

CIBIR

IDENTITY THEFT RESOURCE CENTER

Consumer Impact – Business Impact Report



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INTRODUCTION

from the CEO About Consumers

It's not very often that we get to report good news at the Identity Theft Resource Center (ITRC). For more than 25 years now, we've been helping victims of identity crimes deal with the aftermath of having their personal information stolen and misused. We don't meet people at the best moments of their lives.

Sometimes, the impacts they suffer are more frustrating and annoying, but they can also be devastating and life-altering. In 2023, we saw plenty of both as the natural consequences of a record-breaking year of data breaches and cyberattacks that exposed millions of people's identities.

However, every once in a while, we do get to share good news. After seeing a steady rise in the number of victims who confessed to contemplating self-harm since 2019, fewer victims who contacted the ITRC during the past 12 months considered ending their lives as a solution to their identity issues.

Specifically, the number of victims who said they considered suicide dropped from 16 percent (16%) in our 2023 report to 12 percent (12%) this year. Just to give a bit of context, from 1999 until 2020, the number of victims who contacted the ITRC and contemplated self-harm hovered between two and four percent (2% - 4%).

While any reduction is encouraging, that number is still way too high and reflective of some of the broader trends that follow in this report, including the financial, physical and emotional impacts of identity crimes on three distinct populations. We surveyed nearly two thousand people online to learn more about the impacts of being a victim and how it changed their behaviors (if it did).

There is also some good news on this front, too. Victims who contacted the ITRC and those who did not all claimed to be changing some of their habits to better protect their personal information. In particular, the rapid adoption of "passkeys" as a replacement for passwords was very encouraging.

After 18 years of publishing only a Consumer Impact Report, in 2021, we published two separate impact reports: One that outlined the effects on consumers and ITRC victims and a separate report on how small businesses and solopreneurs were impacted by identity crimes and cyberattacks.

This year, we're publishing a combined report to emphasize that the trends we see in all of these groups - victims in the general population, victims who contact the ITRC, and small businesses are all reporting similar trends and impacts. We're calling this report our *Consumer Impact - Business Impact Report* (CIBIR) pronounced like cyber. You'll learn more about the SMB impacts and trends in a commentary from our Chief Operating Officer, James E. Lee.

As I write this introduction in September 2024, with nearly four months left in the year, we don't know how many people will ultimately fall victim to identity criminals. We do know that the overall trend lines - despite some improvements - still reflect a reality that there are too many identity crime victims and too little support for them.

No new federal grants were awarded this year to support this group of crime victims. This is true despite the fact identity crime victims total more than all other crime victims combined (except for petty property crimes). Under-resourced law enforcement agencies are forced to decide which identity crimes to investigate – if they investigate any at all – based on the dollar loss value or the number of people involved. Even if identity crimes are investigated, they may not be prosecuted for the same lack of resources.

It's fair to say that most identity crimes go unpunished. That leaves victims and their loved ones to deal with the impacts alone.

Except they are not alone. The ITRC is here for them. We are launching new programs to ensure victims have access to more high-quality, effective support from the organizations on which they rely when their identities are misused.

The ITRC has developed a training and certification program for company contact center representatives who are called upon to help customers whose accounts and identities have been compromised. We call this the Certified Identity Recovery Specialist (CIRS) program.

What makes this program unique is its special emphasis on how to provide the emotional support and understanding required to help identity crime victims at a time of incredible vulnerability. Developed and tested with the help of leading financial services and technology companies, the CIRS training and certificates will be offered in 2025 for virtual, hybrid and on-site training.

We believe that offering training to other organizations based on the ITRC's decades of experience working with identity crime victims will help bridge the gap between the direct support the ITRC offers and the need for more victim assistance. Just as important, the fees generated from these programs will help ensure our services to individual victims remain free of charge.

As always, I want to thank the incredible team at the ITRC. There are not enough words to describe the level of talent, innovative thinking and dedication to helping others that you find in this team.

Thank you to our many partners and supporters, especially Experian, who provided the support needed to create the report you are about to read. There is always room for more like-minded organizations that recognize that identity crimes are not victimless crimes. There are real people behind the numbers you are about to see, and they deserve the same dignity and support afforded to any crime victim.

Join us, won't you, in caring for them.



Eva Velasquez
CEO, Identity Theft Resource Center

INTRODUCTION

from the COO About Small Businesses

There are 33.3 million small businesses in the United States, according to the Small Business Administration. That includes every type of business – from a solopreneur working a side gig for extra income to a growing business with 500 employees destined for bigger things.

All these businesses share a common issue: They are targets for cyber and identity criminals. As Eva points out in her CEO comments, we have combined our findings from studies of the impacts of cyber and identity crimes on both consumers and small businesses. Like the consumer findings, there are some encouraging trends along with a few jaw-dropping statistics. Among the reasons to be encouraged:

- + There is a significant increase in new security tools and employee training.
- + Small businesses are adopting data protection best practices at a rapid rate.
- + Most small business leaders know if their state has adopted a comprehensive privacy law.

On the other hand, the current trends reflect an environment where cybercriminals are focusing on smaller businesses that are part of large business supply chains. Identity criminals are seeking personal information that can be used to impersonate a consumer. Other trends include:

- + Fewer than 20 percent (20%) of small businesses surveyed had not been the victim of a cyberattack, data breach or both in the past year.
- + Financial losses greater than \$500,000 doubled in one year.
- + Over three-quarters of small business leaders are concerned about how they'll comply with new state privacy laws.

In the pages that follow, you'll see the same or similar trends impacting both consumers and small businesses. Many of these trends are the direct or indirect results of data breaches that are the fuel for most cyberattacks and identity crimes committed today.

People and small businesses are at substantial risk of an identity criminal using stolen information to impersonate them. In the wake of these crimes, the questions are the same, no matter who the victim is: ***What do I do now? How do I make sure this doesn't happen again?***

It's the role of the ITRC to provide the support consumers need to protect, recover and prevent identity misuse. It's also our mission to provide objective information like the analysis you're about to read to help guide business and government leaders as they develop policies and investments needed to protect personal information.

As you read this report, I encourage you to think about how you are protecting the personal information of your colleagues, customers and yourself. Defending against those who would steal, as Shakespeare wrote, "my good name" is now everyone's responsibility in some way. The ITRC is here to help equip you with the tools needed to do just that.



James E. Lee
COO, Identity Theft Resource Center

ABOUT THE CIBIR

2024 Consumer Impact – Business Impact Report

For the first time, this year's Consumer and Small Business Impact Reports are combined into a single report that explores the trends from the three distinct groups – ITRC victims, General Consumers and Small Business Leaders – and how they are impacted by identity misuse, data breaches and cyberattacks.

Each year, the ITRC asks identity crime victims who have contacted the ITRC to reveal how their lives have been impacted not just financially, but also emotionally and physically by the crimes. We also ask them if they have changed their habits to protect their personal information and, if so, how. We've done this since 2003.

The ITRC also surveys general consumers each year to gauge the rate and impact of identity crimes on people who do not contact the ITRC for victim support. We use this information to determine if there are significant differences in the experiences of ITRC victims compared to the general population and general consumer victims. We've done this since 2021.

The ITRC's annual survey of small business owners and executives looks at the rates and impacts of identity crimes and cyberattacks on organizations with 500 or fewer employees, as well as solopreneurs and gig workers. This meets the definition of small business according to the U.S. Small Business Administration.

The ITRC impact reports are based on survey responses gathered on the SurveyMonkey online research platform. With the exception of the identity crime victims who contacted the ITRC and who responded to direct requests to participate in this report, the individuals whose experiences are reflected here were solicited for participation by SurveyMonkey based on criteria selected by the ITRC as described in the following sections.

CONSUMER IMPACT METHODOLOGY

From July 2023 to July 2024, the ITRC responded to requests for direct assistance from 9,213 individuals seeking help addressing the impacts of compromised or misused identity credentials, as well as requests for information on how to prevent becoming a victim of an identity crime. In August 2024, the ITRC sent emails to a representative sample of those individuals, 254 of which responded by completing an online survey questionnaire.

To get a broader view of the trends and impacts affecting consumers in general, we asked similar questions to a group of 1,031 general consumers who may or may not have been a victim of an identity crime and who had not contacted the ITRC for information or assistance. These general consumers completed a similar, but not identical, online survey questionnaire as the ITRC victims.

This report makes a distinction from time to time between “ITRC Victims” – people who contacted the ITRC for assistance – and “Consumer Victims,” the 515 individuals who reported being a victim of an identity crime but did not seek help from the ITRC. In several instances, we also refer to “General Consumers,” which includes the full sample of 1,031 general consumers from the online survey.

Figure 1 | Gender Demographics, General Consumers



Figure 2 | Age Demographics, General Consumers

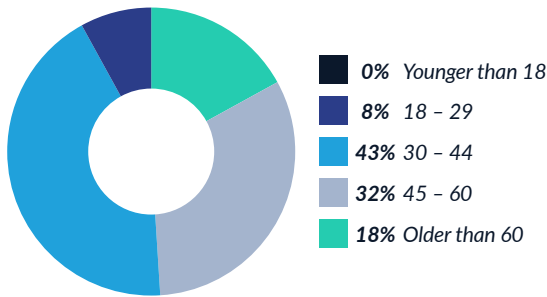
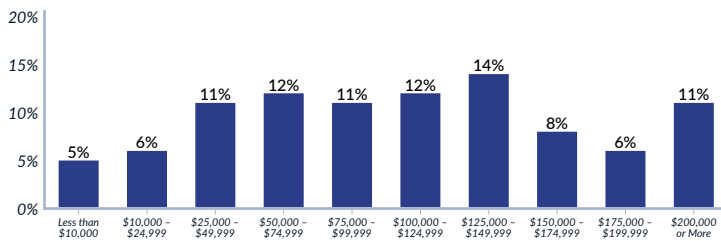


Figure 3 | Income Demographics, General Consumers



For the latest demographic information about ITRC Victims, review the [ITRC Trends in Identity Report](#) published in May 2024.

BUSINESS IMPACT METHODOLOGY

The ITRC, using the SurveyMonkey platform, conducted an online survey to explore the impacts of cybercrimes on small businesses as defined by the U.S. Small Business Administration. The survey was conducted in August 2024, covering the previous 12 months unless otherwise noted in a specific question.

The online questionnaire was completed by 461 people selected by SurveyMonkey. The respondents met the criteria of being a small business owner or executive at a company of 500 or fewer employees, including solopreneurs and gig workers.

This year’s report reflects responses from businesses ranging from single-employee companies to organizations with 500 employees. The responses also reflect a wide range of industries with significant concentrations in Financial Services, Manufacturing, and Technology.

Figure 4 | Company Headcount Demographics, Small Businesses

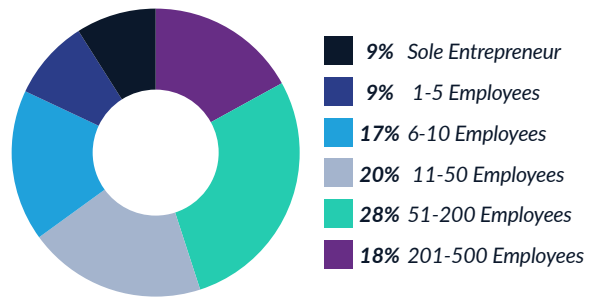


Figure 5 | Industry Demographics, Small Businesses

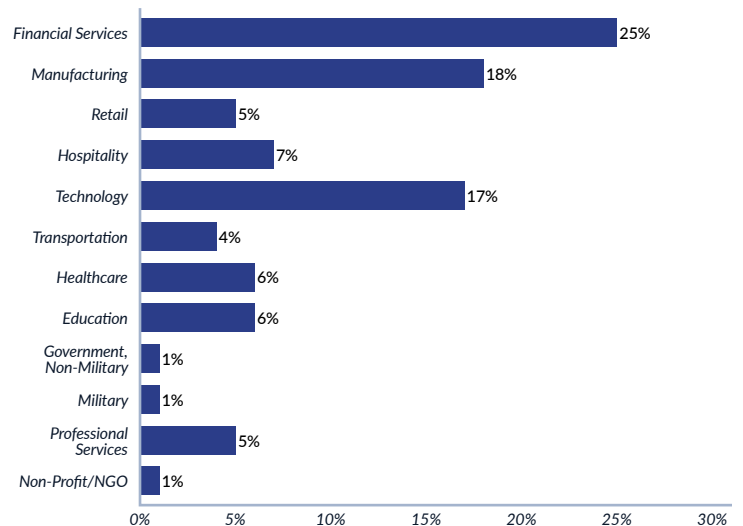
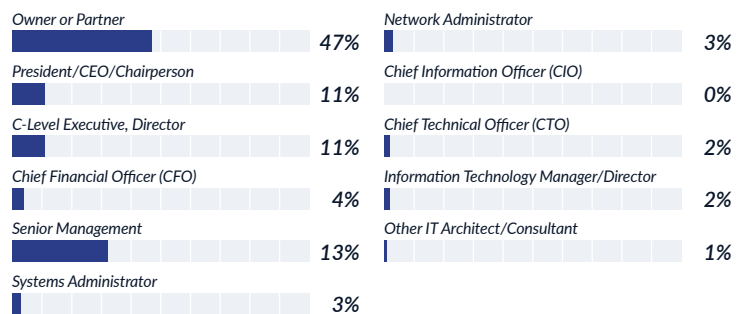


Figure 6 | Job Title Demographics, Small Businesses



KEY TAKEAWAYS

CONSUMERS

- + Reports from General Consumers of identity crimes jumped 21 percentage points from July 2023 to June 2024. Nearly 45 percent (45%) of victims who contacted the ITRC during the reporting period had been victimized more than once.
- + The number of first-time ITRC Victims increased to 45 percent (45%) from 36 percent (36%). The number of first-time identity crime victims among General Consumers grew from 31 percent (31%) in 2023's report to 37 percent (37%) in the current reporting period.
- + Eighty-one percent (81%) of General Consumers and 79 percent (79%) of ITRC Victims received at least one data breach notice between July 2023 and June 2024.
- + The number of ITRC Victims who contemplated suicide dropped from the previous high of 16 percent (16%) to 12 percent (12%) in the most recent reporting period. However, the number of General Consumers who considered self-harm grew to five percent (5%), up from three percent (3%) the prior year.
- + General Consumers consider themselves to be more security savvy than Victims of identity crimes who contacted the ITRC for assistance. Nearly 75 percent (75%) of General Consumers, half of whom have also been the victim of an identity crime, describe themselves as very or somewhat knowledgeable when it comes to cyber security and data protection. Yet, only 56 percent (56%) of ITRC Victims consider themselves to be very or somewhat knowledgeable.

