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NEW ZEALAND

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**A Report on a Survey of New Zealanders' Use of Social Media  
and Opinions on Cyber Security 2018**

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# Preface

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According to the *Digital in 2018* report released by We Are Social and Hootsuite, in 2018, the number of people using the internet globally has passed the 4 billion mark. This translates into over one half of the world's population.

Due to more affordable handsets and mobile data plans on the market, the number of mobile phone users continues to increase year-on-year. This year, there are around 5 billion mobile phone users worldwide. It is not surprising to learn that more than one half of these are 'smart' devices.

Ease of access to the internet also means that social media use continue to grow rapidly – 11 new users sign up every second to a social media account. Almost all social media engagement is done through a mobile phone device.

*“People are spending more time online; the average user now spends around 6 hours each day using the internet. If we add this together for all 4 billion of the world's internet users, people will spend a massive 1 billion years online in 2018”* Source: We are Social and Hootsuite; Digital in 2018 Report.



# Introduction

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Research New Zealand first conducted the *Survey of New Zealanders' Use of Smartphones and other Mobile Communication Devices* in 2013. In that survey, we focused on the ownership and use of laptops, tablets, PCs, smartphones and other mobile phones (feature phones).

This survey was repeated in 2014 and in 2015 to keep abreast of the pace of change and to continue monitoring emerging trends. This year, the survey was repeated with some of the core questions asked in previous years, but also additional topical questions around social media, cyber security and children's use of technology.

This report focuses on the areas of social media and cyber security.

## Key findings

There are **four** key findings:

1. 4 in 5 adult New Zealanders **visited a social media site** in the last seven days. The top visited sites, by far, are Facebook and YouTube.
2. **Opinion is mixed** as to the pros and cons of social media. For example, the majority of New Zealanders agree that social media is a great way to stay in touch and catch up with friends (56 percent agree) and that it is a very important part of today's society (51 percent agree). However, many New Zealanders worry about privacy issues when it comes to social media (53 percent agree) and believe it has an overall negative effect on young people (45 percent agree).
3. The majority of New Zealanders state they have **experienced some sort of cyber security issue** (79 percent). The most common experience is being the target of a scam either online or by phone (72 percent).
4. Three-quarters of adult New Zealanders believe that **cyber security is a major issue** (76 percent). Over 2 in 5 **often worry** about what happens to the personal data they provide online (44 percent). A third of New Zealanders do **not** think the internet is a safe place (33 percent).



## Detailed findings

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### 4 in 5 New Zealanders visited a social media site in the past seven days

Respondents were presented with a list of everyday activities and asked to indicate which of them they had engaged in, in the past seven days. As illustrated in Figure 2 overleaf, 79 percent of respondents reported that they had **visited a social media site** (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.) in the previous seven days. Comparing those who had visited a social media with those who had not leads to the following conclusions:

#### ◆ Differences by gender:

- ◆ Fifty-five percent of respondents who had visited a social media site were female, 45 percent were male. The reverse is true when we will examine those who have not visited a social media site. Forty-two percent of those who had not visited a social media site were female, 57 percent were male.

#### ◆ Differences by age:

- ◆ Respondents who had visited a social media site tended to be of a younger age group. Of those who visited a social media site, 35 percent were under the age of 34 years. This compares to just 5 percent of those who had not visited a social media site.

#### ◆ Differences by ethnicity:

- ◆ Māori and Pacific respondents were more likely to fall into the category of those respondents who had visited a social media site than those who had not. Ten percent of respondents who had visited a social media site identified as Māori and four percent identified as Pacific. In comparison, six percent of respondents who had not visited a social media site were Māori and none were of Pacific ethnicity.

