

Privacy and Security: A Manitoba Perspective

PART OF THE **RETHINKING THE INFORMATION HIGHWAY** 2004/5 STUDY



EKOS

Privacy and Security: A Manitoba Perspective

Part of the **RETHINKING THE INFORMATION HIGHWAY** syndicated study

Prepared for the **Office of the Manitoba Ombudsman**



EKOS RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

Ottawa Office

99 Metcalfe Street, Suite 1100
Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 6L7
Tel: (613) 235 7215
Fax: (613) 235 8498
E-mail: pobox@ekos.com

Toronto Office

480 University Avenue, Suite 1006
Toronto, Ontario
M5G 1V2
Tel: (416) 598 8002
Fax: (416) 598 2543
E-mail: toronto@ekos.com

Edmonton Office

9925 109th St. NW, Suite 606
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2J8
Tel: (780) 408 5225
Fax: (780) 408 5233
E-mail: edmonton@ekos.com

About the study

Launched in 1996, EKOS' *Rethinking the Information Highway* study originally grew out of a need to understand how the environment within which companies and governments were operating was fast being transformed by the Internet and other emerging technologies.

Now in its sixth edition and almost 20 surveys later, the study is one of the largest and longest running studies in this area in Canada today. Given its big-picture focus on the full range of issues relating to technology usage, such as the interaction between traditional and electronic service delivery channels and privacy and security-related issues, *Rethinking the Information Highway* remains one of the most relied upon sources for senior decision makers who are tasked with guiding their organization through what continues to be a rapidly changing environment.

Table of contents

Introduction.....	1
Key Trends	2
Broad Landscape.....	5
Privacy and the Individual	13
Collective Privacy Protection.....	23
Implications	31
Appendix: Research Methodology.....	41

Introduction

The following provides a snapshot of the privacy and security landscape in Manitoba and implications of the current environment for government. The examination begins with an overview of the key trends defining the current environment. This section is then followed by the data from which observations and conclusion are sourced in chart and table form.

Data featured in the report was collected through both the wave one and wave two surveys comprising the citizen/consumer components of the Rethinking the Information Highway national syndicated study. An overview of the methodology of the study is provided in Appendix A.

Key Trends

1. Broad concerns about the continued erosion of personal privacy remain high. The nature of these concerns have, however, shifted from the vague Orwellian-type fears of “big brother” surveillance and control that characterized the early to mid 1990’s, to concerns about specific threats, such as identity theft.
2. Despite their concerns, Manitobans are not keeping their personal information under lock and key. A large number report they have submitted personal information online. Nevertheless, Manitobans are taking a number of proactive steps to buttress informational privacy. These actions include questioning why information is being collected, refusing to provide personal information, using secondary email accounts to protect anonymity while online and purchasing a household document shredder. A smaller number report they have lodged a complaint or requested access to their personal information held by business or government in the past year.
3. While individual Manitobans accept their role in protecting their personal privacy, trend lines show there is a growing demand for a shared or collective responsibility. For many Manitobans this call is going unheard. Large numbers do not have a clear idea of who they can turn to if confronted by a serious invasion of privacy. Most would turn to police or seek the guidance of a family or a friend. Few indicated they would initially seek the assistance of a privacy commissioner, ombudsman or privacy advocate.

Further, a large majority of Manitobans report a lack of general familiarity with federal and provincial privacy laws. This low familiarity may, in part, explain limited citizen confidence that privacy laws are being followed by the public and private sector. Only a slim majority is even “somewhat confident” that governments adhere to their own privacy laws. Confidence in business compliance is even lower.

4. The implications of the current landscape for both the public and private sector are significant. More than four out of five Manitobans report they would not hesitate to switch financial institutions if their personal information was misused. With regard to government, there is a significant distrust and suspicion regarding the collection and use of personal information. Only 17 per cent agree they have control over how government uses their personal information. Further, large numbers hold the view that government collects more personal information than is actually necessary and stores that information in large centralized databases. In fact, 70 per cent of Manitobans believe government access to personal information is so great that there is actually “no real privacy”.
5. This general lack of trust in government has implications for government initiatives that involve the collection, use, disclosure and security of personal information. For example, while Internet usage is high, uptake of government online service offerings is low, stunted perhaps by the lack of confidence in how personal information is collected, used and protected. What is most telling is the continued lacklustre support expressed by citizens for an Electronic Health Record or EHR system, despite the promised improvements to the quality and efficiency of health-care.

Broad Landscape

Broad Landscape

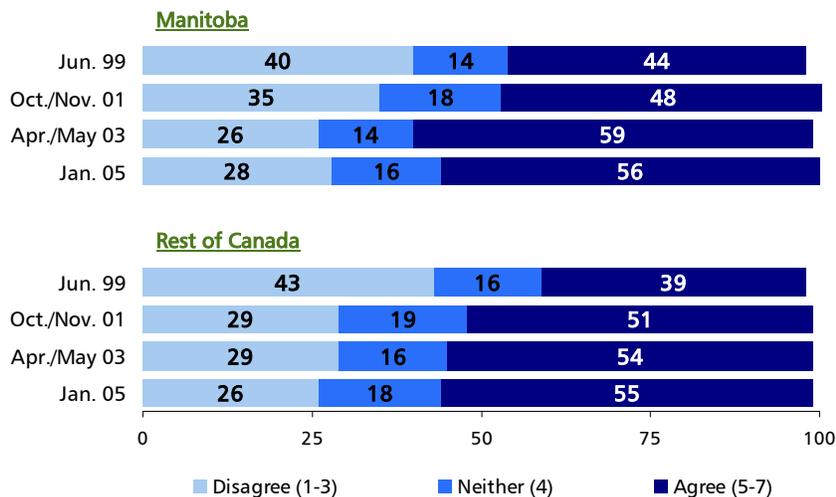
In Manitoba, personal privacy is perceived by many to be under siege and steadily eroding. Overall, 56 per cent of Manitobans believes they have less privacy today than just five years ago. Further, more than three in five Manitobans (63 per cent) express concern about the erosion of their personal privacy.

As has been the case previously, these concerns are not grounded in actual first-hand experience, with few reporting they have personally been a victim of what they would characterize as a serious invasion of privacy (18 per cent). The actual reported incidence of privacy invasion stands in sharp contrast to the perceived threat. Overall, 43 per cent of Manitobans believes it is at least “somewhat likely” they will be a victim of a serious invasion of privacy in the next two years.

What has changed, however, is the focus of broad concerns. As recently as the mid 1990s, broad level angst could be sourced back to vague Orwellian-style perceived threats of “big brother” oversight by government and business. While these concerns still linger, today’s environment is increasingly shaped by concern over a number of emerging issues that pose a very real and direct risk for the privacy and security of personal information.