SMALL BUSINESSES

- + The number of small business leaders reporting a stand-alone cyberattack or no cyberattacks or data breaches in the past year was down from July 2023 to June 2024 compared to previous years. However, the number of data breaches and cyberattacks that led to data breaches increased significantly.
 - + Small business leaders report investing across the board in new tools, training and processes as a result of the cyberattacks and data breaches. Cyber insurance policy proceeds have grown to be the number one source of funds to pay for the cost of recovering from a cyber event.
-

GENERAL TRENDS: CONSUMERS & SMALL BUSINESSES

- + General Consumers, ITRC Victims and Small Business Leaders are making significant changes in their cyber routines that will lead to few identity crimes in the future. More consumers are freezing their credit, changing their risky password habits and adopting new technologies like Passkeys.
- + Small Businesses are implementing a range of data protection practices that will result in less personal data being available to identity thieves.

CIBIR

IDENTITY THEFT RESOURCE CENTER

Consumer Impact – Business Impact Report

The 2024 Consumer Impact – Business Impact Report, supported by Experian, explores the trends from the three distinct groups – ITRC Victims, General Consumers and Small Business Leaders. The report findings highlight significant changes in cyber habits from consumers and small businesses and how identity misuse, data breaches and cyberattacks impact them.



THOUGHTS OF SUICIDE

CONSUMER IDENTITY CRIME VICTIMS

5% GENERAL CONSUMERS
Increased by Two (2) Percentage Points
YEAR-OVER-YEAR

12% ITRC VICTIMS
Decreased by Four (4) Percentage Points
YEAR-OVER-YEAR



DATA BREACH NOTICES

RECEIVED BY CONSUMERS

Only 19 percent (19%) of General Consumers did not receive at least one breach notice compared to 44 percent (44%) the previous year.

21 percent (21%) of ITRC Victims did not receive a notice compared to 29 percent (29%) in 2023's report.

FIRST-TIME VICTIMS

OF AN IDENTITY CRIME

37% GENERAL CONSUMERS

45% ITRC VICTIMS

Increased by Six (6) Percentage Points
YEAR-OVER-YEAR

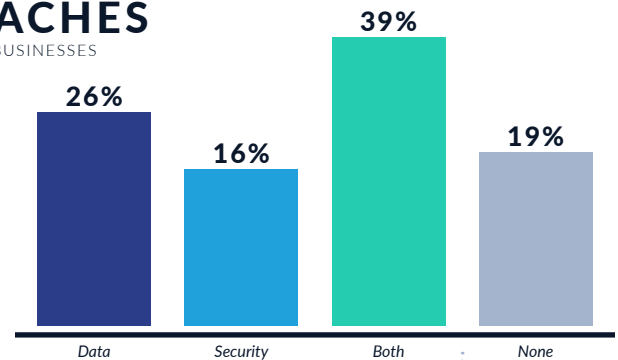
Increased by Nine (9) Percentage Points
YEAR-OVER-YEAR

49% OF GENERAL CONSUMERS are repeat victims, a 20 percentage point decrease since 2023.

47% OF ITRC VICTIMS are repeat victims, a six (6) percentage point increase since 2023.

EXPERIENCED BREACHES

BY SMALL BUSINESSES



Small businesses reporting a breach increased by eight (8) percentage points since 2023.

SMALL BUSINESS FINANCIAL LOSSES

DUE TO AN IDENTITY CRIME

- 21% Less than \$250,000
- 34% \$250,000 – \$500,000
- 28% \$500,001 – \$1M
- 8% More than \$1M
- 9% Other

Small businesses reporting financial loss of over \$500,000 more than doubled since 2023.

80% OF SMALL BUSINESSES

Surveyed Reported Taking Steps to Prevent Future Breaches

88%
Provided New Training for Staff
IT & NON-IT STAFF

67%
Added Additional Security
STAFF & BUDGET

65%
Implemented New Security Tools



This report was made possible through the support of Experian.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Each day the expert advisors in the ITRC's Help Center provide free assistance to victims of identity crimes and people who want to learn how to protect their personal information. Behind every statistic in this report is a person who has been victimized...and these are their words.

"My father committed suicide on February 2 as a result of being scammed for months and having given them every penny he had. He lost everything and then he took his own life. The scammers then started to scam me (his daughter) and all of our family members by, for example, setting up a fake Facebook account during his funeral to scam friends and family out of money that they thought was going to our family."

"I'm so tired of all this abuse and someone completely tak[ing] away my identity.... This is really affecting me in so many different ways."

"I constantly have to change passwords and record the change, worry about my finances and go to great lengths to protect them, worry about my emails being taken over and my personal information getting in the wrong hands, and my personal safety being at risk, and continue to run my business and take care of myself through all of this."

"I've been told to go %\$^ myself, @%\$# off (duh, they called me), been called all kind of names. I don't even like to answer the phone."*

"Every time I get the debt [paid] down I have new false charges popping up and I never use my cards so yeah, I'm pretty drained mentally, blaming myself for not being more careful about how I do things... My family is pressuring me with their constant disapproval, I'm in a very bad place emotionally."

"Nobody has helped me, absolutely zero... I'm so distressed."

"The incident set off a multitude of impacts on my life that I've had to deal with in addition to reporting the incident. So that's taking time too."

"Still experiencing new incidents. Can't contain threat, can only react."

"I don't trust anyone right now; I really feel alone."

ANALYSIS

Consumers

CONSUMERS

New Information Provides Additional Context

Multiple Breach Notices Lead to Multiple Victimitizations

Financial Impacts Rise as Attacks Do

Emotional Impacts

Consumers are Changing Their Cyber Habits, Selectively

ANALYSIS

Consumers

With two decades of information from hundreds of thousands of ITRC victims and four years of general consumer data, it's safe to conclude that ITRC information about victim impact can be viewed as a leading indicator. This report reflects trends among ITRC victims that are likely to manifest themselves later in the way general consumers are impacted if (when, in reality) they become victims of identity crimes.

The *2024 Consumer Impact - Business Impact Report (CIBIR)* reflects the trendlines found in the answers provided by General Consumers, General Consumer Victims and ITRC Victims. The trends often indicate a plateauing of certain impacts from July 2023 through June 2024, as well as a slowing in the rate of increase and the occasional rare decrease in some key measurements.

There were even a few bright spots as consumer behaviors show a change that will reduce or *eliminate* certain kinds of cyber and identity crimes down the road.

The appendix to this report includes the responses from each question put to General Consumers and ITRC Victims. This report section highlights some key findings and trends.

NEW INFORMATION PROVIDES ADDITIONAL CONTEXT

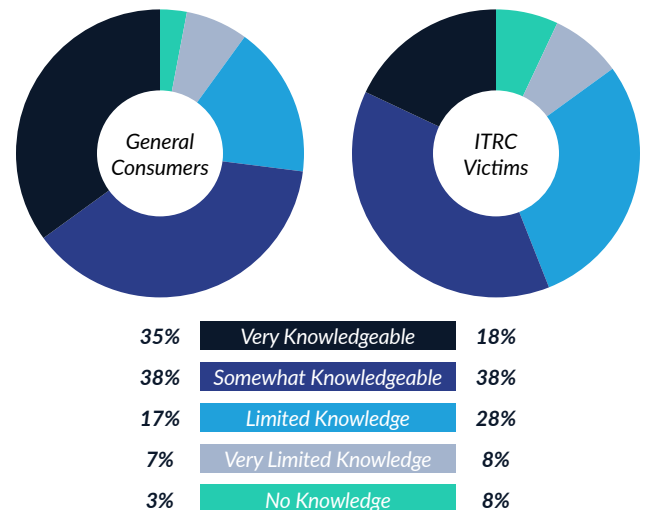
Each year, the ITRC adds new questions to the surveys that ITRC Victims and General Consumers are given.

The 2024 report explores two new areas:

- 1) How knowledgeable are people about personal cybersecurity and data protection?
- 2) Do identity crime victims have trouble proving their identity?

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF CYBERSECURITY AND WAYS TO PROTECT YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION FROM MISUSE?

Figure 7 | Knowledge of Cybersecurity Protections, General Consumers vs ITRC Victims

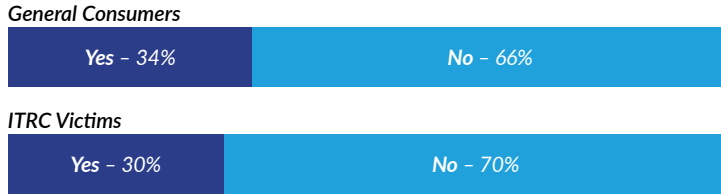


General Consumers are more confident in their cybersecurity and data protection knowledge. However, only about half of these individuals are self-reported victims of identity crimes.

Compare the responses from General Consumers to ITRC Victims whose personal information has been stolen or misused. This indicates that being an identity crime victim puts a dent in someone's confidence when it comes to self-protection.

AS A RESULT OF YOUR IDENTITY BEING COMPROMISED OR MISUSED, HAVE YOU HAD TROUBLE PROVING YOUR IDENTITY WHEN ASKED?

Figure 8 | Difficulty Proving Identity After Compromise/Misuse, General Consumers vs ITRC Victims



More than one-quarter of ITRC Victims experience difficulties proving they are who they claim to be. With that said, more than one-third of General Population Victims have trouble proving their identity.

MULTIPLE BREACH NOTICES LEAD TO MULTIPLE VICTIMIZATIONS

Figure 9 | Breach Notices in Last 12 Months, General Consumers vs ITRC Victims

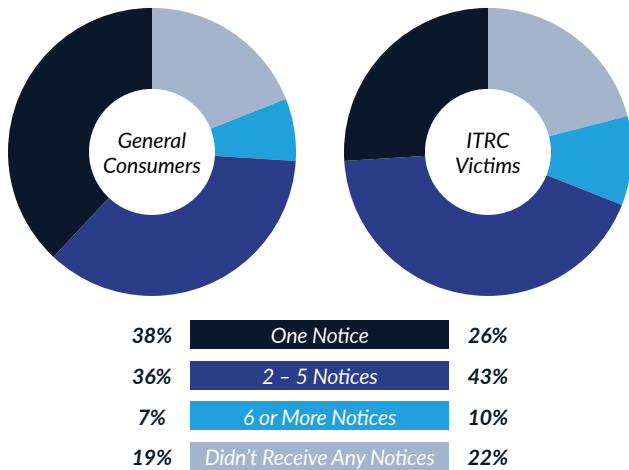
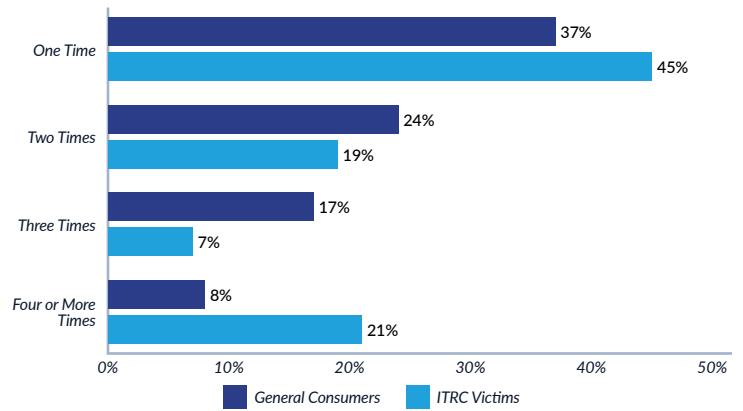


Figure 10 | Personal Information Stolen/Misused in Last 12 Months, General Consumers



Figure 11 | Victim of Identity Crime, General Consumers vs ITRC Victims



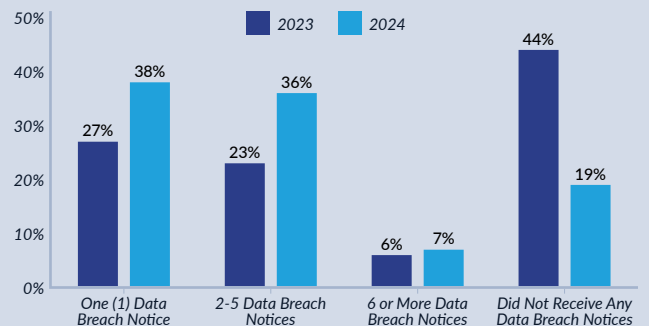
While it's nearly impossible to tie a particular data breach to a specific identity attack, it's reasonable to conclude the rising volume of multiple attacks on individuals (and businesses) is linked.

