

# THE NUMBER-ONE SIGN OF TRUST ON THE INTERNET



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CONSUMERS ARE CONTINUING TO TURN TO THE WEB FOR RETAIL SHOPPING—NOW MORE THAN EVER. IN A RECENT EMARKETER REPORT, IT WAS PROJECTED THAT IN 2010, U.S. E-COMMERCE SALES WILL SURPASS \$182 BILLION, AN INCREASE OF 11 PERCENT FROM THE 2009 PROJECTION.<sup>2</sup> UNFORTUNATELY, AS COMMERCE CONTINUES TO GROW ON THE WEB, SO DOES THE NUMBER AND SOPHISTICATION OF FRAUDULENT ACTIVITIES, REDUCING CONSUMER CONFIDENCE. ACCORDING TO A RECENT STUDY FROM AN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH FIRM, THE VERISIGN SECURED<sup>®</sup> SEAL IS THE MOST RECOGNIZED SYMBOL OF TRUST ON THE WEB.<sup>3</sup> ADDING IT TO YOUR SITE, ALONG WITH THE ENCRYPTION OF A VERISIGN<sup>®</sup> SSL CERTIFICATE, MAY IMPROVE CONSUMER CONFIDENCE AND ULTIMATELY, YOUR SALES.



**74**  
PERCENT

OF U.S. INTERNET  
USERS LISTED  
IDENTITY THEFT AS  
A PRIMARY FEAR!<sup>1</sup>

# 86

PERCENT

of online shoppers feel more confident about entering personal information on sites using security indicators, such as a trust mark.<sup>3</sup>

## DESPITE E-COMMERCE GROWTH, ONLINE SHOPPERS REMAIN CONCERNED ABOUT SECURITY

With the growth of e-commerce also comes a significant increase in the variety of fraudulent Web activities. Phishing and other scams involving fraudulent use of consumers' digital identities are on the rise. According to Gartner Research, more than 5 million U.S. consumers lost money to phishing scams in the 12 months ending in September 2008—nearly a 40 percent increase from the previous year.<sup>4</sup>

The consumer cost of identity theft and online fraud continues to rise, too. In 2007, for instance, consumers reported fraud losses of more than \$1.2 billion and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) received 800,000 separate consumer fraud and identity theft complaints.<sup>5</sup>

The reality of such figures has caused online shoppers to be wary of how they share their personal information to make purchases.

- According to a recent study, fear of identity theft resulted in retailers missing out on \$21 billion in sales in 2008.<sup>6</sup>
- Of those who were previously victims of fraud, 12 percent no longer shop online; 25 percent do so less frequently; and 19 percent continue to shop, but spend less per transaction.<sup>6</sup>

And while many online businesses believe consumers are becoming more comfortable establishing customer relationships online, the statistics tell a different story. In addition to fear of identity theft, online shoppers are becoming increasingly distrustful of sharing personal information due to worry of misuse; 39 percent assume that a retailer will sell their information; and half expect to receive spam after making an online purchase.<sup>6</sup>

## SECURITY CONCERNS ARE LEADING TO SHOPPING CART ABANDONMENT ONLINE

Several recent studies demonstrate that consumer concerns about online security deter potential customers from making purchases. Consider a few key statistics:

- One half of Internet users today avoid buying online because they are afraid their financial information might be stolen, and 49 percent of those who express concern about their information security do not make online purchases at all.<sup>7</sup>
- 83 percent of consumers want more assurance that their information is secure.<sup>6</sup>
- An overwhelming majority of shoppers would be more motivated to buy if a company better protected them from identity theft, and 81 percent want retailers to offer zero liability for fraudulent purchases.<sup>6</sup>

CONSUMERS NEED CONSTANT ASSURANCES THAT THEIR ONLINE TRANSACTIONS ARE PROTECTED.

## THIRD-PARTY TRUST MARKS ALLEVIATE THE SECURITY CONCERNS OF ONLINE SHOPPERS

A recent study investigated security concerns of online shoppers and the value trust marks hold in the minds of consumers. The following statistics are from a September 2008 study conducted by Synovate/GMI, an independent research firm.<sup>3</sup>

Consumers are very aware of trust marks and understand what they represent. The overwhelming majority of consumers feel it is important for sites to include a trust mark.

- 87 percent of online shoppers are familiar with Web site security.
- 86 percent of online shoppers feel more confident about entering personal information on sites using security indicators, such as a trust mark.