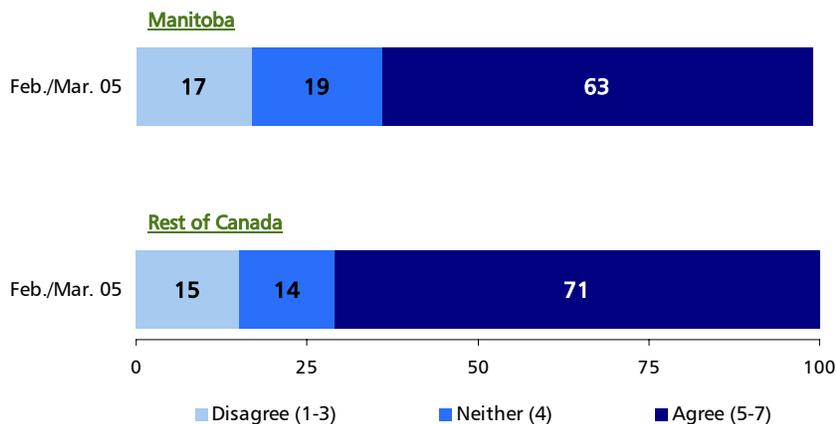
Identity theft is one such threat. Though few report they have been victims of identity theft (only 6 per cent in Manitoba compared to 10 per cent in the rest of Canada), the potential threat is recognized by a majority of Manitobans. Two in three Manitobans (66 per cent) rank identity theft as “somewhat” to an “extremely serious” threat (though 29 per cent did not know or did not provide a response). In addition, 83 per cent of Manitobans are “somewhat” to “extremely concerned” of falling victim to identity theft.

Erosion of personal privacy



Q: I feel I have less personal privacy in my daily life than I did five years ago. (BASE: Jan. 05, Manitoba, n=503; Rest of Canada; n=4,510)

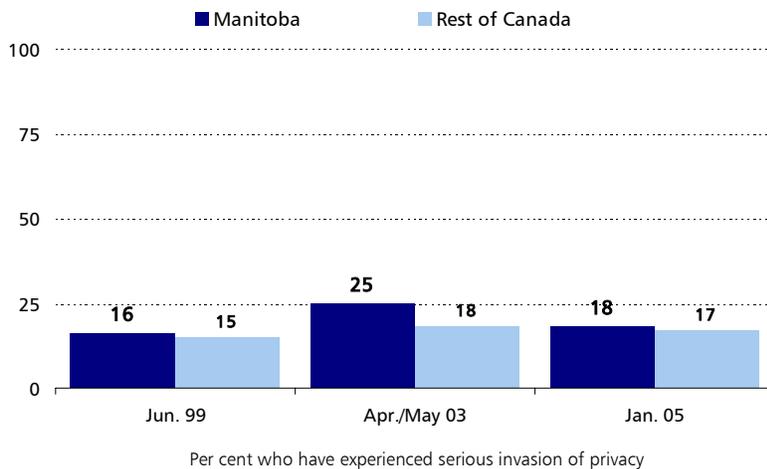
Concern about erosion of privacy



NOTE: Differences in Manitoba and Rest of Canada results are statistically significant.

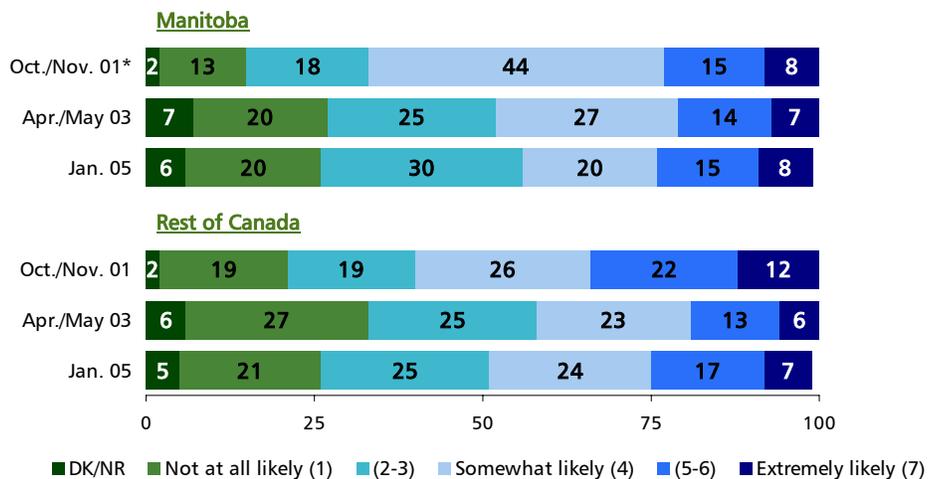
Q: I am concerned about how my privacy is being eroded. (BASE: Feb./Mar. 05, Manitoba, n=221; Rest of Canada; n=1,801)

Privacy Invasions



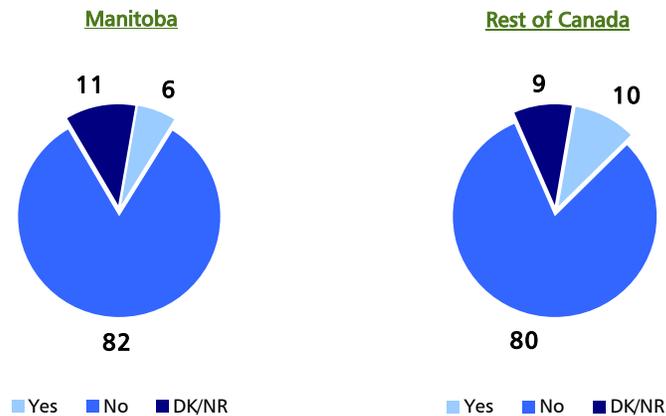
Q: Have you ever experienced a serious invasion of privacy? (BASE: Jan. 05, Manitoba, n=503; Rest of Canada [ROC]; n=4,510)

Threat of privacy invasion



Q: How likely is it that you will experience a serious invasion of your personal privacy over the next two years? (BASE: Jan. 05, Manitoba, n=299; Rest of Canada; n=2,697)

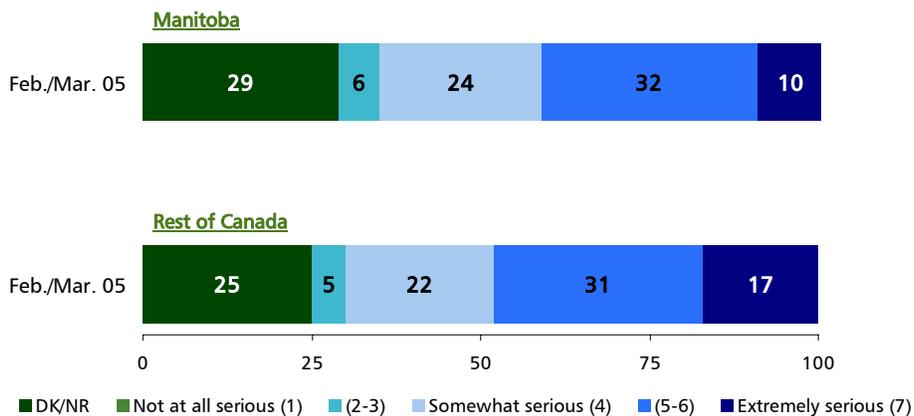
Victims of identity theft



NOTE: Differences in Manitoba and Rest of Canada results are statistically significant.