BREACH FATIGUE IS REAL AS FEWER ADULTS ESCAPE DATA BREACHES

In last year's *ITRC Consumer Impact Report*, 44 percent (44%) of respondents said they had not received a data breach notice in the previous 12 months. After a record-setting year for data breaches in 2023, just 19 percent (19%) of respondents in this year's report said they had not received an alert about a data breach in the past year.

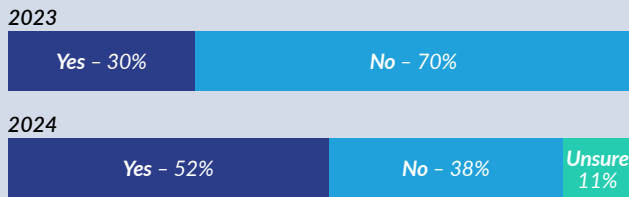
Not only is the rate of data breach notices increasing, but so is the frequency, with more than 43 percent (43%) of victims receiving at least two notices. That's up from 29 percent (29%) in last year's report.

Breach Fatigue is Real



It's well established that data breaches are the fuel for many identity crimes – from crimes of impersonation and new account creation to stolen credentials used to log in to company systems to steal more data, execute a ransomware attack or perpetrate a scam. The number of people who say their personal information was stolen or misused in the past year jumped 21 percentage points compared to the previous Impact Report.

Data Compromises Lead to Identity Crimes



FINANCIAL IMPACTS RISE AS ATTACKS DO

Figure 12 | Value of Total Loss, General Consumers (2023 vs 2024)

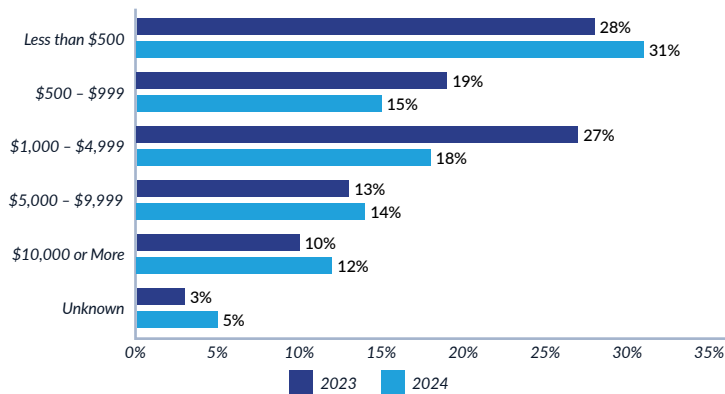
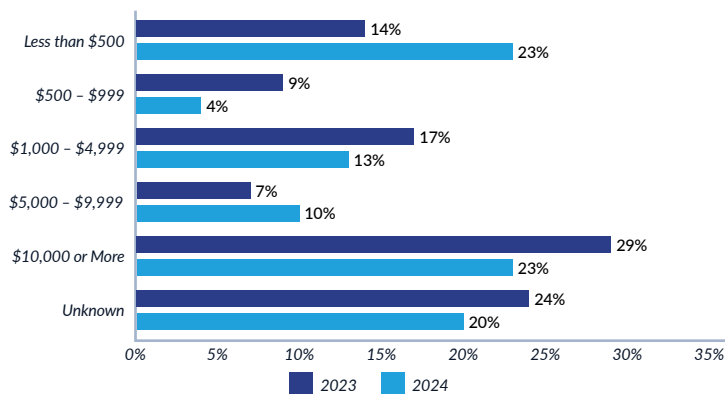


Figure 13 | Value of Total Loss, ITRC Victims (2023 vs 2024)



Financial losses among General Consumer Victims and ITRC Victims are following the same pattern, with more victims reporting financial losses at the extremes: Less than \$500 and more than \$5,000. Fewer victims are reporting losses in the middle ranges.

Overall, fewer ITRC Victims and General Consumer Victims reported severe secondary financial impacts. Over one-third of ITRC Victims reported no secondary financial impacts, and 40 percent (40%) of General Consumer Victims reported no additional financial impacts. Still, most victims reported some level of impact beyond the dollar loss.

EMOTIONAL IMPACTS

Figure 14 | Emotional Impact, ITRC Victims & General Consumers (2023 vs 2024)

	ITRC VICTIMS		GENERAL CONSUMERS	
	2023	2024	2023	2024
Worried or Anxious	87%	82%	47%	53%
Violated	77%	76%	43%	37%
Vulnerable	71%	70%	43%	42%
Annoyed or Frustrated	75%	68%	28%	28%
Angry	79%	67%	28%	30%
Like You Can't Trust People	71%	60%	20%	21%
Sad or Depressed	63%	52%	19%	20%
Shame or Embarrassment	52%	45%	23%	20%
Guilt That You Caused This to Happen	45%	39%	14%	11%
Isolated	45%	38%	9%	11%
Loss of Interest in Activities or Hobbies	43%	33%	9%	10%
Loss of Interest in Work	28%	20%	7%	8%
Suicidal	16%	12%	3%	5%
None of the Above	1%	5%	4%	13%

The ITRC Consumer Impact Reports have revealed for two decades the depth and breadth of the non-financial impacts identity crime victims suffer. One of the foundational statistics dating to 2003 is the number of ITRC Victims who contemplate suicide. The rate steadily increased over the past four years to 16 percent (16%) in the 2023 Consumer Impact Report.

However, in this report, fewer ITRC Victims reported feeling suicidal, but more General Population Victims said they considered self-harm. The rise in General Population Victims considering suicide follows the ITRC Victim trend line since 2019.

Although specific emotional impacts are generally flat or slightly down across the board in all victim groups, 95 percent (95%) of ITRC Victims and 87 percent (87%) of General Consumer Victims experienced one or more significant emotional effects. That is a shockingly high rate of impact.

CONSUMERS ARE CHANGING THEIR CYBER HABITS, SELECTIVELY

Figure 15 | Precautions Taken Prior to Identity Crime, General Consumers (2023 vs 2024)

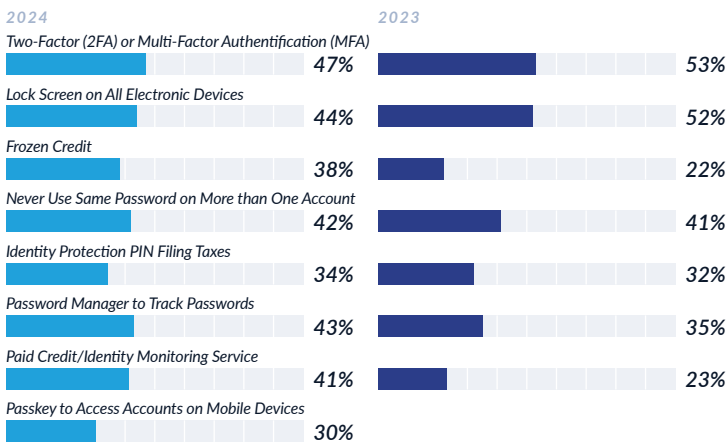


Figure 16 | Precautions Taken Prior to Identity Crime, ITRC Victims (2023 vs 2024)

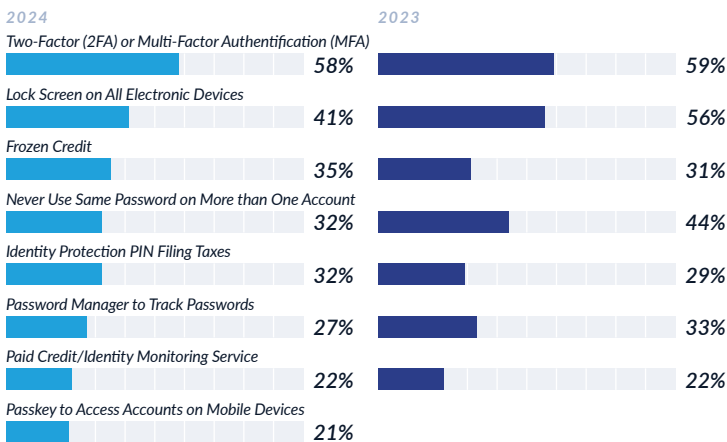


Figure 17 | Adopted Procautionary Habits After Compromise, ITRC Victims & General Consumers (2023 vs 2024)

	ITRC VICTIMS		GENERAL CONSUMERS	
	2023	2024	2023	2024
Never Click on Links or Attachments in Emails/Texts	59%	60%	53%	52%
Only Click on Requested Links or Attachments in Emails/Texts	59%	59%	56%	55%
Use Long, Unique Passwords for Each Account/App	55%	59%	50%	63%
Limit Social Media Content Posted	68%	57%	57%	47%
Provide Information via Phone Only When Calling	58%	54%	43%	38%
Limit Who Can See Social Media Posts	61%	50%	48%	43%
Only Send Money via Instant Payment Service when Initiating Transaction	54%	47%	41%	37%

Here is another area where all victim groups are pretty much in lockstep. General Consumers and ITRC Victims alike have significantly increased their use of credit freezes and paid protection services. Still, the growth of other protective actions has stalled or fallen back from previous years. Part of the reduction in the use of password managers and better password management can be attributed to the rapid adoption of Passkeys.

PASSKEY USE GROWS RAPIDLY AS CONSUMERS TAKE MORE PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

For years, cybersecurity and identity crime experts have been advising consumers to take more responsibility for protecting their personal information. After a record year for data breaches in 2023, General Consumers are increasingly adopting the kind of good cyber hygiene habits needed to help prevent or mitigate the impact of identity crimes.

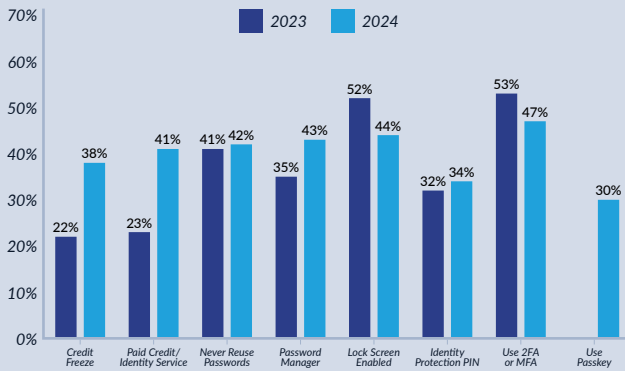
In particular, 30 percent (30%) of General Consumers responded to the ITRC's Impact questionnaire by claiming they have created passkeys, a new form of a secure access credential that replaces passwords.

Historically, consumers have self-compromised by giving away their logins and passwords in addition to login credentials being stolen in data breaches. (Some of the largest data breaches in 2024 have been because of compromised passwords.)

Unlike a password, a person can't be scammed into giving away their passkey because it is a unique code tied to a biometric or PIN on their device, so they never see it or know it. Likewise, a passkey cannot be stolen in a data breach like a password because the passkey is never stored by the business where a person has an account. Passkeys only became broadly available in mid-to-late 2023.

Consumers have also broadly adopted other best practices, including credit freezes and using password managers.

Consumer Actions are Improving



ANALYSIS

Small Businesses

SMALL BUSINESSES

Attacks are On the Rise Here, Too

Fortune Favors the Prepared

Bigger Attacks = Bigger Losses

Best Practice Adoption or Compliance?

ANALYSIS

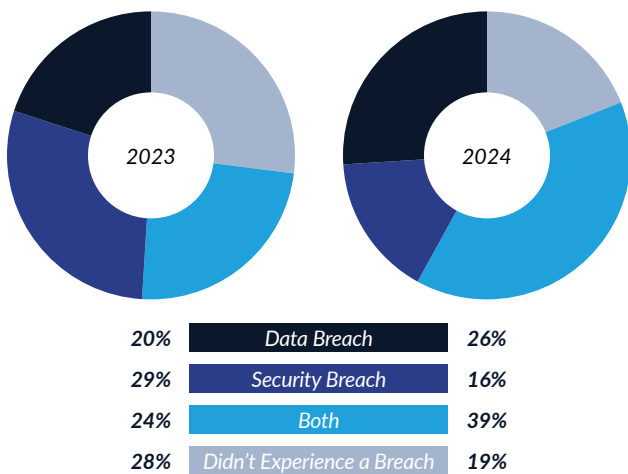
Small Businesses

One of the interesting trends in the data that forms this report is how similar many of the trends are between consumers and small businesses. From the increasing number of attacks and the pattern of financial losses to where business leaders are investing their resources, both groups' actions look a lot alike.

This year's cohort features more respondents who identified as owners and more organizations on the larger end of the small business spectrum than in previous reports.

