



Concerns Over Privacy and Security Contribute to Consumer Distrust in Connected Devices

New research shows privacy, security are frequently key consumer concerns and drive buying decisions

IoT Security Implementation Working Group to address Canadian consumer concerns

[OTTAWA – May 1, 2019] — The work of a diverse group of Canadians could offer a solution to consumer concerns highlighted in [a newly published survey about the privacy and security of connected devices](#).

The survey, conducted in the United States, Canada, Japan, Australia, France, and the United Kingdom by IPSOS Mori on behalf of the Internet Society and Consumers International, found that 65% of consumers are concerned with the way connected devices collect data. More than half (55%) do not trust their connected devices¹ to protect their privacy and a similar proportion (53%) do not trust connected devices to handle their information responsibly.

In Canada, 69% of those surveyed said connected devices are “creepy” in the way they collect data about people and their behaviours. The Internet Society and Consumers International survey reveals that most Canadians believe manufacturers (88%) and retailers (85%) should ensure good privacy and security standards.

Recognizing that everyone should play a role in securing our connected future, the Internet Society convened a collaborative project in April 2018 to develop a broad-reaching policy on IoT security. They partnered with the Ministry of Innovation, Science, and Economic Development Canada (ISED), Canadian Internet Registration Authority (CIRA), Canadian Internet Policy and Public Interest Clinic (CIPPIC) and CANARIE to serve as the oversight committee.

The result was recommendations on network resilience, device labeling, and consumer education that came from more than 100 participants across Canada.

“The Canadian Multistakeholder Process to enhance Internet of Things security shows Canada's leadership in developing digital solutions in a way that fits naturally with the Internet,” says Mark Buell, North America Regional Bureau Director for the Internet Society. “By using the collaborative way the Internet works, Canada is better prepared to make sure security and innovation are the foundation of our connected future,” he added.

¹ For this research, we defined smart devices as everyday products and devices that can connect to the Internet using Wi-Fi or Bluetooth, such as smart meters, fitness monitors, connected toys, home assistants, or gaming consoles. The definition excluded tablets, mobile phones, and laptops.

This collaborative process will be carried forward by the newly formed IoT Security Implementation Working Group.

The success of the Canadian Multistakeholder Process is already gaining worldwide attention. The Internet Society has already begun working on similar initiatives with government representatives in France and Senegal to facilitate similar collaborative models to improve IoT security.

More results from the IoT survey in Canada show:

- 77% think people using connected devices should be concerned about their data being used without their permission
- 75% of consumers using connected devices should worry about the risk of “eavesdropping” (devices are being accessed without knowledge or permission)
- 80% of consumers are generally aware of security features in their connected devices and consider information about privacy and security important for their buying decisions.

An infographic with the survey highlights can be downloaded at:

<https://www.internetsociety.org/iot/trust-by-design/infographics/>.

Notes to Editors

In 2018, the Internet Society and Consumers International formed a working partnership aimed at creating a safer, more trusted Internet for everyone. The organizations collaborate on a wide range of initiatives engaging consumers, governments, regulators, and businesses on the importance of secure and trusted consumer IoT devices. For tips and information on what consumers can do to protect themselves, please visit: <https://www.connect-smart.org/>.

About the Internet Society

Founded by Internet pioneers, the Internet Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring the open development, evolution and use of the Internet. Working through a global community of chapters and members, the Internet Society collaborates with a broad range of groups to promote the technologies that keep the Internet safe and secure, and advocates for policies that enable universal access. The Internet Society is also the organizational home of the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF).

About the Survey

1. Interviews were conducted online by Ipsos MORI among a representative quota sample in six countries (1000 adults aged 18-65 in Australia, 1072 adults aged 18-75 in Canada, 1094 adults aged 16-75 in France, 1000 adults aged 18-65 in Japan, 1130 adults aged 16-75 in the UK, and 1085 adults aged 18-75 in USA). The data was collected between 1st March and 6th March 2019 and have been weighted to the known profile of the respective population.
2. The ‘overall’ figures quoted are derived from aggregating the percentages for each market, weighted by population numbers in the respective countries. The number for any specific market may be higher or lower than the total percentage.
3. Full question wording for each of the questions referred to in this release is given in the accompanying “topline” results document.
4. The survey was conducted by Ipsos on behalf of Consumers International and the Internet Society.

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