Q: Have you ever been a victim of identity theft? By identity theft, we mean the unauthorized collection and fraudulent use of someone else's personal information, usually for criminal purposes. (BASE: Feb./Mar. 05; Manitoba, n=221; Rest of Canada, n=1,801)

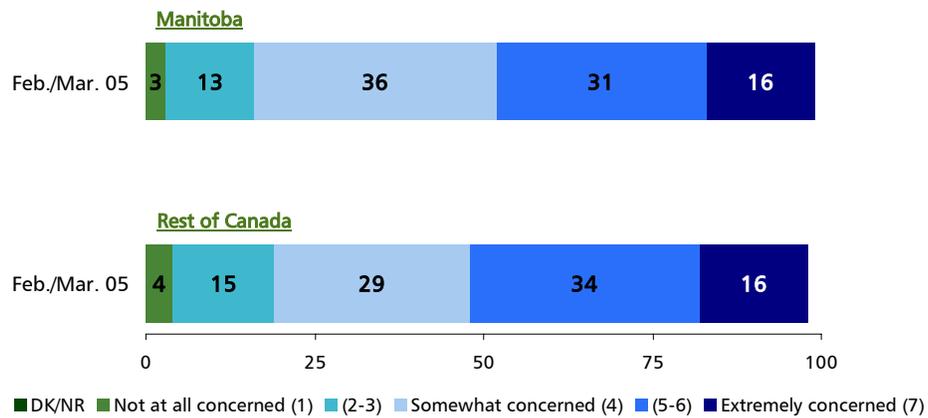
Extent of perceived threat posed by identity theft



NOTE: Differences in Manitoba and Rest of Canada results are statistically significant.

Q: How serious a problem is identity theft in Canada today? (BASE: Feb./Mar. 05; Manitoba, n=221; Rest of Canada, n=1,801)

Level of concern regarding identity theft



Q: How concerned are you personally about being a victim of identity theft? (BASE: Feb./Mar. 05; Manitoba, n=221; Rest of Canada, n=1,801)

Privacy and the Individual

Privacy and the Individual

Though expressing concern about the erosion of personal privacy and vulnerability of personal information, Manitobans are not retreating into their homes and keeping their personal information under lock and key. In fact, 44 per cent of all Manitobans (or 56 per cent of Manitoba Internet users) have submitted personal information online in the past year including sensitive information, such as a credit card number. The proportion having submitted information online actually edges out those reporting a general awareness of the technology that makes the transfer of this information safe, with only 40 per cent being “somewhat” to “extremely aware” of encryption.

Clearly, Manitobans are willing to accept a certain degree of risk to participate more fully in the national and global information society, despite expressed concerns. Nevertheless, Manitobans are taking a more active role in the protection of their personal privacy. Some of the actions taken by individuals over a 12 month period include the following:¹

- Refusing to provide personal information to a company requesting it (82 per cent);
- Asking a business why they were requesting certain personal information (76 per cent);
- Deliberately providing misinformation (39 per cent);
- Attempting to take name off marketing list (65 per cent).

Actions taken by Manitoba Internet users include reading privacy policies posted on websites the visit (67 per cent) and making use of secondary email accounts to deflect access to their primary email account (38 per cent).

Likely motivated by the threat posed by identity theft, a notable 39 per cent of Manitoba households have purchased a home shredder to securely dispose of sensitive documents, including credit card and bank statements.

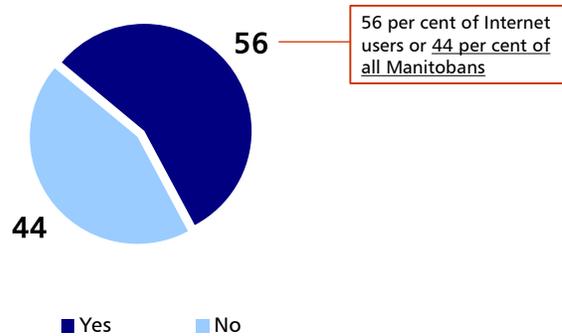
In addition, 10 per cent of Manitobans lodged a complaint about how an organization handled their personal information in the past year. A smaller number requested access to their personal information held by business or government over the same period.

Manitobans are not shirking their responsibility to play a central role in the protection of their personal information. At the same time, long term trends show an increasing number believe there is a strong collective role for government and other organizations to play in the protection of personal information.

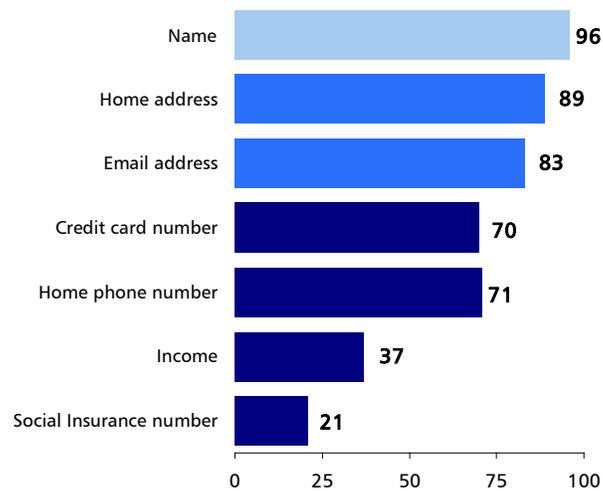
- Declining steadily from 2001, 55 per cent believe it is up to individual to protect their own personal privacy.

¹ Percentages listed included totals of actions taken “rarely”, “sometimes” and “regularly” over a 12 month period.

Submitting personal information online



Types of Information submitted online*



Q: In the past year, have you submitted personal information such as your credit card number, name, address, or your income over the Internet? What types of personal information have you submitted over the Internet in the past year? (BASE: Internet users; Jan. 05, n=170. *Those who submitted information online; Jan. 05, n=52).