ATTACKS ARE ON THE RISE HERE, TOO

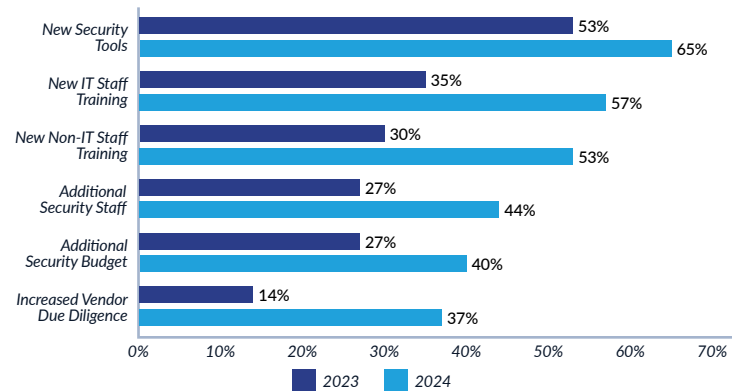
Figure 18 | Breach Experienced in Last 12 Months, 2023 vs 2024



The interesting data points here are not the drop in cyberattacks. Rather, the rise in combination attacks (cyberattacks that led to data breaches) and the steep drop in the number of organizations that experienced no form of attack at all.

FORTUNE FAVORS THE PREPARED

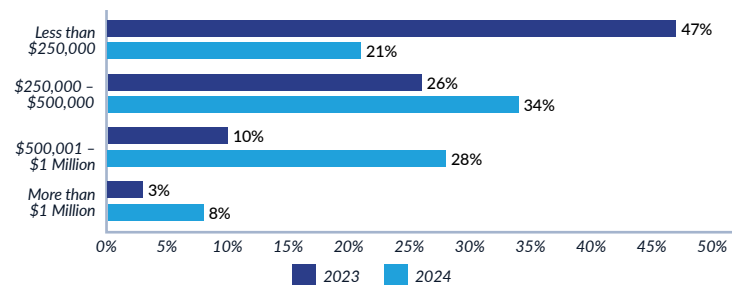
Figure 19 | Preventative Steps Taken, 2023 vs 2024



Across the board, small business leaders are investing in more tools and training. Thanks to the proliferation of supply chain attacks, vendor due diligence has taken on more urgency, with leaders more than doubling investment in the category since the 2023 report.

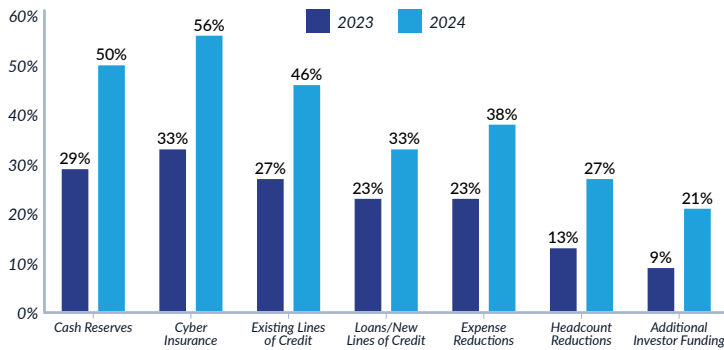
BIGGER ATTACKS = BIGGER LOSSES

Figure 20 | Total Financial Impact, 2023 vs 2024



Unlike consumers, who saw limited growth in losses per attack, business losses grew significantly. With bigger losses also come more aggressive actions to cover the unbudgeted costs:

Figure 21 | Financial Impact Actions, 2023 vs 2024



BEST PRACTICE ADOPTION OR COMPLIANCE?

Figure 22 | Data Privacy Best Practices Followed, 2023 vs 2024

	2023	2024
Consumers Must Opt-In to Data Collection/Use	34%	50%
Consumers Have Easy Access to Personal Information	33%	53%
Consumers Can Opt-Out/Limit Personal Information Collected	37%	50%
Consumers Can Opt-Out/Limit Use of Personal Information	28%	34%
Consumers Can Easily Correct Personal Information	25%	33%
Consumers Can Easily Request Personal Information Be Deleted	21%	29%
Information Not Required to Be Retained After Transaction is Deleted	22%	25%

In past years, business leaders focused more on implementing best practices like Multifactor Authentication (MFA) and mandating longer passwords. Those were not specifically mandated by law or most regulations. Now, with nearly half of all states passing their own privacy and data protection laws in the absence of a federal privacy law, this year's results show a shift to compliance.

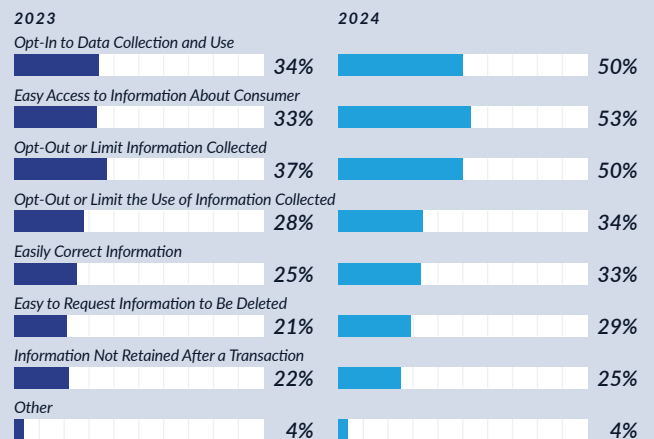
STATE PRIVACY LAWS MAY BE DRIVING BETTER DATA PRACTICES

As of October 2024, 20 states have passed comprehensive data protection and privacy laws. These laws give consumers more access and control over how their personal information is collected, processed, sold or shared and stored. The laws often also mandate data security and other data practices.

Small business leaders who responded to the ITRC's annual survey questionnaire were very aware of their state's new requirements (77 percent). However, an almost equal number were concerned about how they would comply (76 percent).

There were also significant improvements in data best practices compared to responses in the previous year.

Small Business Data Practices are Improving



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

REPORTS

The ITRC publishes comprehensive reports and analysis throughout the year. Click below to download the reports of interest to you.

[ANNUAL DATA BREACH REPORT \(DBR\)](#)

Published January 2024

Based on publicly reported data breaches issued between January and December each year, the ITRC's DBR is the most trusted source used by media, businesses and government officials on data breach trends.

ITRC also offers periodic updates on data breaches. In 2025, the ITRC will only publish a half-year update in July.

[TRENDS IN IDENTITY REPORT \(TIR\)](#)

Published May 2024

Based on the information provided by the identity crime victims and consumers who contact the ITRC for assistance, the TIR offers insight into current and emerging identity issues that victims have faced in the previous year.

CONTACT CENTER SUPPORT FOR BUSINESS

The ITRC offers businesses a variety of trauma-informed and culturally aware support services to help organizations address the wide range of unique issues experienced by their customers who are identity crime victims.

Designed as either a first-stop or an escalation service, organizations can provide direct access to trained ITRC expert advisors where victims will receive personalized, concierge-level support based on their unique needs.

The ITRC also offers a certificate training program for customer support center representatives. The ITRC's new Certified Identity Recovery Specialist training program provides front-line staff with the tools and skills needed to effectively partner with your customer or prospect who is an identity crime victim in a supportive and effective way.

DATA SERVICES

Consumers may access the latest information about Data Breaches and enroll in *Breach Alert for Consumers* to receive an email when an organization where they have an account issues a data breach notice. These services are free to individuals.

Businesses, government agencies and academic institutions may access the ITRC's comprehensive Data Breach database that dates back to 2005 on a batch or subscription basis. *Breach Alert for Business* allows you to create a list of companies with whom you have a relationship and receive an email alert if they are added to our breach notice database. *Breach Alert for Business* allows businesses to conduct due diligence and monitor partner organizations and prospective vendors. This paid service includes unlimited breach searches and future breach monitoring alerts.

ABOUT

ITRC & Experian

IDENTITY THEFT RESOURCE CENTER

Founded in 1999, the Identity Theft Resource Center® (ITRC) is a national nonprofit organization established to empower and guide consumers, victims, business and government to minimize risk and mitigate the impact of identity compromise and crime. Through public and private support, the ITRC provides no-cost victim assistance and consumer education through its website live-chat idtheftcenter.org and toll-free phone number 888.400.5530. The ITRC also equips consumers and businesses with information about recent data breaches through its [data breach tracking tool](#). The ITRC offers help to specific populations, including the deaf/hard of hearing and blind/low vision communities.

EXPERIAN

Experian is a global data and technology company, powering opportunities for people and businesses around the world. We help to redefine lending practices, uncover and prevent fraud, simplify healthcare, deliver digital marketing solutions, and gain deeper insights into the automotive market, all using our unique combination of data, analytics and software. We also assist millions of people to realize their financial goals and help them to save time and money.

We operate across a range of markets, from financial services to healthcare, automotive, agrifinance, insurance, and many more industry segments.

We invest in talented people and new advanced technologies to unlock the power of data and innovate. As a FTSE 100 Index company listed on the London Stock Exchange (EXPN), we have a team of 22,500 people across 32 countries.

Our corporate headquarters are in Dublin, Ireland. Learn more at experianplc.com.

CIBIR

IDENTITY THEFT RESOURCE CENTER

Consumer Impact – Business Impact Report

CONSUMER & BUSINESS RESOURCES

The ITRC offers a variety of low-cost identity education, protection, and recovery services for small businesses as well as free victim assistance and education opportunities for consumers. To learn more, email [Dorinda Miller](mailto:Dorinda.Miller@idtheftcenter.org) or contact the ITRC by email at communications@idtheftcenter.org.

FOR MEDIA

For any media-related inquiries, please email media@idtheftcenter.org.



This report was made possible through the support of Experian.

APPENDIX



2024 CONSUMER IMPACT SURVEY

Survey Results

Demographics

2024 SMALL BUSINESS IMPACT SURVEY

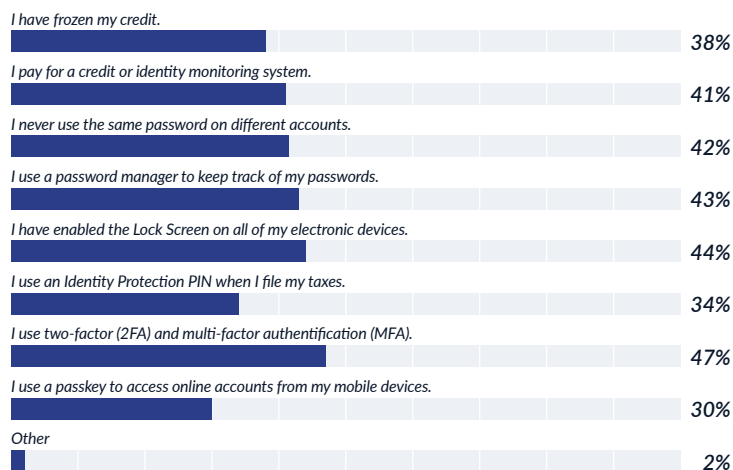
Survey Results

Demographics

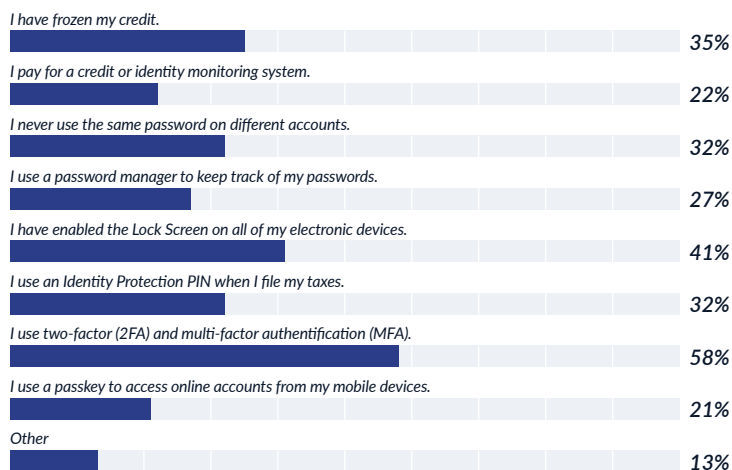
2024 CONSUMER IMPACT SURVEY

SURVEY RESULTS

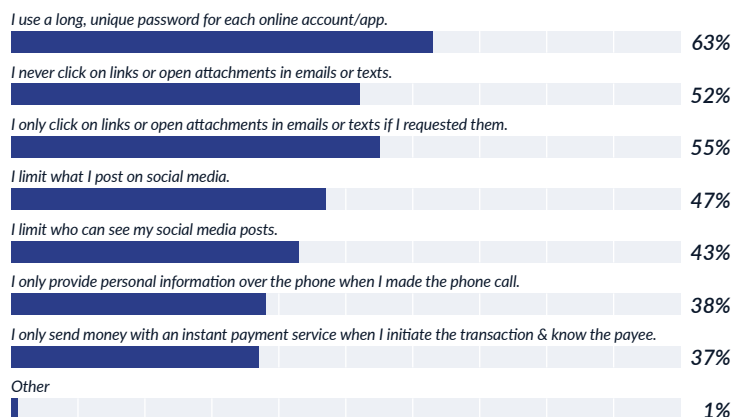
General Consumers | What actions do you currently take to minimize the risk of your identity being stolen or misused? Select all that apply.



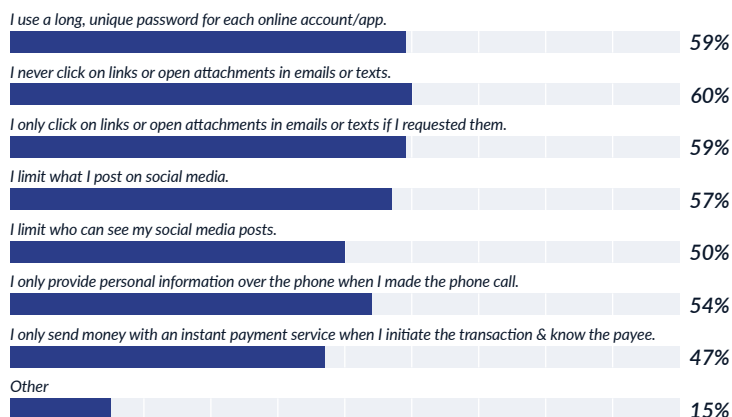
ITRC Victims | Prior to your identity being stolen or compromised, did you take any of the following actions to minimize the risk of your identity being misused? Select all that apply.