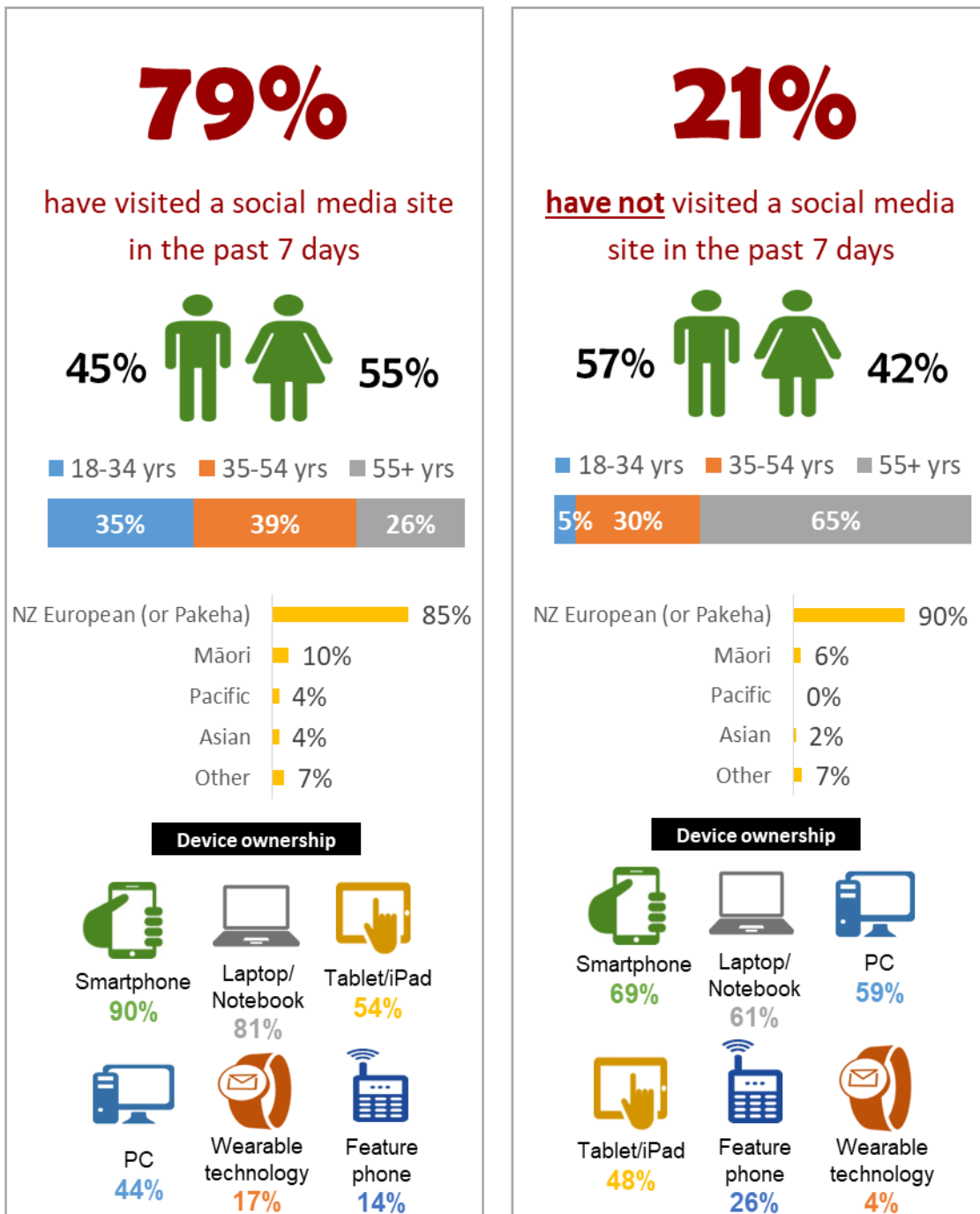
#### ◆ Device ownership/access:

- ◆ Differences also existed when it came to the type of devices each group owned or had access to. Those who had visited a social media site in the past seven days were more likely to own/have access to a smartphone (90 percent compared with 69 percent of respondents who had not visited a social media site), a laptop or notebook (81 percent compared with 61 percent) and wearable technology (e.g. smart watch, activity trackers) (17 percent compared with 4 percent).

Respondents who had not visited a social media site were more likely to own/have access to a PC (59 percent compared with 44 percent of respondents who had visited a social media site) and another type of mobile phone (26 percent compared with 14 percent).



**Figure 1: Profile of social media users**





## Facebook is the most visited social media site among New Zealanders

As illustrated in Figure 2 overleaf, over 4 in 5 respondents reported visiting **Facebook** in the past 12 months (83 percent). Over one-half of respondents spent the most time on this social media site (49 percent).