Awareness of privacy and security related technologies

(per cent)

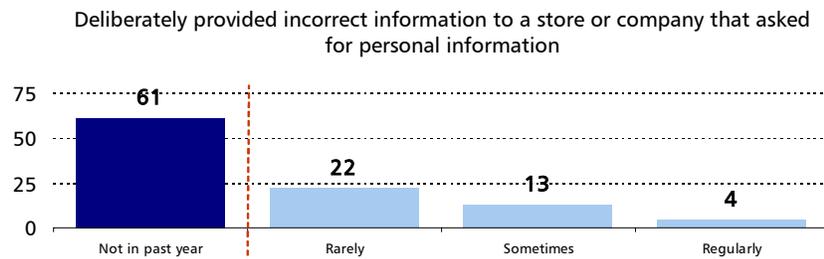
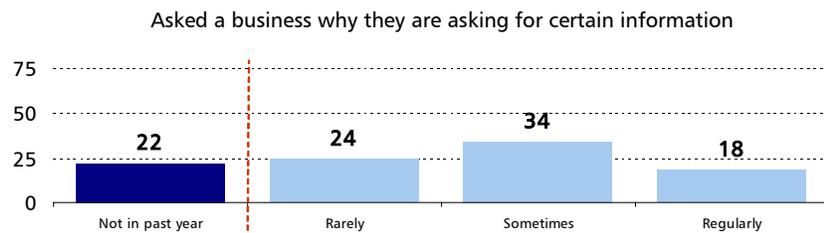
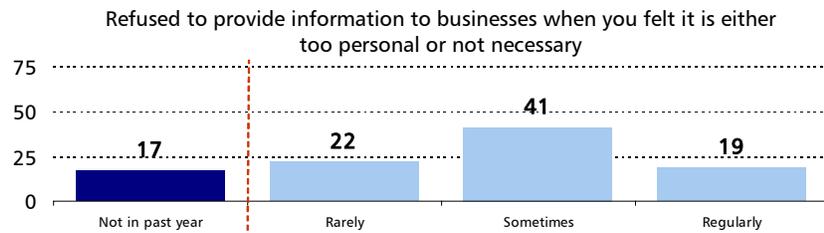
	Oct./Nov. 99		Oct./Nov. 00		Nov./Dec. 01		May/Jun. 03		Feb./Mar. 05	
	MB	ROC	MB	ROC	MB	ROC	MB	ROC	MB	ROC
Encryption										
Not at all aware (1)	43	51	49	48	40	41	36	37	41	40
(2-3)	24	20	15	21	22	22	13	18	19	20
Somewhat aware (4)	10	9	12	11	9	11	21	14	12	13
(5-6)	16	13	20	13	20	16	21	18	20	16
Extremely aware (7)	6	6	3	7	6	7	7	10	8	8

	MB	ROC	MB	ROC	MB	ROC	MB	ROC	MB	ROC
	"Cookies"									
Not at all aware (1)	42	52	45	47	38	39	34	31	31	29
(2-3)	22	16	14	18	22	18	13	16	17	20
Somewhat aware (4)	11	9	12	8	11	10	12	12	13	13
(5-6)	15	13	19	18	18	18	23	24	25	22
Extremely aware (7)	10	9	11	9	10	12	16	15	14	13

	MB	ROC	MB	ROC	MB	ROC	MB	ROC	MB	ROC
	Public Key Infrastructure									
Not at all aware (1)	--	--	76	65	64	59	61	63	75	73
(2-3)	--	--	17	22	23	24	25	20	20	17
Somewhat aware (4)	--	--	4	7	6	7	10	7	1	4
(5-6)	--	--	3	5	5	5	1	5	1	3
Extremely aware (7)	--	--	--	2	1	2	1	2	2	2

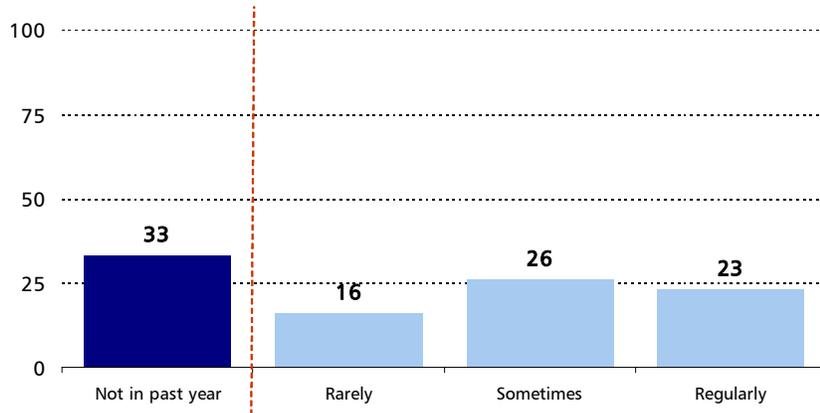
Q: To what extent are you aware of the following products, services and new technologies?
 (BASE: Feb./Mar 05; All Manitobans [MB], n= 221; Rest of Canada[ROC], n=1,801)

Actions taken when information is requested



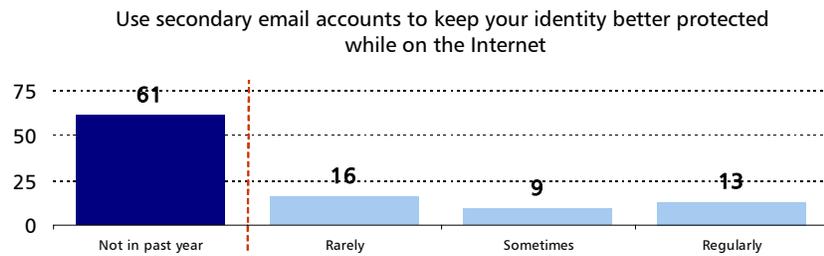
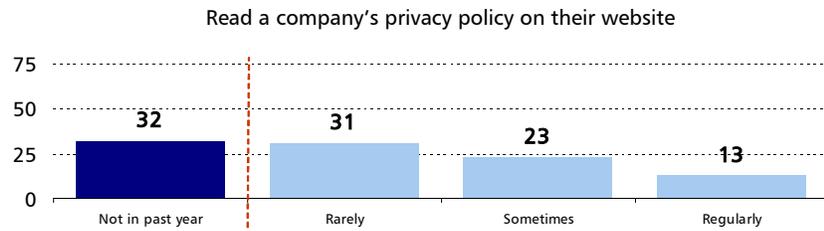
Q: How often have you done the following in the past year? (BASE: All Manitobans; Feb./Mar. 05, n=221)

Attempted to remove name from marketing lists



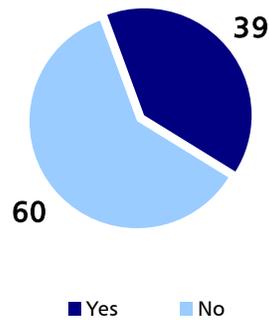
Q: How often have you done the following in the past year? — Attempted to take your name off marketing lists. (BASE: All Manitobans; Feb./Mar. 05, n=221)

Actions taken online to protect information



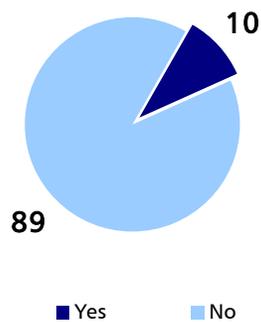
Q: How often have you done the following in the past year? (BASE: Internet users; Feb./Mar. 05, n=174)

Household document shredder ownership



Q: Do you or anyone in your household have a personal shredder used to destroy documents such as credit card statements or other type of personal documents? (BASE: All Manitobans; Feb./Mar. 05, n=221)