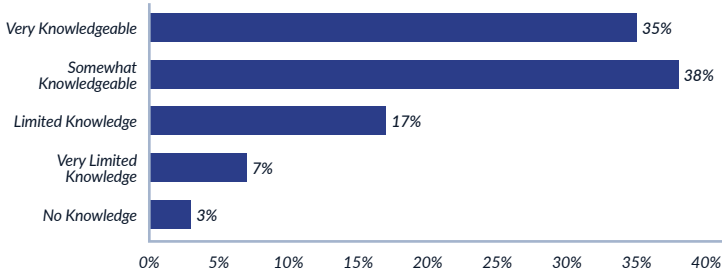
General Consumers | Have you adopted any of the following habits to protect your personal information? Select all that apply.



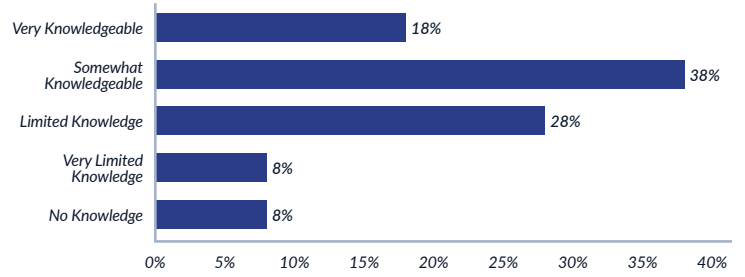
ITRC Victims | Since your identity compromise, have you adopted any of the following habits to protect your personal information? Select all that apply.



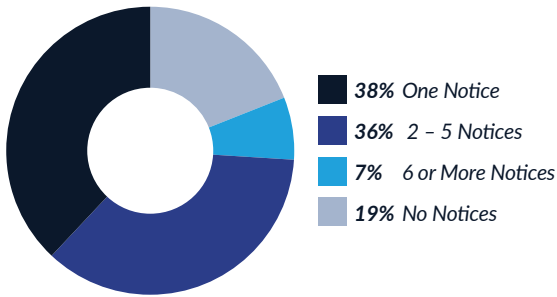
General Consumers | How would you describe your knowledge of cybersecurity and ways to protect your personal information from misuse?



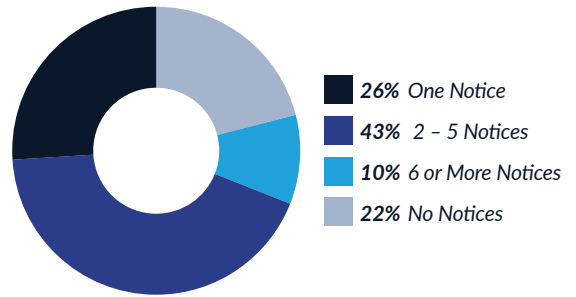
ITRC Victims | How would you describe your knowledge of cybersecurity and ways to protect your personal information from misuse?



General Consumers | Have you received data breach notices in the past 12 months?



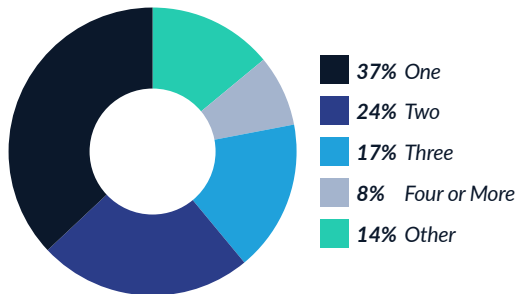
ITRC Victims | Have you received data breach notices in the past 12 months?



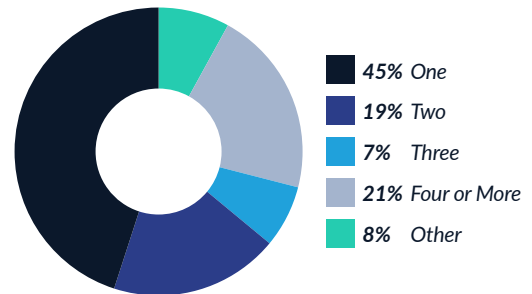
General Consumers | Has your personal information (SSN, DL, login/password, account number, social media account, etc.) been stolen or misused in the past 12 months?



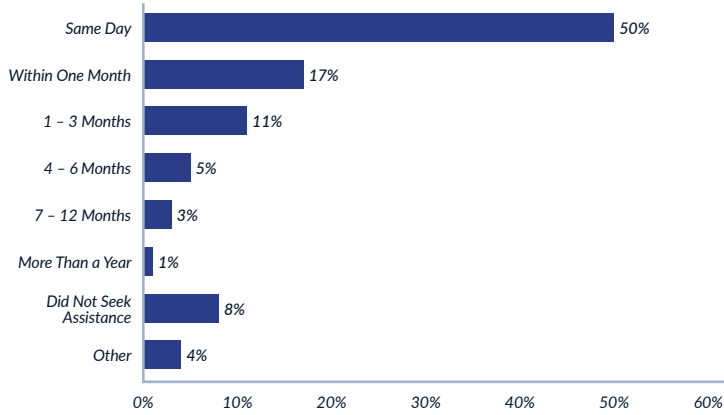
General Consumers | How many times have you been the victim of an identity crime (not including data breaches)?



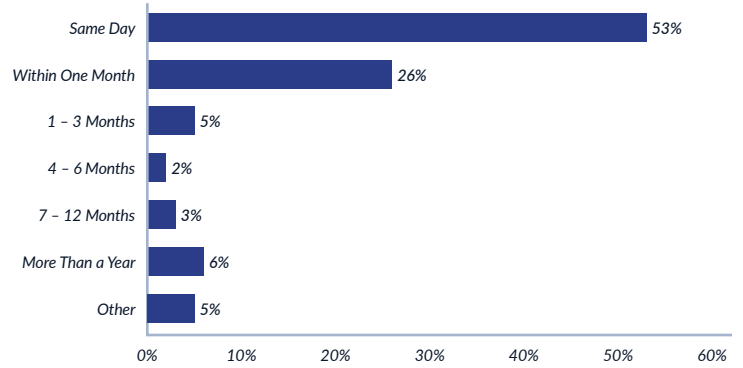
ITRC Victims | How many times have you been the victim of an identity crime (not including data breaches)?



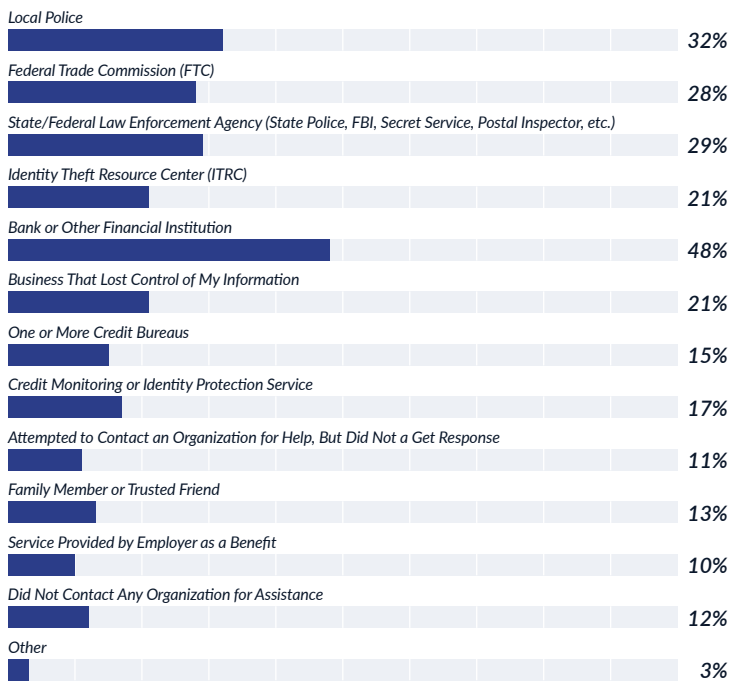
General Consumers | How long did you wait to seek assistance after learning your identity/personal information was stolen or misused?



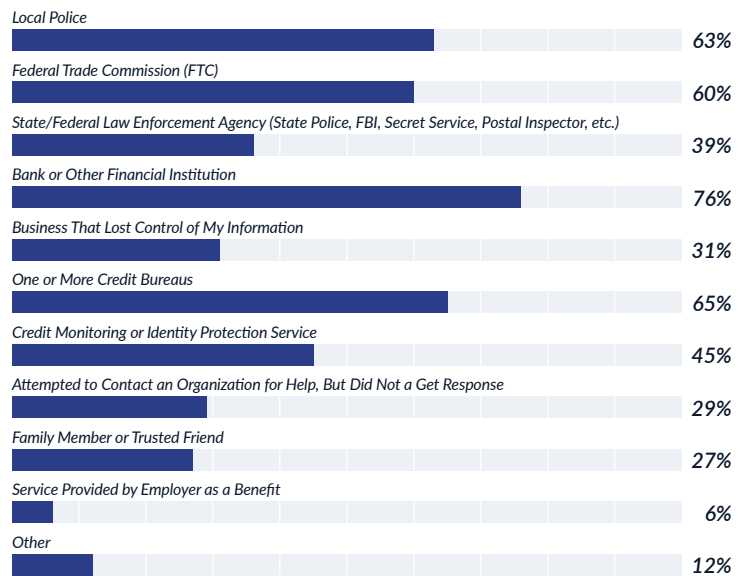
ITRC Victims | How long did you wait to seek assistance after learning your identity/personal information was stolen or misused?



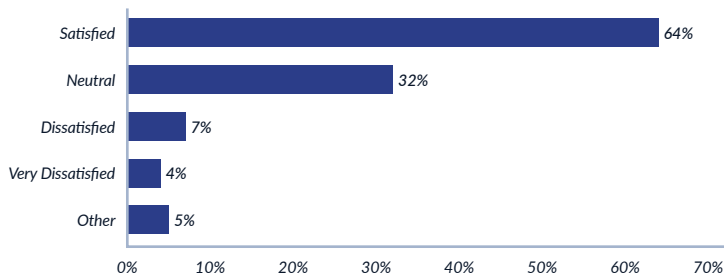
General Consumers | Whom did you first contact for assistance after discovering your personal information has been stolen or misused? Select all that apply.



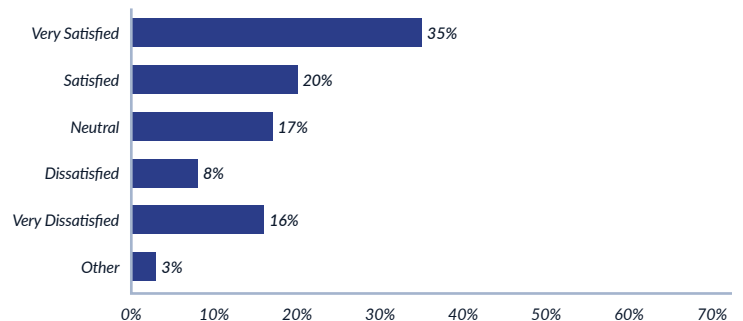
ITRC Victims | Whom did you contact for assistance after discovering your personal information has been stolen or misused? Select all that apply.



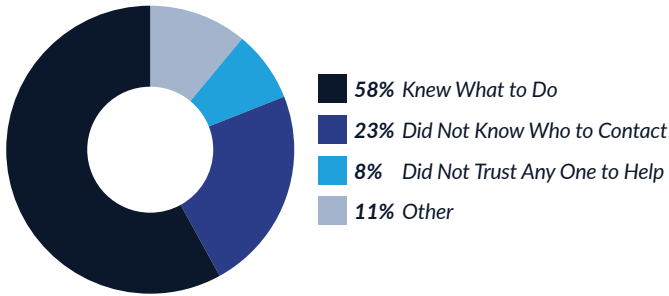
General Consumers | Rate your level of satisfaction with the organization(s) you contacted for assistance.



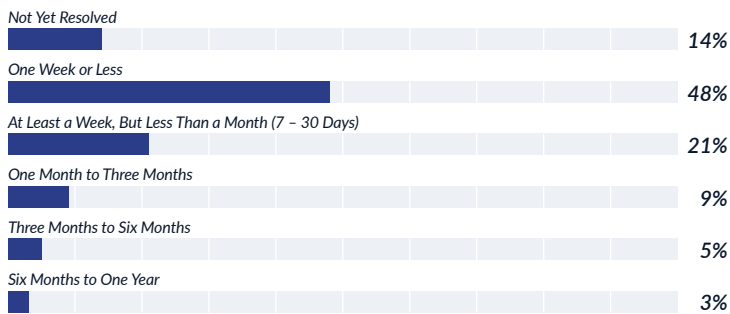
ITRC Victims | Rate your level of satisfaction with the organization(s), including ITRC, you contacted for assistance.