SHOPPERS NOT ONLY RECOGNIZE AND VALUE THIRD-PARTY TRUST MARKS, BUT THE PRESENCE OF A TRUST MARK CAN ALSO PERSUADE THEM TO COMPLETE THEIR PURCHASES. IN FACT, A RECOGNIZED SECURITY SEAL MAKES THREE-QUARTERS OF CONSUMERS MORE WILLING TO ENGAGE IN ONLINE TRANSACTIONS.

**91**  
PERCENT

of online shoppers recognize the VeriSign Secured Seal significantly more than any other trust mark.<sup>3</sup>

## THE VERISIGN SECURED SEAL INCREASES THE LIKELIHOOD TO BUY

With an understanding of the importance of trust marks in completing online transactions, businesses should be sure to choose the trust mark that offers the most value. The VeriSign Secured Seal is the most trusted symbol of secure transactions on the Web as evidenced by these figures from the September 2008 Synovate/GMI study.<sup>3</sup>

- 70 percent of online shoppers recognize the VeriSign brand name for Web site security services.
- Additionally, 91 percent of U.S. online shoppers recognize the VeriSign Secured Seal, significantly more than any other trust mark.

The VeriSign Secured Seal can also affect which Web site online shoppers prefer to do business with. Among online shoppers who look for security symbols when transacting online, 62 percent said that the VeriSign Secured Seal specifically most increases their confidence about the security of a Web site.



## **VERISIGN PROVIDES A SIMPLE WAY TO ALLEVIATE THE SECURITY CONCERNS THAT LIMIT TRANSACTIONS**

As online shoppers become savvier, they make purchase decisions based on their knowledge of online security. Including a trust mark on your Web site alerts your customers that your site is secure, which can improve consumer confidence and decrease shopping cart abandonment. As the most trusted security mark on the Internet, the VeriSign Secured Seal is the best choice for businesses to communicate online transaction security to customers.

The VeriSign Secured Seal and VeriSign SSL Certificates also deliver additional features that consumers demand. One such feature is the verification functionality. When a consumer clicks on the seal, information about the VeriSign security services provided to the site is displayed. Further, VeriSign offers VeriSign Extended Validation (EV) SSL Certificates; combined with a new high-security Web browser, VeriSign EV SSL Certificates provide instant notification that your site is secure and legitimate by turning your customer's address bar green.

The VeriSign Secured Seal is the only choice for businesses that are serious about alleviating the security concerns of online consumers. The seal is available exclusively to sites that purchase and implement VeriSign's market-leading SSL Certificates.

Increase your Web site's sales potentials—display the VeriSign Secured Seal today.

**BUY VERISIGN SSL CERTIFICATES AT:  
[www.Verisign.com](http://www.Verisign.com)**



## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In September 2008, an independent research firm, Synovate/GMI, conducted a study on consumer awareness of Web site security practices and awareness of the brands that offer Web site security services. The study was sponsored by VeriSign. Pulling from a nationally representative pool of more than 5 million U.S. households, Synovate/GMI chose and interviewed 915 online shoppers. Participants were split into three age segments: 18–34 years (305 participants), 35–54 years (306 participants), and 55 years or older (304 participants). Each person interviewed indicated that they spend at least three hours per week online at home and regularly transacts online. Sample transactions included online banking and bill pay, participating in auctions, booking travel, managing healthcare or insurance information, downloading music, watching videos, social networking, blogging, and e-commerce.

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<sup>1</sup> Taylor Nelson Sofres report, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> eMarketer report, May 2008.

<sup>3</sup> "VeriSign 2008 Brand Research," Synovate/GMI, September 2008. This study was sponsored by VeriSign and was comprised of online shoppers at least 18 years old. U.S. respondents were recruited from Synovate/GMI's online consumer panel.

<sup>4</sup> "The War on Phishing Is Far from Over," Gartner Research, April 2009.

<sup>5</sup> "Consumer Sentinel," Federal Trade Commission, December 2007. Available at: [www.ftc.gov/sentinel/reports/sentinel-annual-reports/sentinel-cy2007.pdf](http://www.ftc.gov/sentinel/reports/sentinel-annual-reports/sentinel-cy2007.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Javelin Strategy and Research, March 2008. Available at: [www.javelinstrategy.com/2009/03/17/survey-finds-retailers-missed-out-on-21-billion-in-sales-in-2008-due-to-online-shopping-fears](http://www.javelinstrategy.com/2009/03/17/survey-finds-retailers-missed-out-on-21-billion-in-sales-in-2008-due-to-online-shopping-fears)

<sup>7</sup> Internet Security National Survey, No. 3, Cyber Security Industry Alliance, May 23, 2006.