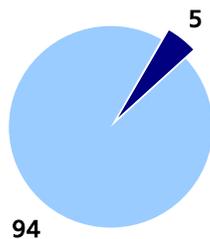
Lodged a complaint about how information used



Q: Have you done any of the following in the past year? — Lodged a complaint if you were unhappy with how an organization handled your information (BASE: All Manitobans; Feb./Mar. 05, n=221)

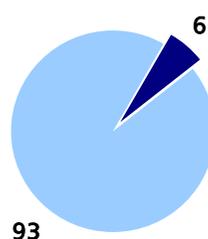
Request to see information kept by organizations

Requested to see personal information about yourself that is kept by **government**



■ Yes ■ No

Requested to see personal information about yourself that is kept by a **business**

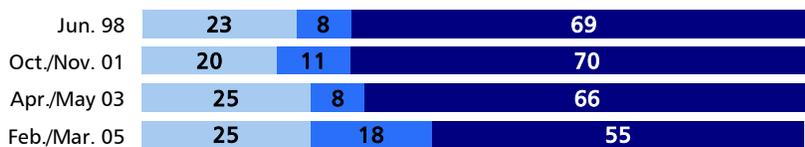


■ Yes ■ No

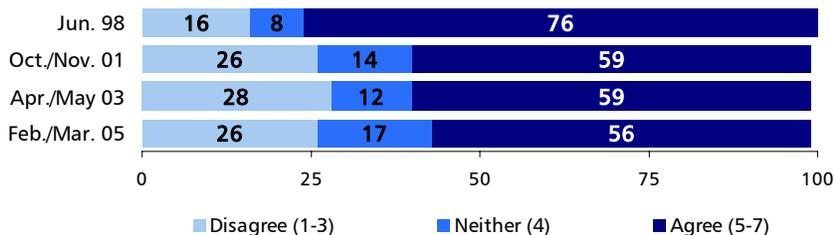
Q: Have you done any of the following in the past year? — Requested to see personal information about yourself that is kept by government/business (BASE: All Manitobans; Feb./Mar. 05, n=221)

Individual responsibility

Manitoba



Rest of Canada



Q: It's up to individuals to protect their own personal privacy. (BASE: Feb./Mar. 05, Manitoba, n=221; Rest of Canada; n=1,801)

Collective Privacy Protection

Collective Privacy Protection

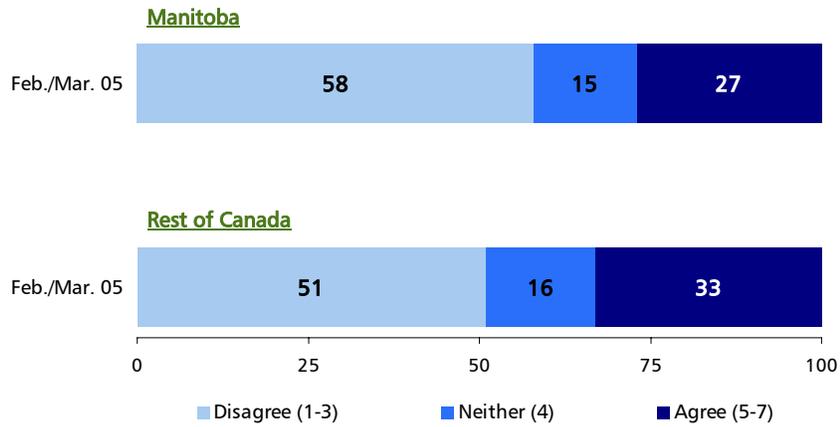
For many Manitobans, their desire for a greater shared or collective responsibility for the protection of personal information is going unheard. A large majority of Manitobans do not have any understanding of the collective resources and protections available to them. Fewer than three in ten Manitobans (27 per cent) report they have a clear idea of who to turn to if they were to experience a serious invasion of privacy. When asked to identify whom they might contact if they were to experience a serious invasion of privacy, the plurality of Manitobans indicated they would go to the police (39 per cent), with few reporting they would seek the assistance of a privacy commissioner, ombudsman or privacy advocate.

Further, the high profile, multi-year implementation of the federal government's *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* (PIPEDA) and the provincial review of *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) and *The Personal Health Information Act* (PHIA) have been largely unnoticed by most Manitobans. Both federal and provincial privacy laws have failed to gain a significant foothold in the Manitoba mindset. Overall, only 34 per cent of Manitobans report they are even "somewhat familiar" with either the federal or provincial privacy laws.

Given current low levels of awareness, it is perhaps not surprising that only a limited number of Manitobans express confidence that federal and provincial privacy laws are actually being adhered to by government or business:

- 56 per cent of Manitobans are "somewhat" to "extremely confident" federal government departments adhere to their own privacy laws.
- 57 per cent of Manitobans are similarly "somewhat" to "extremely confident" provincial government ministries comply with their own privacy laws.
- Confidence regarding business compliance is the lowest: just 48 per cent of Manitobans report they are at least "somewhat confident" businesses follow federal or provincial privacy laws.

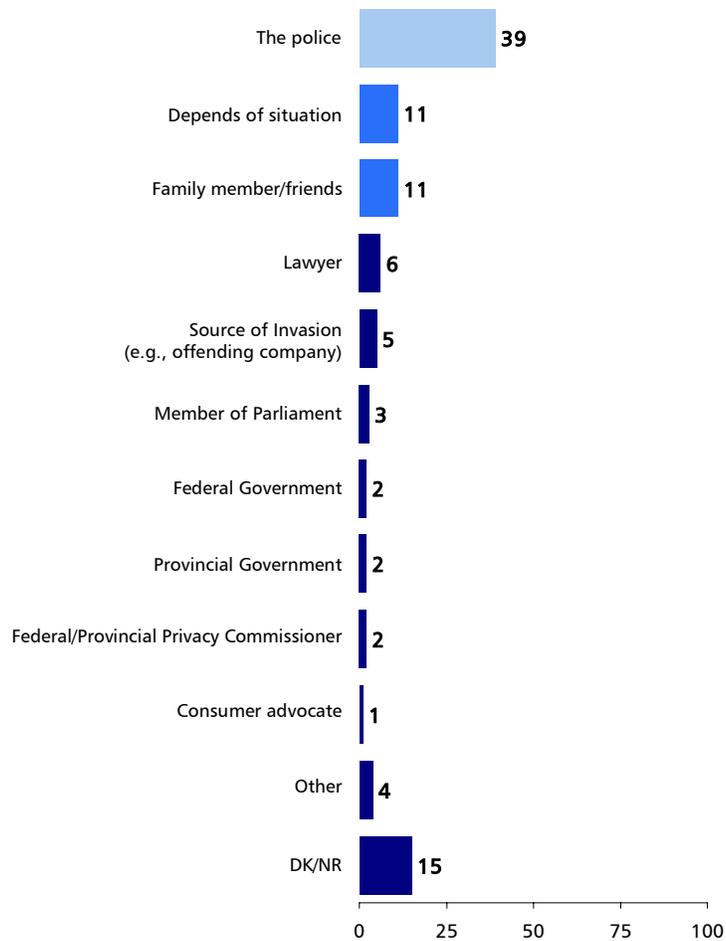
Awareness of who to turn to if invasion experienced



NOTE: Differences in Manitoba and Rest of Canada results are statistically significant.