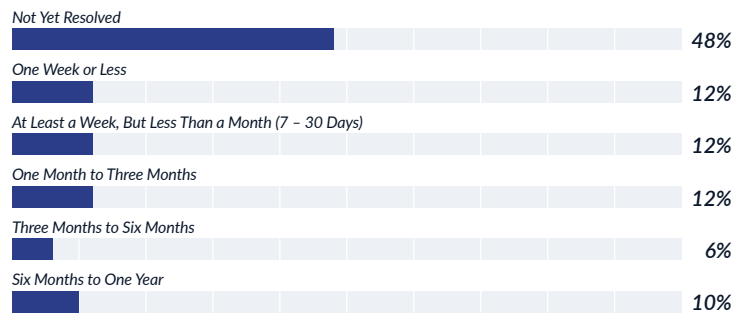
General Consumers | You answered you did not contact any organization for help responding to your identity/personal information being stolen or misused. Why not?



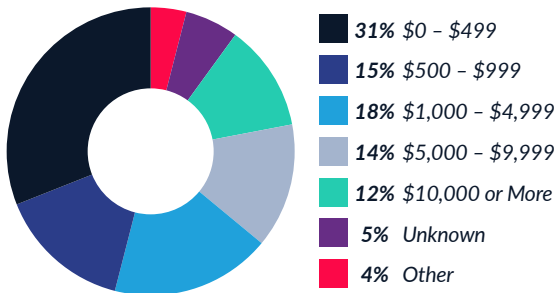
General Consumers | How long did you spend dealing with this instance of identity misuse? If it is ongoing, select "Not Yet Resolved".



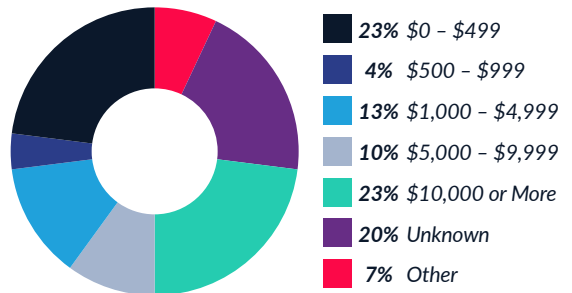
ITRC Victims | How long did you spend dealing with an instance of identity misuse? If it is ongoing, select "Not Yet Resolved".



General Consumers | What is the approximate value of everything stolen during your identity crime incident? Include the value of goods, services, credit card charges, loans, cash, and anything else the person may have obtained.



ITRC Victims | What is the approximate value of everything stolen during your identity crime incident? Include the value of goods, services, credit card charges, loans, cash, and anything else the person may have obtained.



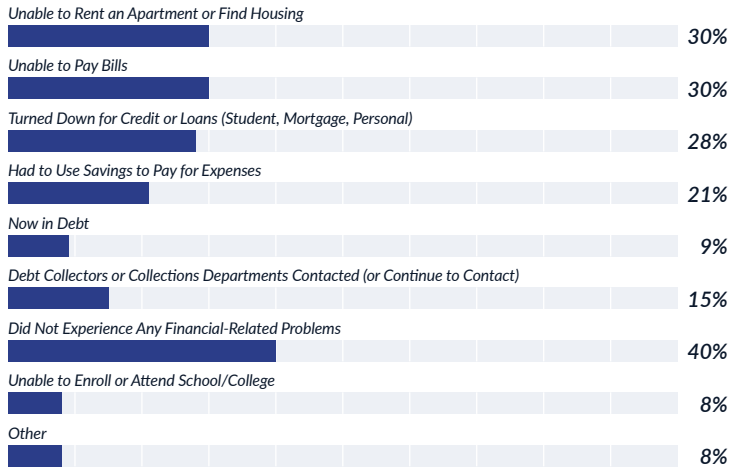
General Consumers | As a result of your identity being compromised or misused, have you had trouble proving your identity when asked?



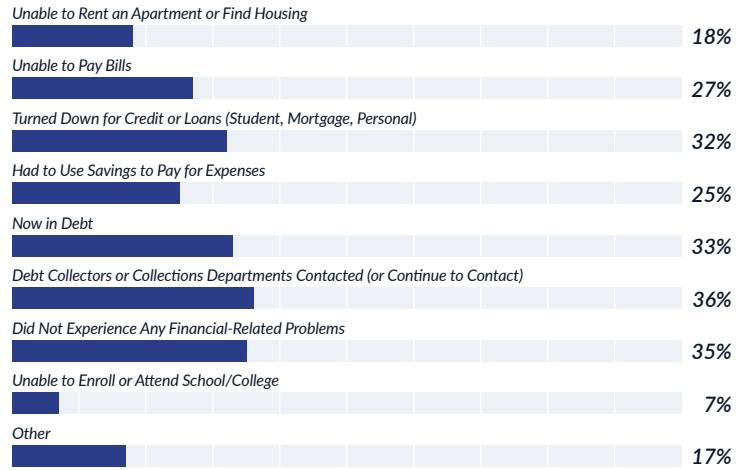
ITRC Victims | As a result of your identity being compromised or misused, have you had trouble proving your identity when asked?



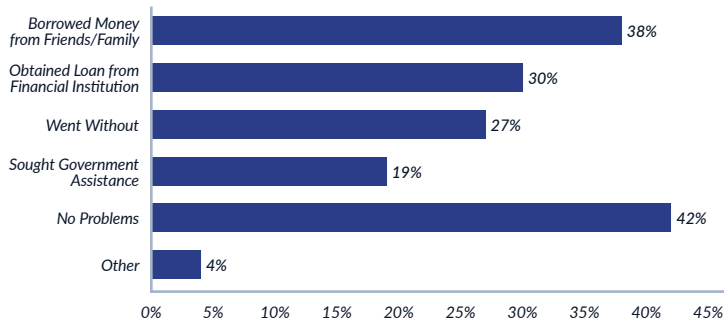
General Consumers | As a result of this incident, did you experience any of the following financial-related problems? Select all that apply.



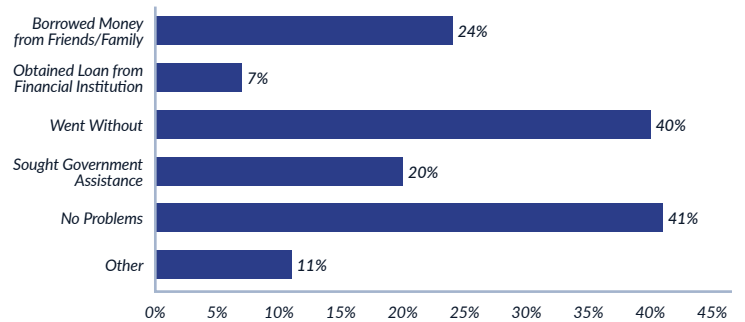
IIRC Victims | As a result of this incident, did you experience any of the following financial-related problems? Select all that apply.



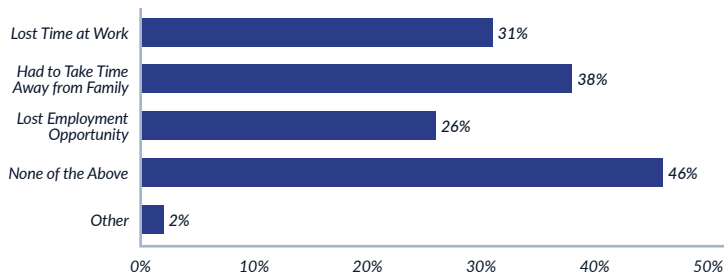
General Consumers | If your identity theft case made it difficult for you to cover the cost of a need, how did you get the need met? Select all that apply.



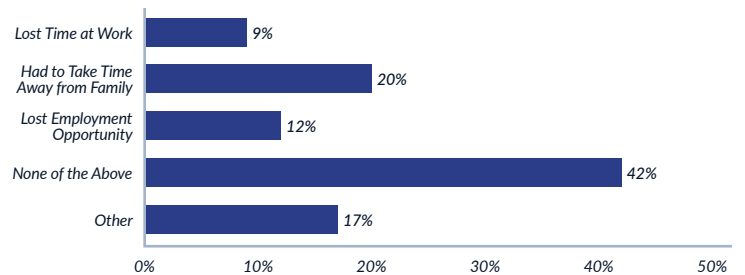
IIRC Victims | If your identity theft case made it difficult for you to cover the cost of a need, how did you get the need met? Select all that apply.



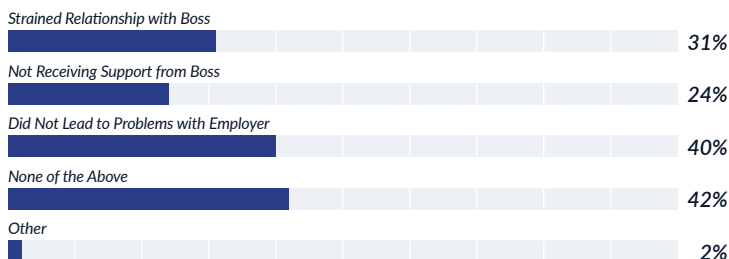
General Consumers | As a result of this incident, did you experience any of the following non-financial problems? Select all that apply.



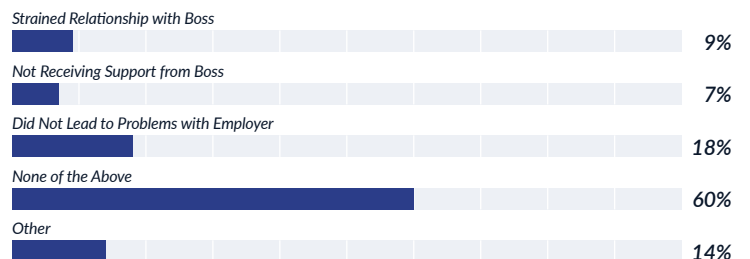
IIRC Victims | As a result of this incident, did you experience any of the following non-financial problems? Select all that apply.



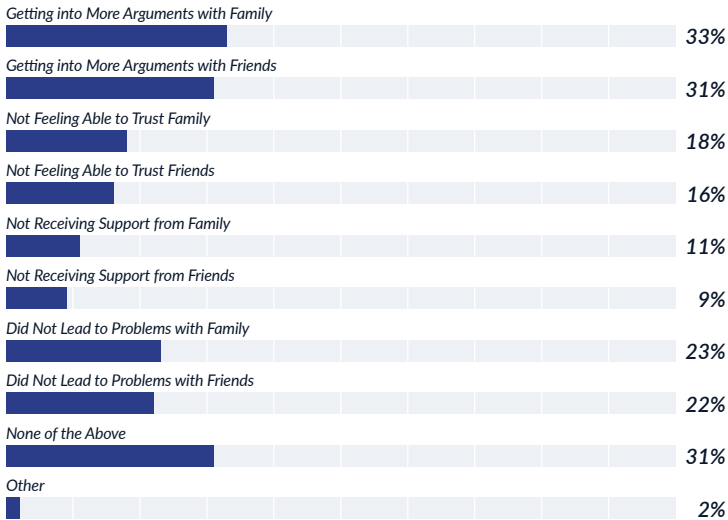
General Consumers | Did this identity theft lead to any of the following problems with your employer? Select all that apply.



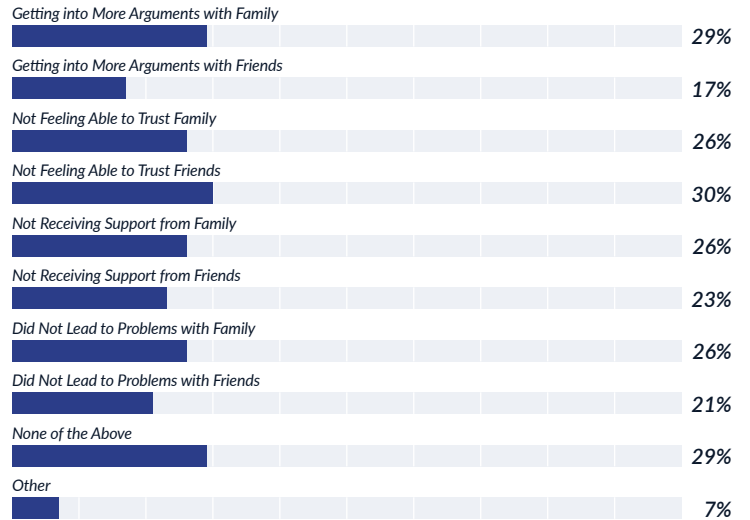
IIRC Victims | Did this identity theft lead to any of the following problems with your employer? Select all that apply.



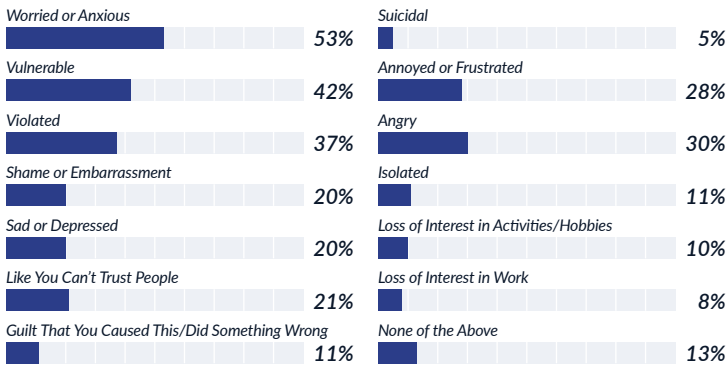
General Consumers | Did this identity theft incident lead to any of the following problems with your family or friends? Select all that apply.



