptions Don't Always Match Reality

- **Anti-Virus Software Up-To-Date.** Nearly 95% of all scanned computers were protected with anti-virus software that had been updated within the past month.

- **Firewall Use Overstated.** Only 42% of home user's computers scanned actually had their firewall installed and enabled, a stark contrast to the 81% of home users who thought their firewalls were fully functional.

- **Anti-spyware protection enabled.** More than 80% had anti-spyware software installed.

- **Phishing Allowed.** 50% of all scanned computer did not have anti-phishing protections.

- **Full Inboxes as Spam protections limited.** Only 58% of computers scanned used anti-spam measures, leaving 42% of home users especially vulnerable to of the main carrier of viruses, spyware, and phishing attempts.

	% Who Claim to Have Protection Installed	% Who Actually Have Protection Installed, Enabled and Up-to-Date
Anti-virus	93%	95%
Anti-spyware	83%	82%
Firewall	81%	**58%**
Anti-spam	75%	**42%**
Anti-phishing	50%	**50%**

3) Americans Suffer Security Breaches

- 54% said that they have had a virus on their computer.

- 51% said they had been a victim of a phishing attempt.

- 28% said they have had spyware on their computer.

4) Americans Need More Knowledge to Make Better Online Decisions

- Only 51% know how to determine if a Web site is safe before visiting it.

- Only 49% know how to tell if a Web search yields a high risk Web site in the results.

- Only 40% are fully confident in the difference between a virus and a firewall.

- Only 27% claim to completely understand firewalls.

5) Possibility Of Online Identity Theft Has Changed Behaviors.

- 41% only visit Web sites they are familiar with.

- 20% have stopped or limited online purchases.

- 11% have stopped or will not do online banking.

6) Emails Continues To Be A Hacker's Entry Point

- 44% have opened an email from someone unknown to them in the past year.

- 28% of respondents have opened an email from someone unknown to them in the past month.

About the Study

The National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA) commissioned a Zogby International survey of more than 3,000 Americans, while Symantec conducted scans of 400 Americans' personal computers using the PC Help By Norton product (www.norton.com/tuneup). The Zogby poll has a margin of error of +/- 1.6% and the scan has a margin of error of +/- 5%.