Q: I have a good idea of who to turn to if I ever experience an invasion of my privacy? (BASE: Feb./Mar. 05, Manitoba, n=221; Rest of Canada; n=1,801)

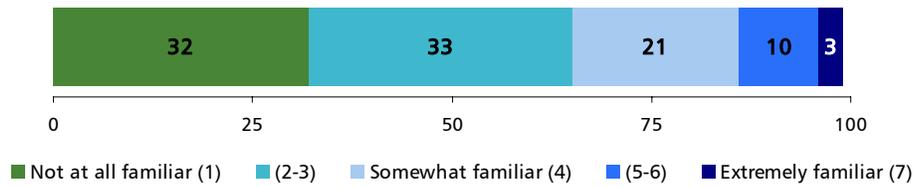
Organization turned to if invasion experienced



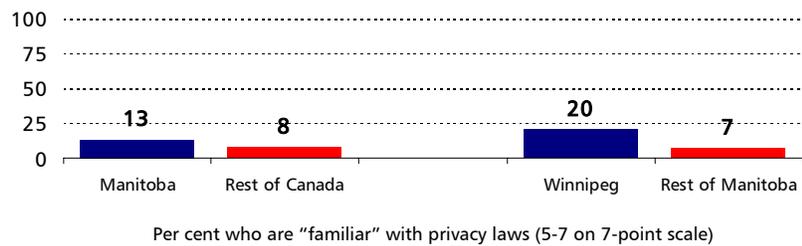
Q: If you were to experience a serious invasion of privacy, who would you be most likely to turn to?
(BASE: Jan. 05, Manitoba, n=503; Rest of Canada; n=4,510)

Familiarity with privacy laws

How familiar are you with federal and provincial privacy laws that place restrictions on how governments and businesses can use Canadians' personal information?



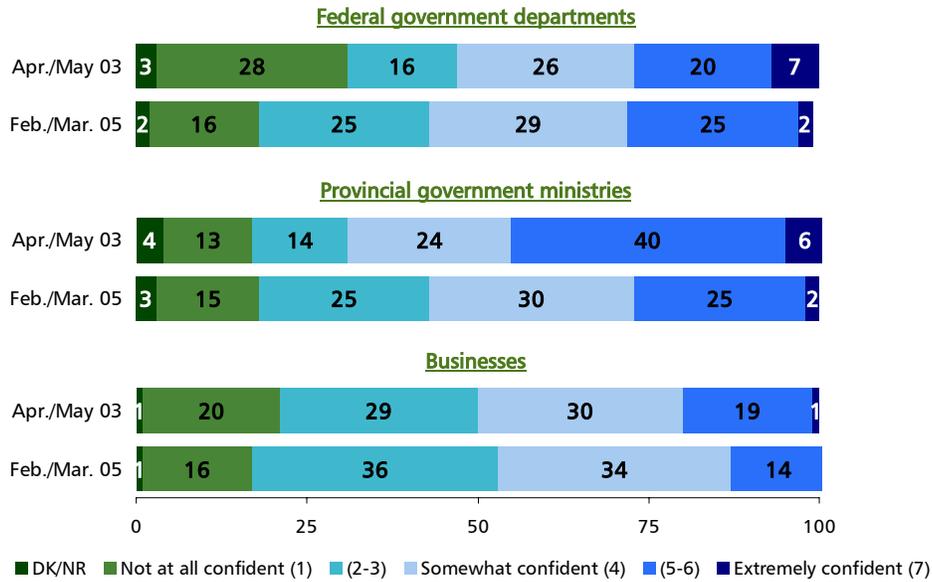
Differences by region



NOTE: Differences between above subgroups are statistically significant.

(BASE: Feb./Mar. 05; Manitobans, n=221; Rest of Canada, n=1,80; Winnipeg, n=118; Rest of Manitoba, n=103)

Confidence privacy laws will be adhered to



Q: How much confidence do you have that federal government departments and provincial government ministries will follow their own privacy laws regarding usages of Canadians' personal information? How much confidence do you have that businesses will follow federal and provincial government privacy laws regarding usages of Canadians' personal information?
(BASE: Manitobans; Feb./Mar. 05, n=221)

Implications

Implications

The implications of the current environment for both the public and private sectors are significant. In the case of the private sector, the consequences are clear, respect privacy and provide security for personal information or lose a client's business.

- 83 per cent of Manitobans would not hesitate to switch financial institutions if they felt their personal information was being used in a way they did not consent to.

In the case of government, citizens often do not have the same option to go elsewhere for service. This condition, however, does little to inoculate government from the consequences of the misuse of personal information.

In today's environment, there is a significant distrust and suspicion regarding government collection and use of personal information. For example, government guarantees of respect for privacy and citizen control over their personal information are seen as disingenuous by a large number of Manitobans: only 17 per cent agree they have control over how their personal information is used by government (this compares to 32 per cent in the rest of Canada). Further, 56 per cent of Manitobans believe the government collects far more information than is necessary to provide services. A large number of Manitobans also suspect that the federal government (52 per cent) and the provincial government (42 per cent) have one large database containing all of their personal information. This overall suspicion culminates with the belief held by 70 per cent of Manitobans that there is, in fact, "no real privacy" because government access to citizen personal information is so great.

Understanding that to possess personal information conveys power to those that hold it, the perception that governments have unfettered access to personal information fuels the perception of a steep power differential between individual citizens and their government. Where such a differential is perceived, trust in an organization wanes. Given the current environment, it is perhaps not surprising to find that only 29 per cent of Manitobans believe their government can be trusted "to do the right thing".

This suspicion and general lack of trust has implications for government initiatives that involve the collection, use, disclosure or security of personal information. For example, while Internet usage in Manitoba is approaching four in five (78 per cent), uptake of government online services offered by the three levels of government remains low. For example, few Manitobans have — either themselves or requested someone do so on their behalf — made an online payment to any of the three-levels of government (8 per cent) or have applied for a government program or service over the Internet (12 per cent).

The current privacy landscape also has significant implications for planned service innovations, such as Electronic Health Records (EHR). Recommended by both the Kirby and Romanow health commissions, EHRs have been touted as essential to improving access to reliable health information and increasing health service quality and productivity. While focus is placed on the benefits for individual patient care, EHRs may also provide an opportunity for clinical studies to be based entirely on EHR data.