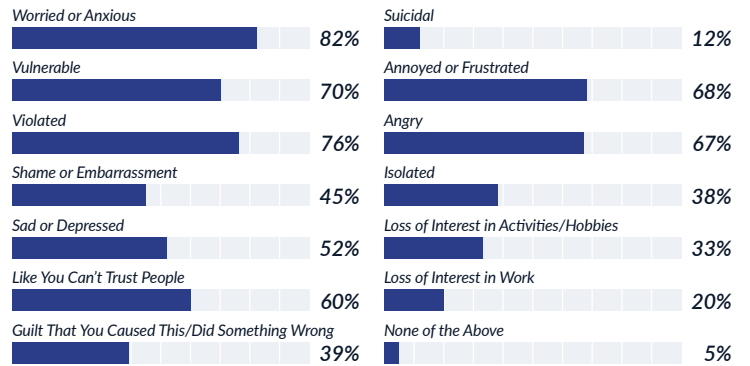
ITRC Victims | Did this identity theft incident lead to any of the following problems with your family or friends? Select all that apply.



General Consumers | As a result of this identity incident, did you experience any of the following feelings? Select all that apply.



ITRC Victims | As a result of this identity incident, did you experience any of the following feelings? Select all that apply.



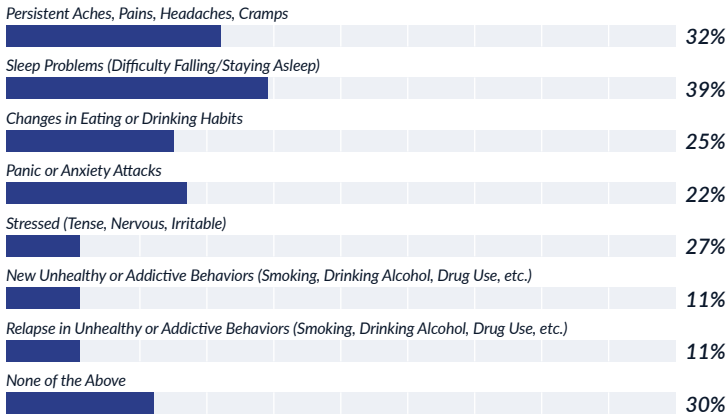
General Consumers | Did you seek emotional support for any of the problems you experienced?



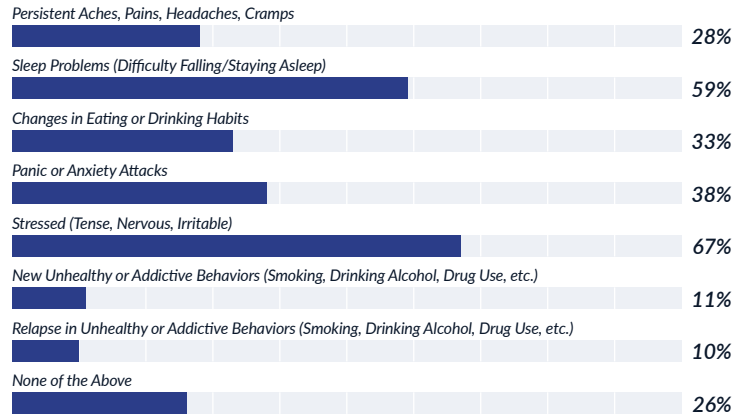
ITRC Victims | Did you seek emotional support for any of the problems you experienced?



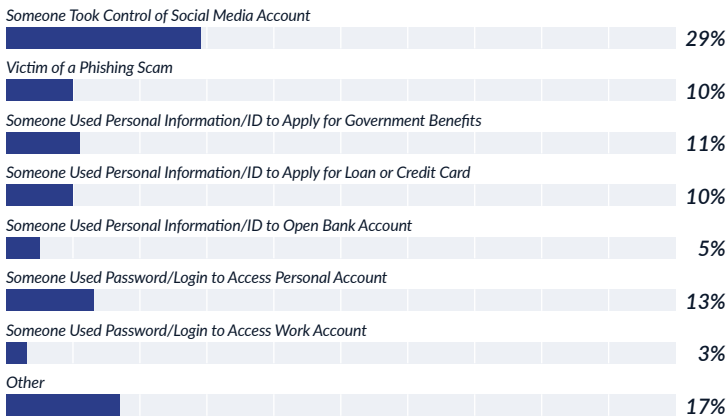
General Consumers | As a result of this incident, did you experience any of the following physical problems? Select all that apply.



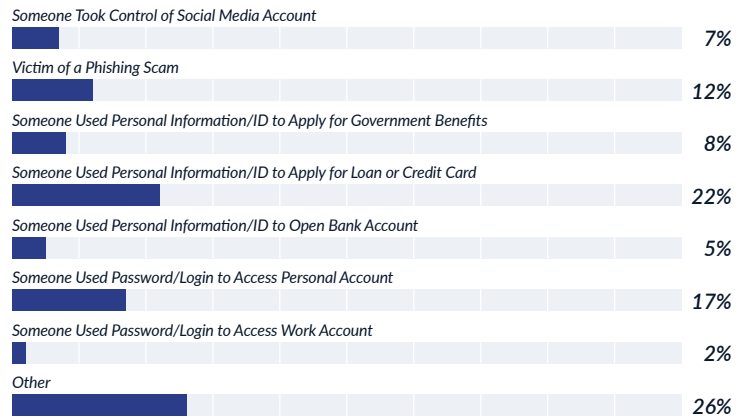
ITRC Victims | As a result of this incident, did you experience any of the following physical problems? Select all that apply.



General Consumers | Pick from the list below the type of identity crime that was committed against you.



ITRC Victims | Pick from the list below the type of identity crime that was committed against you.

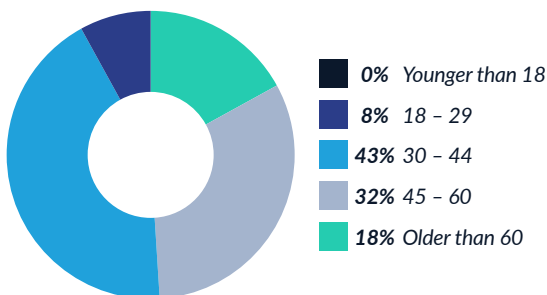


DEMOGRAPHICS

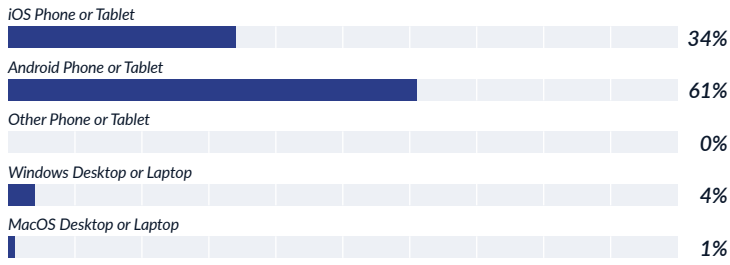
General Consumers | Gender



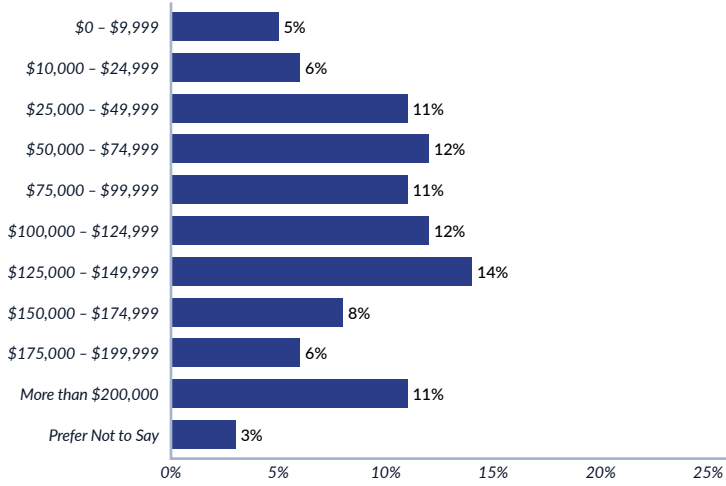
General Consumers | Age



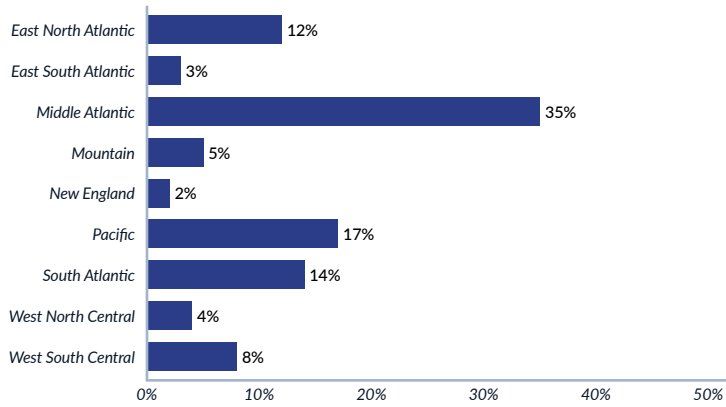
General Consumers | Device Type



General Consumers | Household Income



General Consumers | Major U.S. Region



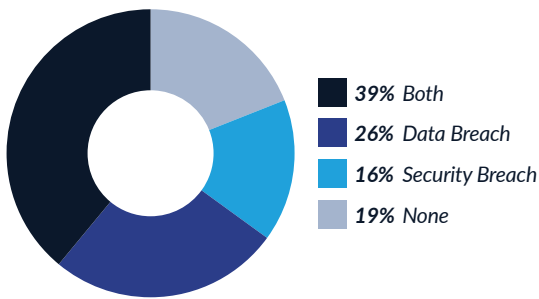
2024 SMALL BUSINESS IMPACT SURVEY

SURVEY RESULTS

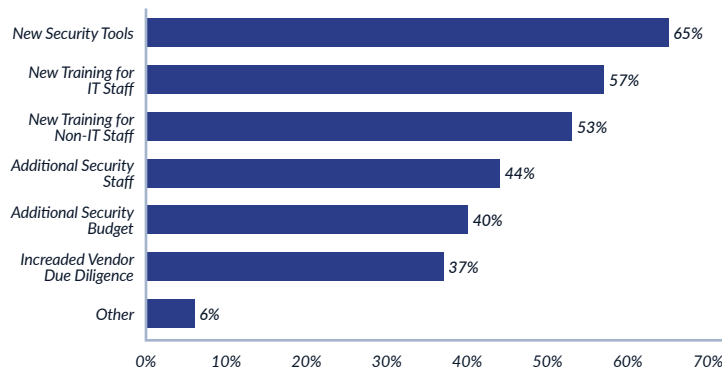
Q1 | Are you an owner or leader of a small business with fewer than 500 employees, including solopreneurs and gig workers?



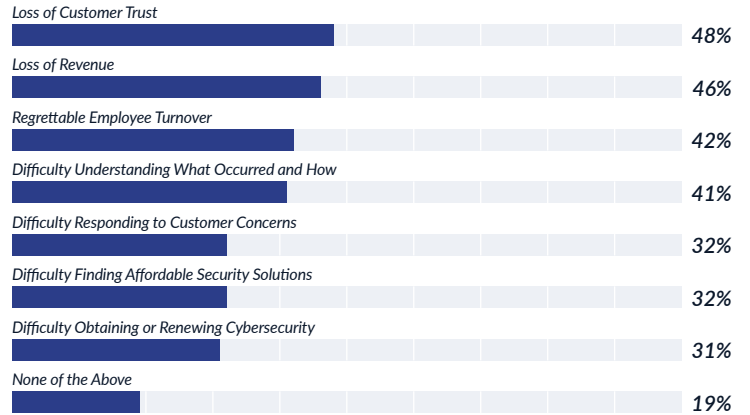
Q2 | Has your company experienced a security or data breach in the past 12 months?



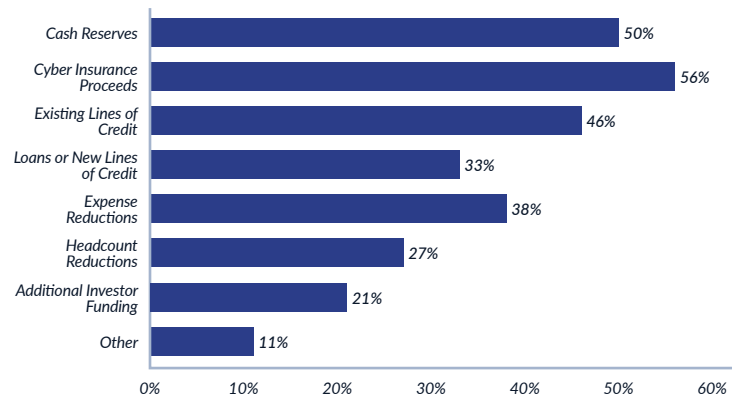
Q3 | What steps have you taken to prevent additional security or data breaches in the future? Select all that apply.



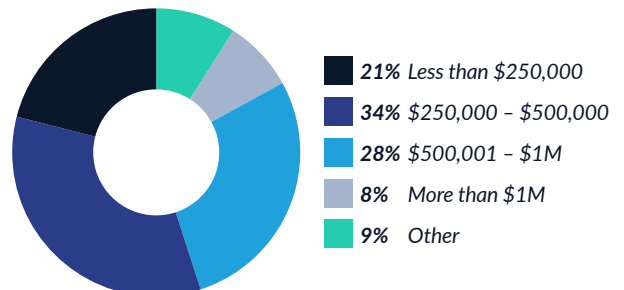
Q4 | Did you experience any of the following issues after your cyber incident? Select all that apply.