The second most visited site was **YouTube**. Eighty-one percent reported that they visited YouTube in the past 12 months, while one in five reporting that this was the social media site they spent the most time on (21 percent).

Adult New Zealanders, on average, visited **4 social media sites** in the past 12 months. There are some differences in the profile of respondents who spent the most time on Facebook compared to the respondents who spent the most time on YouTube. These differences can be summarised as follows:

By **gender**:

- ◆ Females show a greater preference for Facebook, while males prefer YouTube. Respondents who reported they spent the most time on Facebook were more likely to be female (59 percent) when compared with those who spent the most time on YouTube (27 percent). Seventy-three percent of respondents who spent the most time on YouTube were male compared with 40 percent of those who spent the most time on Facebook.

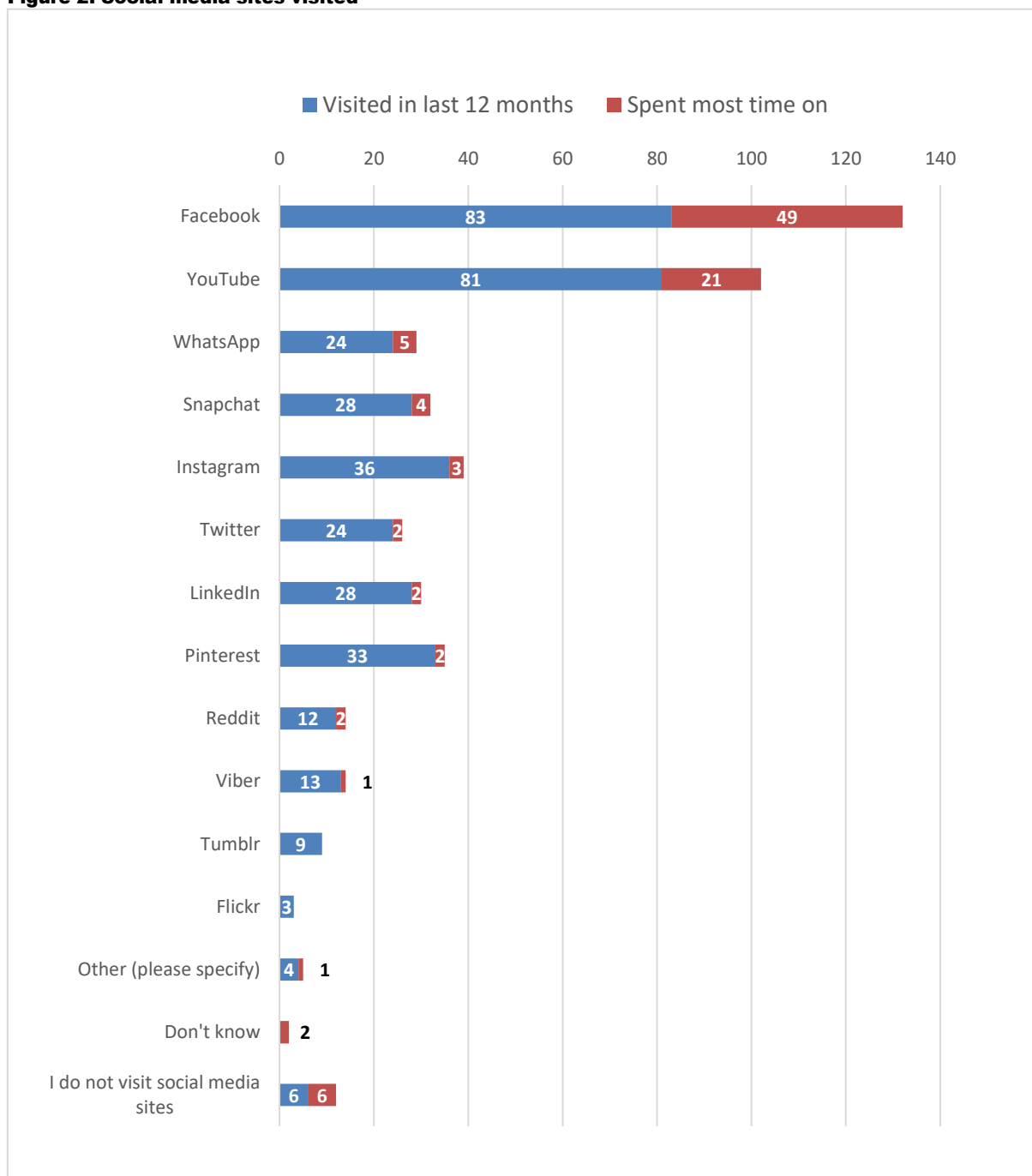
By other **social media site preferences**:

