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NewsRelease Unisys Young Australians are the most likely to use free WiFi Internet access but are also the least concerned about unauthorised access to personal information – Unisys Security Index finds

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SYDNEY, 1 May 2012 – Younger Australians are the most likely to use free public WiFi but are also the least likely to be concerned about unauthorised access to, or misuse of, their personal information, according to the latest results of the Unisys Security Index™.

The national survey of 1,206 adults, conducted in March 2012 by Newspoll, found that 54 percent of Australians aged 18-34 years had used free public WiFi in some location in the last 12 months. This compares to just 32 percent of respondents aged 35-49 years and 16 percent of those aged 50 and over.

At the same time, only four in 10 (44 percent) Australian respondents aged 18-34 years said they were extremely or very concerned about unauthorised access to or misuse of their data, compared to 59 percent of older users and the national average of 54 percent.

Unisys experts warn young people and their employers to make sure they are taking appropriate steps to protect sensitive information accessed via public WiFi.

“Young Australians are embracing the rapid proliferation of free WiFi in high-traffic public places, and the explosive growth of WiFi-enabled mobile devices such as smartphones, laptops and tablets,” said John Kendall, Security Program Director, Unisys Asia Pacific. “In fact, mobile wireless Internet connections in Australia now exceed fixed or Digital Subscriber Line connections for the first time.*

“However, younger Australians’ low level of concern about unauthorised access to or misuse of their data suggests that they may not be aware of potential risks to the privacy of their data – or the implications of a data breach – and so may not be taking suitable steps to protect the data they are accessing via the public WiFi network,” he said.

In last 12 months...

18-34 years

35-49 years

50+ years

Used free public WiFi

54%

32%

16%

Used free public WiFi for personal use

51%

30%

15%

Used free public WiFi for work use

21%

11%

6%

Very/extremely concerned about unauthorised access to or misuse of personal information

44%

59%

59%

Business exposure: 1 in 5 young people have used free public WiFi for work purposes

In the survey 21 percent of Australian 18-34 year olds said they had performed work-related activities on free WiFi networks in the last year, compared to just 8 percent of older age groups.

“As employees increasingly use mobile technology in the workplace, employers need to take precautions that data security extends beyond the office walls and network firewall. It’s important to have a holistic approach to security in place – incorporating technologies, education and policies - that covers every access point to the corporate network,” warned Mr Kendall.

“This has led to the development of sophisticated new ways to manage data access. One example is ‘attribute-based access control’ which uses a combination of information about the person seeking access -- such as their location, what device they are using, whether the request is within their normal pattern of working hours, and how they have verified their identity -- in order to determine what data is allowed to be accessed at that time. Or it may ask for additional proof of identity such as a fingerprint, before access is granted. This takes a very personalised approach to data access for mobile workers,” Mr Kendall said.

Mr Kendall offered five tips to better protect sensitive data when using public WiFi:

1. Lock access to your mobile device with a hard to guess password or PIN so no one else can use it
2. Change your passwords regularly
3. Be aware of who can see and read data on your screen
4. When accessing your work network, use a secured Virtual Private Network
5. If you or your employees need to access sensitive corporate data from a public or shared-use device, use a Secure Virtual Terminal solution for added protection.

Data Privacy Issues top security concern for most Aussies

The overall Unisys Security Index score for Australia was 110 out of a possible 300, reflecting a low level of security concern overall that is approximately unchanged from a year ago.

“The Unisys Security Index shows that data privacy issues are still the top security concern for Australians, with 56 percent of Australians extremely or very concerned about other people obtaining or using their credit/debit card details and 54 percent extremely or very concerned about unauthorised access to or misuse of their personal information,” said Mr Kendall.

"Cyber security issues are also top of mind with 1 in 3 Australians extremely or very concerned about shopping and banking online as well as computer security threats in relation to viruses or unsolicited emails," he added.

*Australian Bureau of Statistics, "Internet Activity, Australia": <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/8153.0>

About the Unisys Security Index

The Unisys Security Index is a bi-annual global study that provides insights into the attitudes of consumers on a wide range of security related issues. Conducted in Australia by market research firm Newspoll, the Unisys Security Index provides a regular, statistically robust measure gauging levels of concern about various aspects of security. The current Australian Unisys Security Index survey was conducted nationally between 2-4 March 2012 by Newspoll using a nationally representative sample of 1,206 respondents aged 18 years and over. All results have been post-weighted to Australian Bureau of Statistics data. The study measures consumer perceptions on a scale of zero to 300, with 300 representing the highest level of perceived concern. For more information on the Unisys Security Index including additional resource material visit:

<http://www.unisyssecurityindex.com/usi/australia>

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Contacts

Julian Brophy

+61 408 276 749

mailto: julian@perceptionpartners.com.au