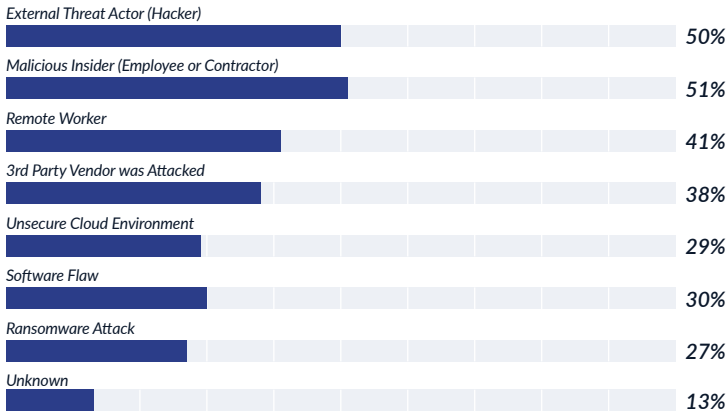
Q5 | How did you address the financial impacts of the security/data or scam incident? Select all that apply.



Q6 | What was the approximate total financial impact of the security/data breach or scam?



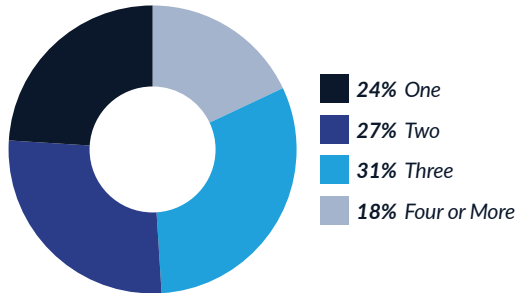
Q7 | What was the root cause(s) of the recent security or data incident? Select all that apply.



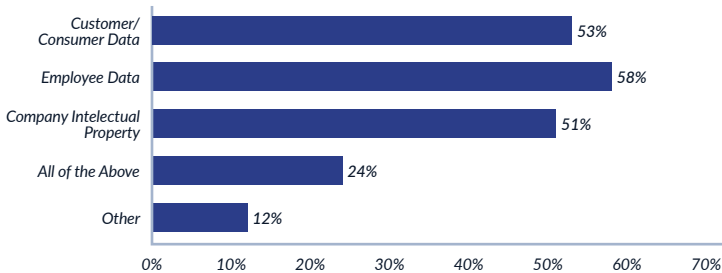
Q8 | Have you been the victim of phishing, impersonation or other identity-related scam involving a fraudulent text, email, voicemail or phone/video call in the past 12 months?



Q9 | How many times have you experienced a data/security incident?



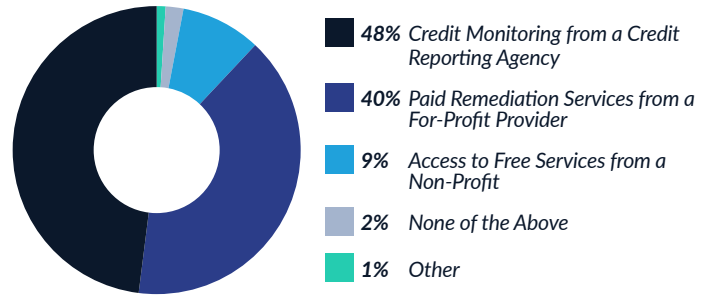
Q10 | What data was compromised? Select all that apply.



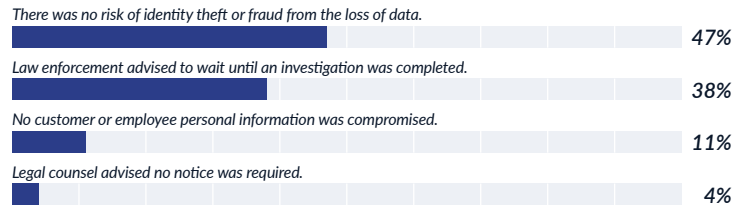
Q11 | Did you send a notice to alert customers and other people impacted by the incident?



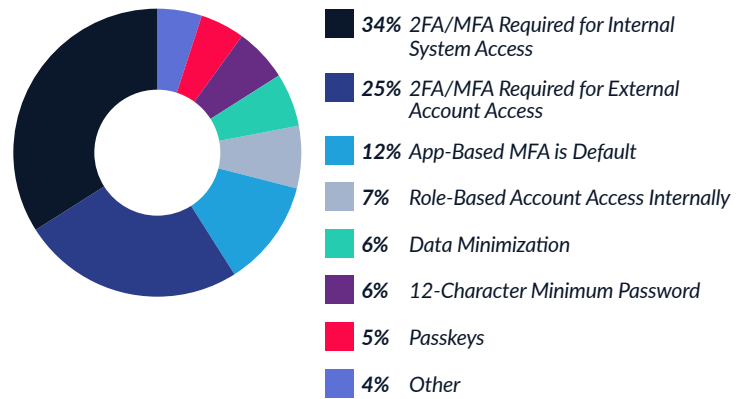
Q12 | Did you offer remediation services to customers or consumers impacted by the breach?



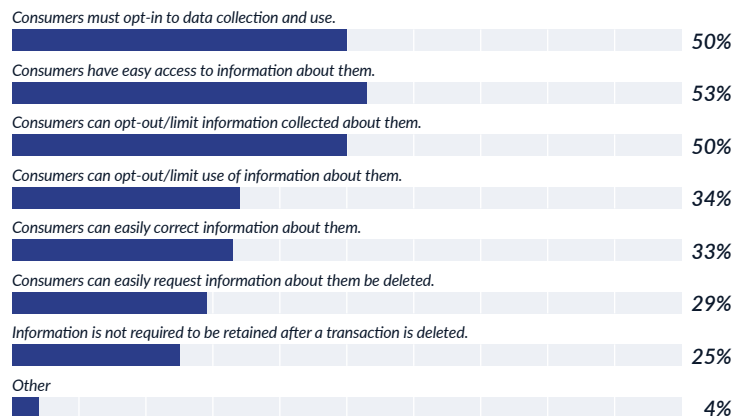
Q13 | If you did not send a notice to customers or other impacted people after the incident, why not?



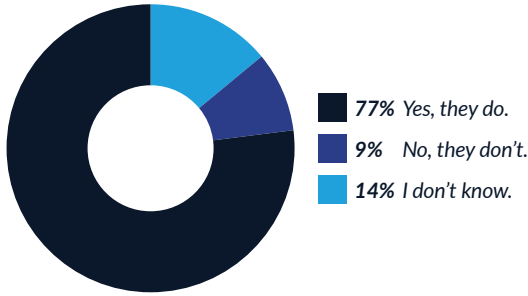
Q14 | Do you currently utilize any of the following solutions to help protect business and customer data?



Q15 | Do you follow any data privacy best practices? Select all that apply.



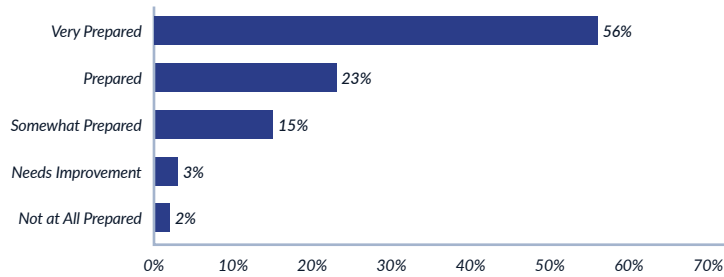
Q16 | Twenty (20) states have passed privacy laws, most of which require businesses to adopt and report cybersecurity protections. Are you aware if your state or the states where you have customers required data and privacy protections?



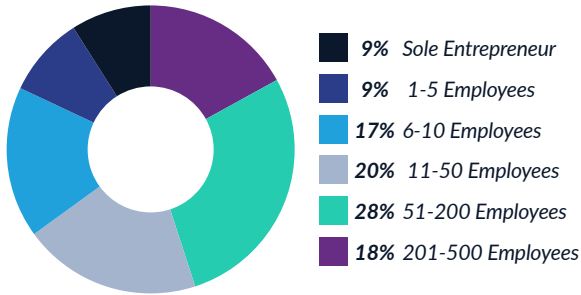
Q17 | Are you concerned about how you will comply with any new privacy and security requirements.



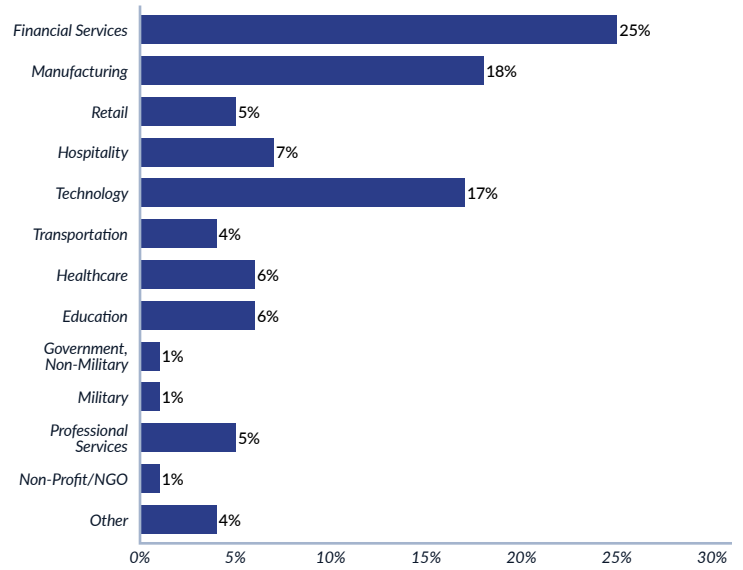
Q18 | How well prepared are you to protect against a cyberattack or recover from a data breach?



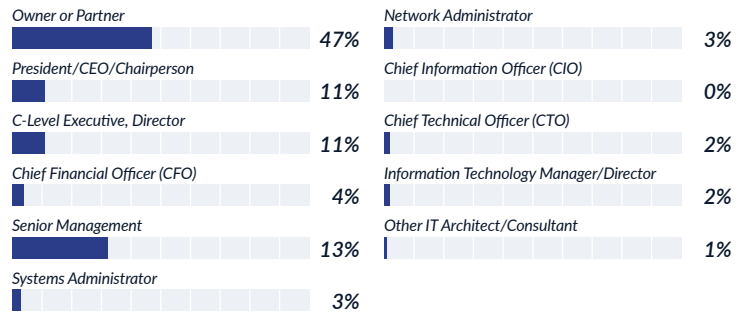
Q19 | How many employees are in your company?



Q20 | What is your industry?



Q21 | What is your title?

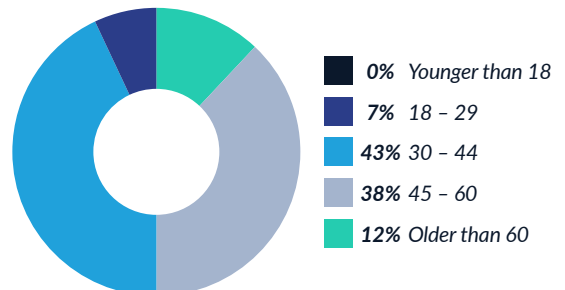


DEMOGRAPHICS

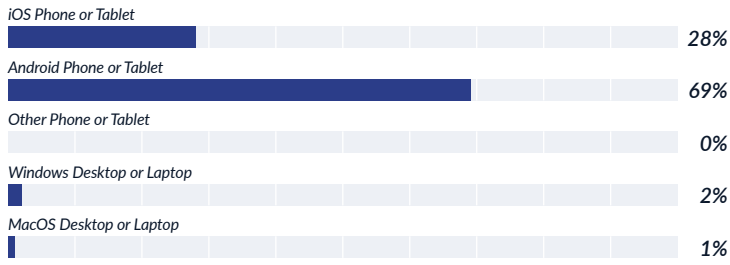
Q1 | Gender



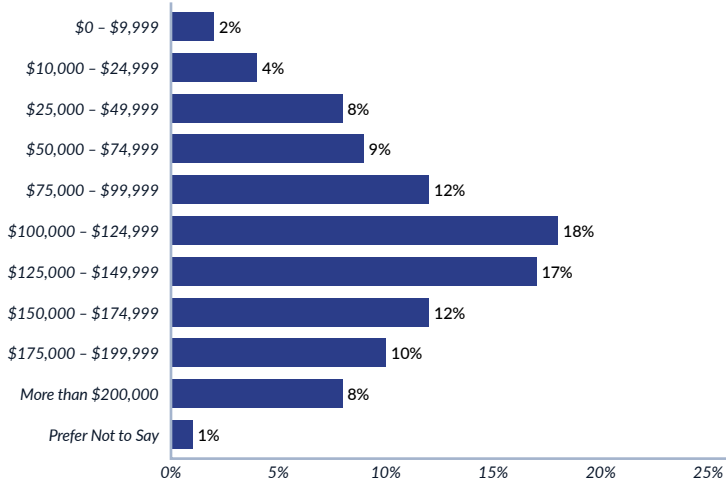
Q2 | Age



Q3 | Device Type



Q4 | Household Income



Q5 | Major U.S. Region