- ◆ Respondents who spent the most time on Facebook were more likely than those who spent the most time on YouTube to also visit other **social networking sites** such as Instagram (39 percent compared with 20 percent), Snapchat (29 percent compared with 12 percent) and LinkedIn (29 percent compared with 20 percent).

Respondents who spent the most time on YouTube were more likely than those who spent the most time on Facebook to also visit the **social news and discussion** website Reddit (20 percent compared with 7 percent).



**Figure 2: Social media sites visited**





## Over one half of adult New Zealanders worry about privacy issues when it comes to social media

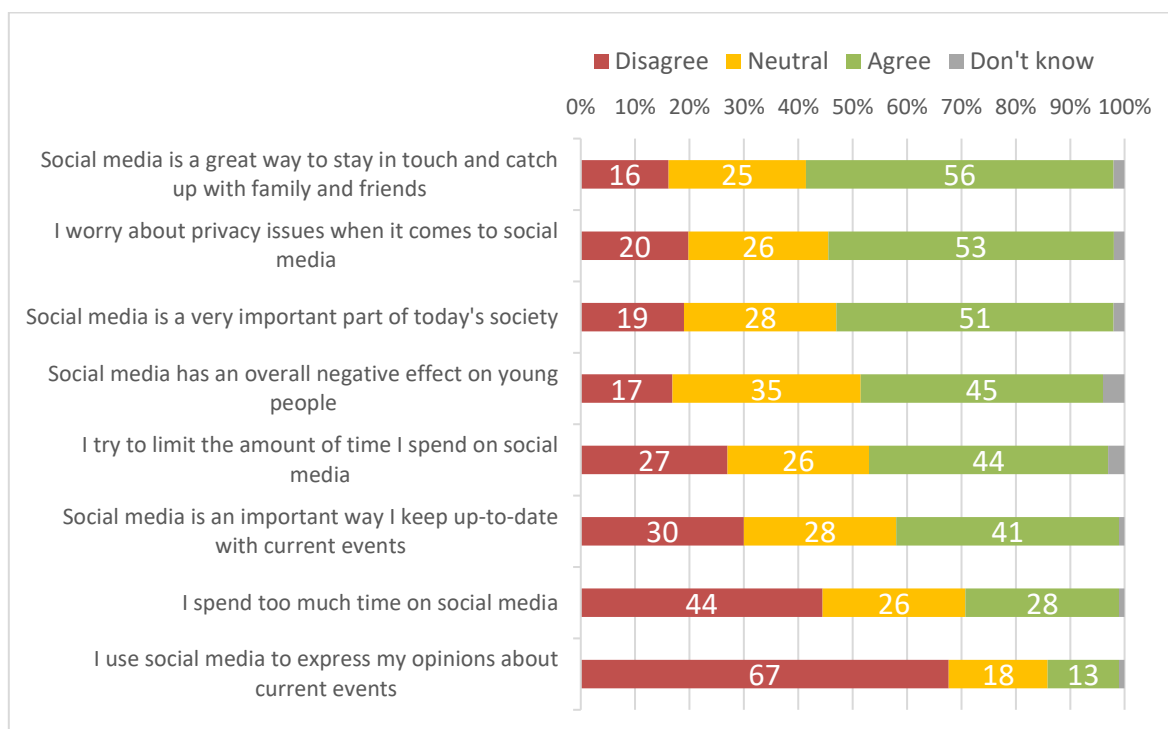
To better understand New Zealanders' **attitudes toward social media**, respondents were presented with a list of statements and asked on a 11-point scale to rate their level of agreement with each of them, where 0 was 'strongly disagree' and 10 was 'strongly agree'.