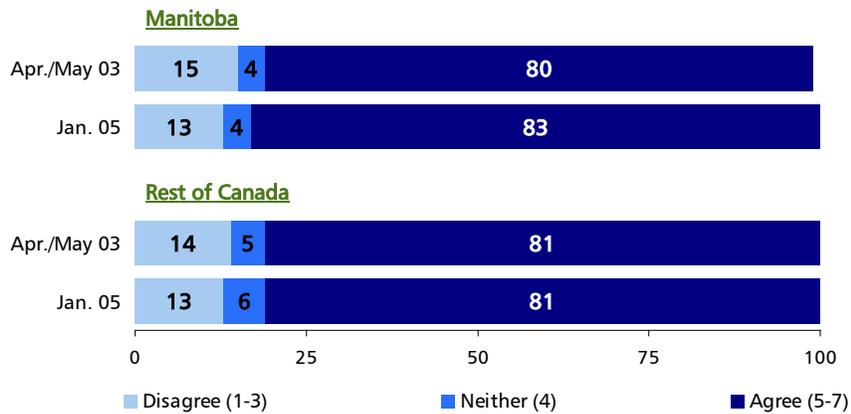
Despite this high billing, Manitobans are giving the potential advantages of providing each citizen with a lifetime record of their key health history a lukewarm welcome.

- 24 per cent of Manitobans are “somewhat comfortable” (4 on 7-point scale) with an EHR system, 38 per cent are “comfortable” (5-6 on the same 7-point scale).
- Only 7 per cent report they are “extremely comfortable” (7 on the same 7-point scale).

This general lack of enthusiasm is driven, in part, by the reluctance of many to sacrifice any part of the privacy of personal health information, despite a promised benefit. The previous edition of the *Rethinking the Information Highway* study provided initial data on the role privacy plays when Canadians seek health-care services. That study found that 12 per cent of Manitobans had withheld information from a healthcare provider because of privacy concerns, at some point in the past.

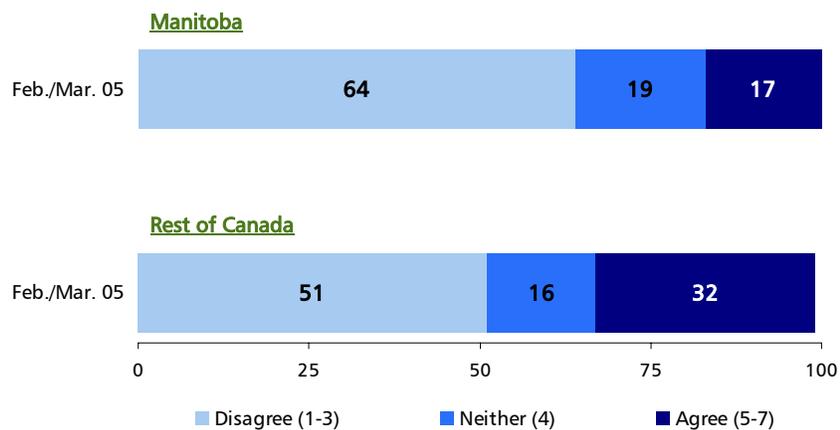
This year’s edition expanded this line of questioning and provided a time stamp. Resulting data showed concerns over the privacy of personal health information prompted only a small percentage of Manitobans to withhold information from a healthcare provider (5 per cent) or caused them to avoid seeing a healthcare provider altogether (3 per cent) in the past 12 months. That said, even this small per cent translates into thousands of Manitobans who are making decisions with the potential to compromise their health because of concerns about who their personal health information might be shared with or how it might be used.

Implications for misuse of personal information by FI



Q: I wouldn't hesitate to switch financial institutions if I felt they were using my personal information in ways that I didn't consent to. (BASE: Jan. 05, Manitoba, n=97; Rest of Canada; n=934)

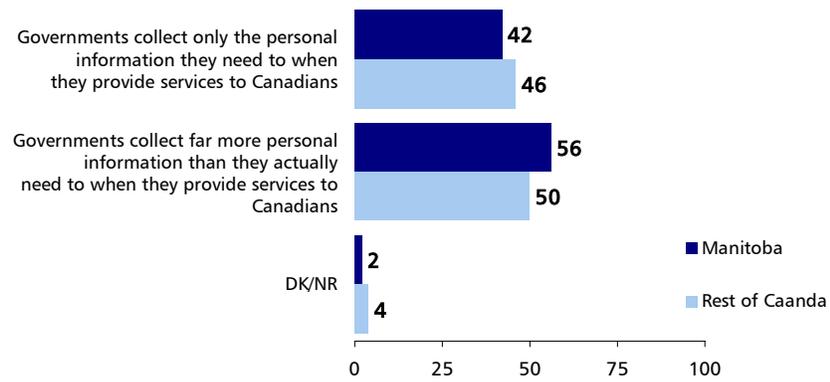
Control of personal information held by governments



NOTE: Differences in Manitoba and Rest of Canada results are statistically significant.

Q: I have control over how my personal information is being used by governments. (BASE: Feb./Mar. 05, Manitoba, n=221; Rest of Canada; n=1,801)

Perception of government information collection



Q: Which of the following statements is closer to your point of view? (BASE: Jan. 05, Manitoba, n=95; Rest of Canada; n=899)

Perception of government information management

The federal government has one large database on me with all my personal information in it.

Manitoba



Rest of Canada

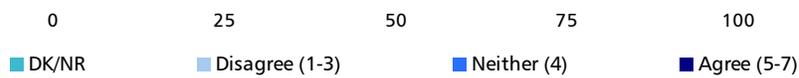


My provincial government has one large database on me with all my personal information in it.

