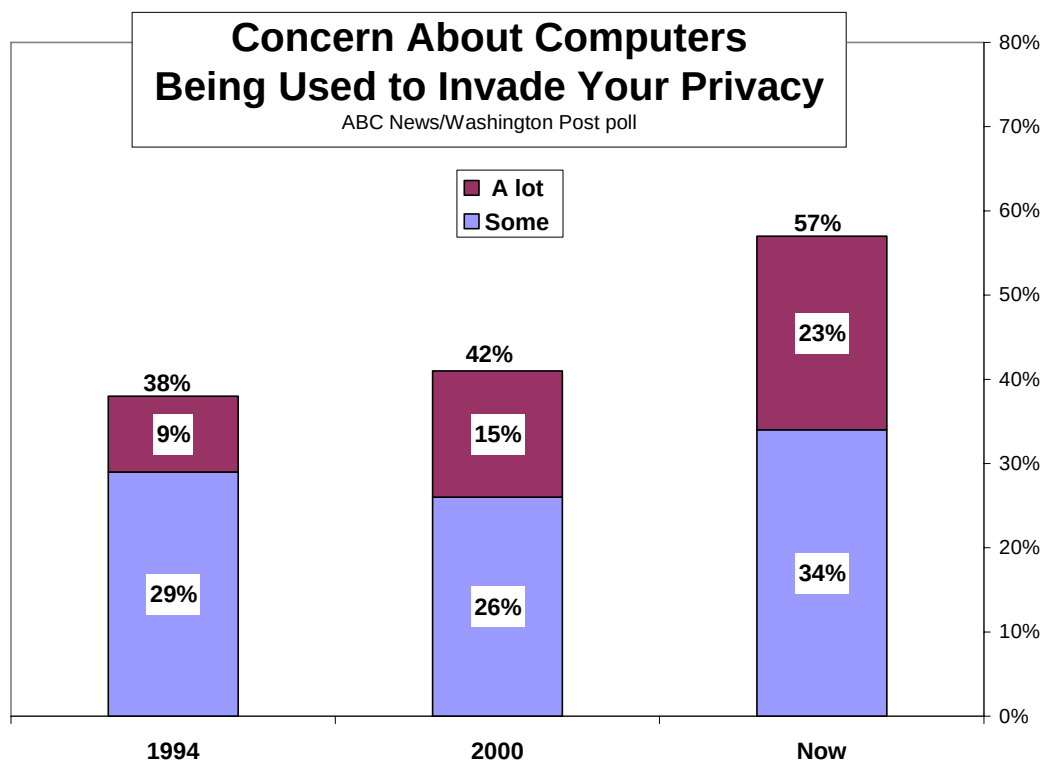


Identity Theft Concerns Rise; Few See Sufficient Safeguards

Most Americans are worried that technology is being used to invade their privacy, a sharp spike from five years ago. And even more – seven in 10 adults – are concerned they could become victims of online identify theft at some point in the future.

After a spate of revelations of major identity-theft cases, 57 percent now express worry that computers and technology are prying into their private lives – up from 42 percent in 2000 and 38 percent in 1994. Seventy-two percent, moreover, are concerned about the possibility their personal records could be stolen over the internet.



These worries follow reports of unauthorized use of personal information stored by companies including Bank of America, ChoicePoint, DSW Inc. and Lexis-Nexis, and subsequent calls from Congress for laws to reign in so-called data brokers. As things stand, this ABC News/Washington Post poll finds, 84 percent of Americans think such companies are not doing enough on their own to protect personal privacy.

In addition to the recent events, the public's increased privacy worries likely are also linked to the decade-long rollout of the Internet and the increasing accessibility of personal data it's created.

In light of that trend, a more positive result is the lack of an increase in the number of Americans reporting actual experiences with identity theft. Twenty-two percent say they've had a credit card number or other personal information stolen at some point, precisely the same as in March 2001.

DATA BROKERS – Faith in data companies' security measures is directly related to concerns about personal information. Among people who think these companies are not doing enough to protect records, 62 percent are worried that their privacy is being invaded, and 76 percent are concerned about identity theft in the future. Among those who think data protection is adequate, far fewer share these worries.

	Current data protection	
	Enough	Not enough
Worried your privacy is being invaded	37%	62
Concerned about security of personal records	52	76

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone March 10-13, 2005, among a random national sample of 1,001 adults. The results have a three-point error margin. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by TNS of Horsham, Pa.

Analysis by Jon Cohen.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollvault.html>.

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Full results follow (*= less than 0.5 percent).

36. How much do you worry that computers and technology are being used to invade your privacy - is that something you worry about a lot, some, not much or not at all?

	-----Worry-----			-----Don't Worry-----			No
	NET	A lot	Some	NET	Not much	At all	op.
3/13/05	57	23	34	42	24	18	1
1/26/00	42	15	26	57	24	33	2
6/8/94	38	9	29	61	34	27	1

37. Have you personally ever had someone steal and misuse your credit card number or other personal information, or not?

	Yes	No	No opinion
3/13/05	22	78	*
3/20/01	22	78	*

38. How concerned are you about having records containing your personal information stolen over the Internet - very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not concerned at all?

	-----Concerned-----			-----Not concerned-----			No
	NET	Very	Smwt.	NET	Not too	At all	op.
3/13/05	72	40	32	28	17	11	*

39. As you may know there are some companies that collect and sell information about people such as their Social Security number, credit card payment history, and public records such as drivers license, real estate, court and military service records. Do you think the companies that collect and sell this information are doing enough to protect your personal privacy, or not?

	Doing enough	Not doing enough	No opinion
3/13/05	13	84	3

END