On a positive note, New Zealanders see the benefit of social media in terms of it being a **platform to communicate with others** and to **stay abreast of current events**. For example, 56 percent of respondents agreed that social media is a great way to stay in touch and catch up with family and friends. Fifty-one percent also agreed that social media is an important part of today's society and 41 percent agreed it is an important way to keep up-to-date with current events.

However, New Zealanders also have **concerns** when it comes to the effect of social media. For example, 53 percent of respondents stated they worry about privacy issues when it comes to social media and 45 percent considered it has an overall negative effect on young people.

When it comes to their **own personal use of social media**, a large percentage of respondents admitted that they try to limit the amount of time they spend on social media (44 percent), although only 28 percent felt they spent too much time on it. A relatively high percentage of respondents reported that they use social media to express their opinions about current events (13 percent).

**Figure 3: Attitudes towards social media**





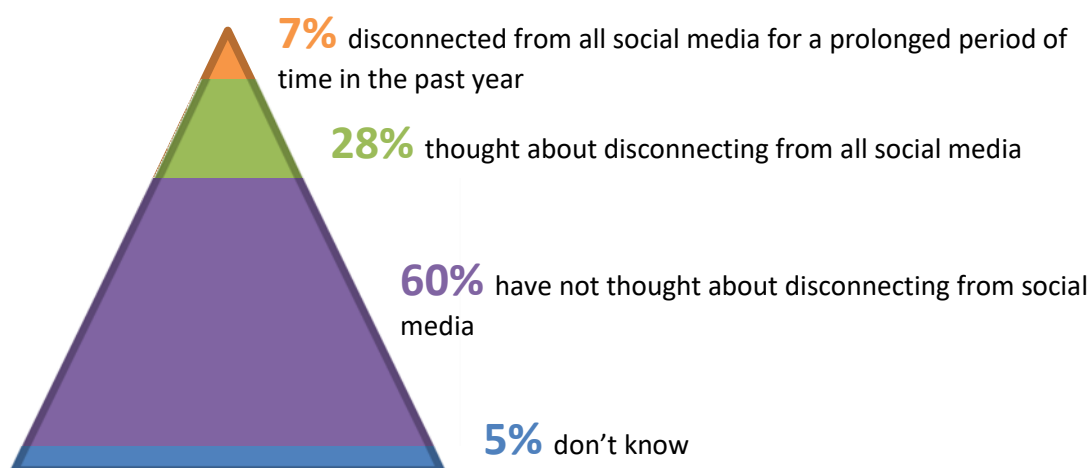


## One third of social media users have disconnected, or thought about disconnecting, from social media in the past year

Respondents that reported they had visited at least one social media site in the last year were presented with a list of statements about disconnecting from social media and were asked which of the statements applied to them in the last year.

As illustrated in Figure 4 below, seven percent of New Zealanders who use social media disconnected from all social media for a prolonged period of time in the last year. Another 28 percent had thought about disconnecting.

**Figure 4: Levels of social media disconnection in the past year**





## The majority of New Zealanders have been the target of a scam, either online or by telephone

Respondents were presented with different types of cyber security scenarios and asked if they had ever experienced any of them.

As illustrated in Figure 5 overleaf, almost three-quarters of respondents reported that they had been targeted by a scam (either online or by phone) (72 percent). Only about one in five New Zealanders stated they had never experienced a cyber security issue (19 percent).

One third of respondents also stated their computers had stopped working because of a virus. Almost one third stated they had been asked for their personal log-on details by someone whose identity they weren't sure of (29 percent). Twelve percent stated their computer had been hacked and five percent stated they had been the victim of bullying.

There are some differences in the profile of respondents who stated they had been a victim of any cyber security issue and those who had not. These differences can be summarised as follows:

### By **age**:

- ◆ Younger respondents, aged 18 to 34 years, were more likely to have **never** experienced a cyber security issue when compared to those who have (37 percent compared to 27 percent).

### By **device ownership**:

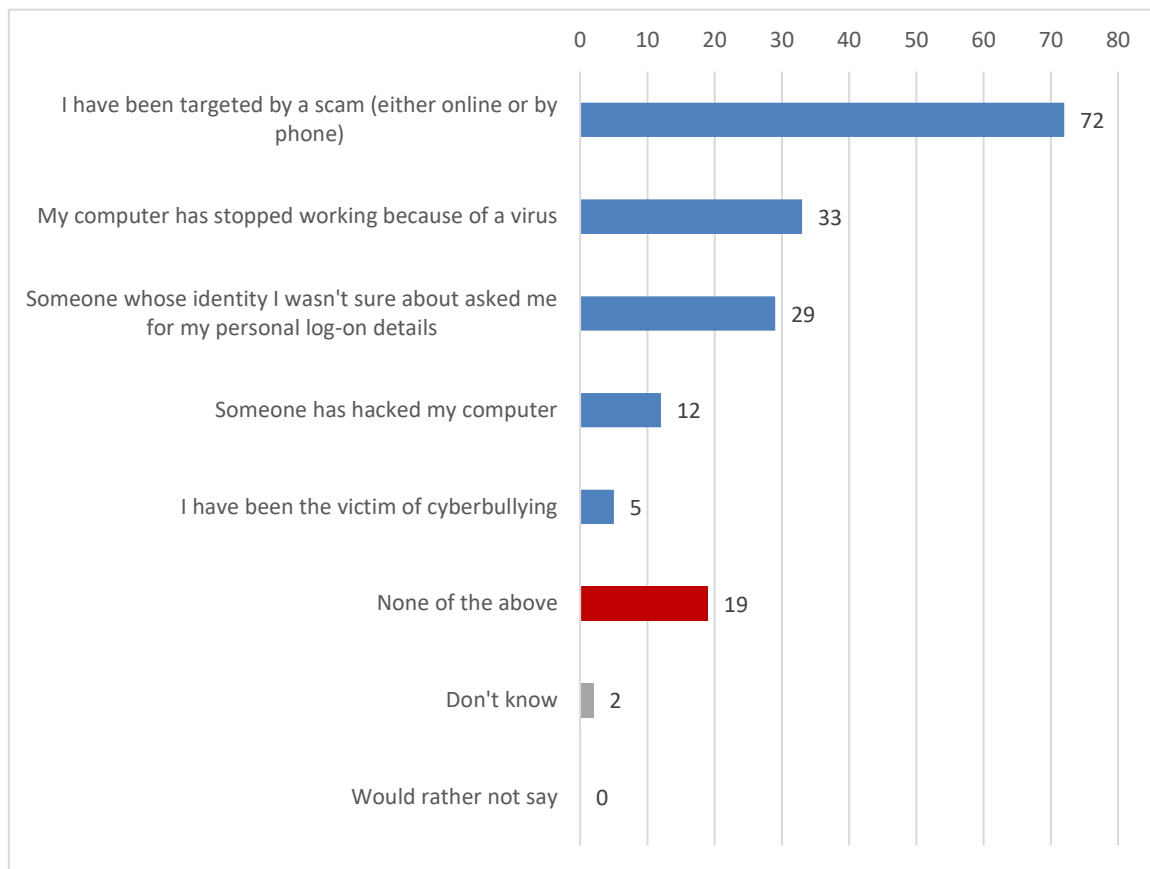
- ◆ Respondents who had experienced a cyber security issue were more likely to own or have access to a PC (49 percent) when compared with those who had never experienced such an issue (38 percent).

### By **social media disconnection**:

- ◆ Respondents who had experienced a cyber security issue were also more likely to have disconnected from social media for a prolonged period of time in the last year (nine percent) or had thought about it (30 percent) (this compares with one percent and 20 percent respectively, of those who have not had a cyber security related issue).



**Figure 5: Types of cyber security issues experienced by New Zealanders**





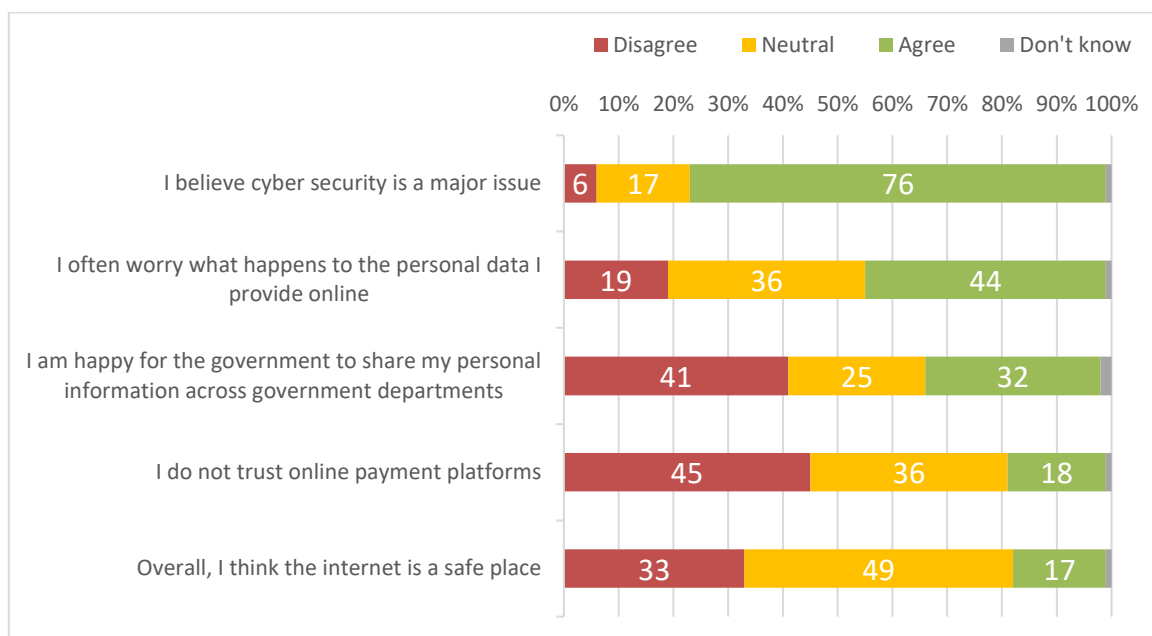
## Over three-quarter of adult New Zealanders believe that cyber security is a major issue

To better understand New Zealanders' attitudes toward cyber security, respondents were presented with a list of statements and asked on a 11-point scale to rate their level of agreement with each of them, where 0 was 'strongly disagree' and 10 was 'strongly agree'.

As illustrated in Figure 6 below, overall, New Zealanders have **concerns** about the internet and are **wary** when it comes to cyber security. In fact, three-quarters of New Zealanders believe that cyber security is a major issue (76 percent), while less than 1 in 5 believe that the internet is a safe place (17 percent).

Forty-four percent reported that they often worry about what happens to their personal data when they provide this online. Furthermore, only one-third (32 percent) of respondents agreed that they are happy for the government to share their personal information across government departments. A significantly larger proportion (41 percent) disagreed with this statement.

**Figure 6: Attitudes toward cyber security**



*"I feel we are now having to become very dependent on technology and social media in our day to day lives. However, we appear to be increasingly vulnerable to scams and hackers. I don't feel the security measures are keeping up with the usage and dependency."*





## Appendix A: Survey methodology

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This report presents the results to the Social Media and Cyber Security modules contained in the fourth Research New Zealand *Mobile Communication Device Use Survey*.

Fieldwork took place between February and May 2018 and was administered online using Research New Zealand's own online panel. A nationally representative sample of n=1,002 New Zealanders, 18 year of age and over, was interviewed.

The data has been weighted to ensure that the results are truly representative of the New Zealand population. The weighting parameters were sourced from Statistics New Zealand and are based on the 2013 Census of Population and Dwellings.

Results based on the (weighted) total sample are subject to a maximum margin of error of +/- 4.0 percent (at the 95 percent confidence level)<sup>1</sup>. This means, for example, that if 50 percent of respondents owned a smartphone, we could be 95 percent sure of getting the same result, plus or minus 4.0 percent, had we interviewed everyone in the population. Higher margins of error apply in the case of sub-samples.

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<sup>1</sup> The margin of error is slightly higher than the conventional margin of error calculation as it takes into account the fact that the data has been weighted.