Manitoba

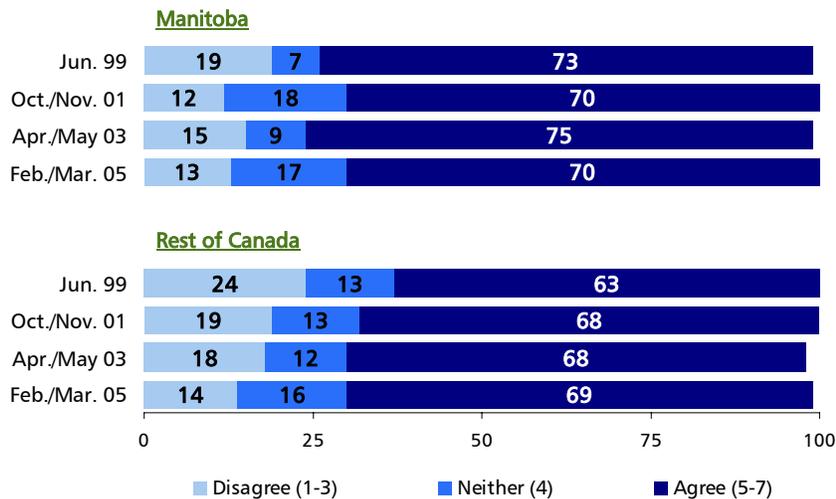


Rest of Canada



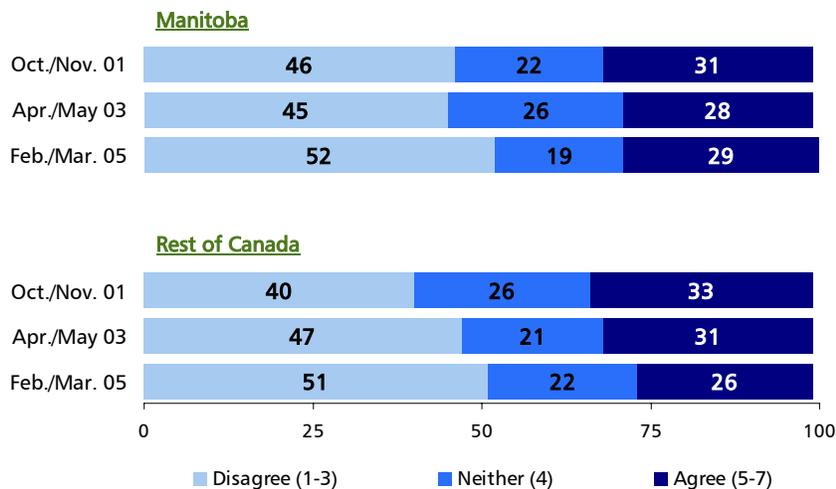
(BASE: Jan. 05, Manitoba, n=approx. 100; Rest of Canada; n=approx. 900)

Perceived government access to personal information



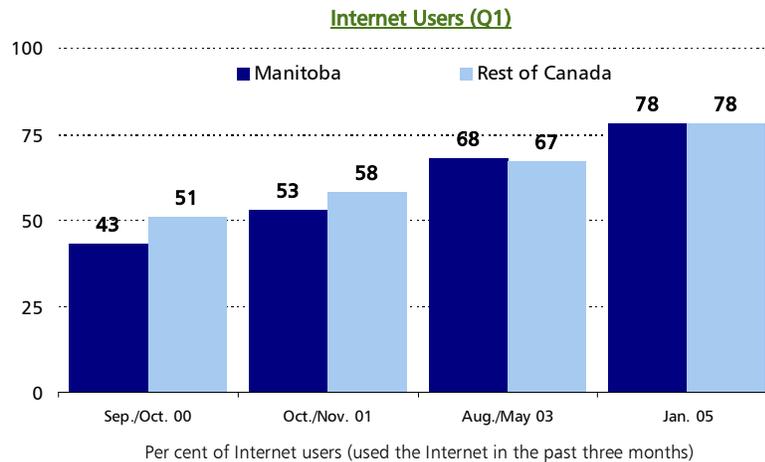
Q: There is no real privacy because the government can learn anything they want about you. (BASE: Feb./Mar. 05, Manitoba, n=221; Rest of Canada; n=1,801)

Broad trust in government

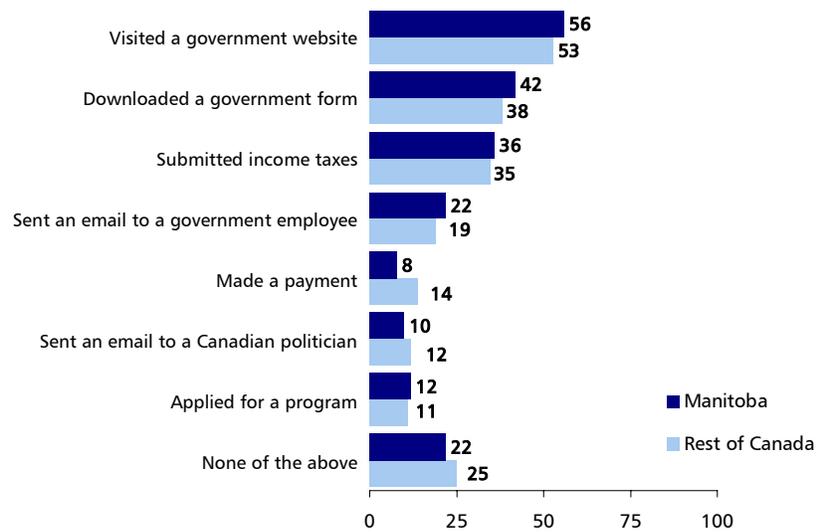


Q: Governments can be trusted to do the right thing. (BASE: Feb./Mar. 05, Manitoba, n=503; Rest of Canada; n=4,510)

Internet use and GOL uptake



GOL Activities Performed themselves or by someone else on their behalf (Q2)



Q1: In the past 3 months, have you used the Internet, either at home or elsewhere? (BASE: Jan. 05, Manitoba, n=503; Rest of Canada; n=4,510)

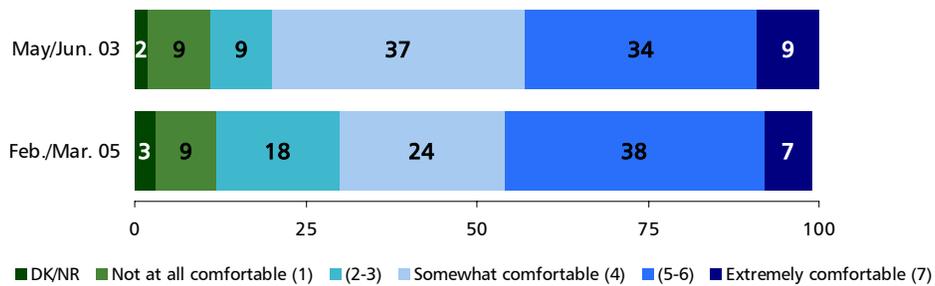
Q2: Have you (Has anybody) ever done any of the following activities with governments over the Internet (on your behalf)? (BASE: Jan. 05, Manitoba, n=222; Rest of Canada; n=1,774)

Comfort with Electronic Health Record

Governments have identified an electronic health record system as essential to improving access to reliable health information in support of quality care. An Electronic Health Record (EHR) will provide Canadians with a secure and private lifetime record of their key health history and care within the health system.

An individual's health information will be stored electronically in separate locations (e.g., practitioners' offices, hospitals, pharmacies, and laboratories) that would be brought together as needed by authorized users. An EHR system will not be a central databank held by governments.

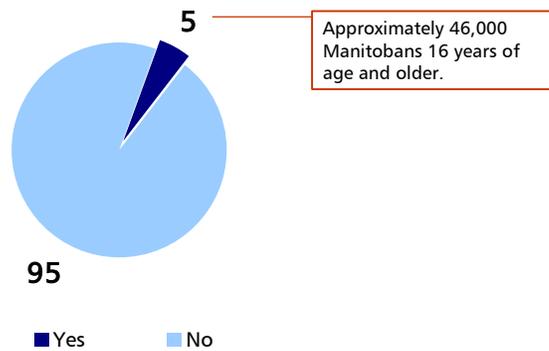
Overall, how comfortable are you with a system where your health information is stored electronically in this way?



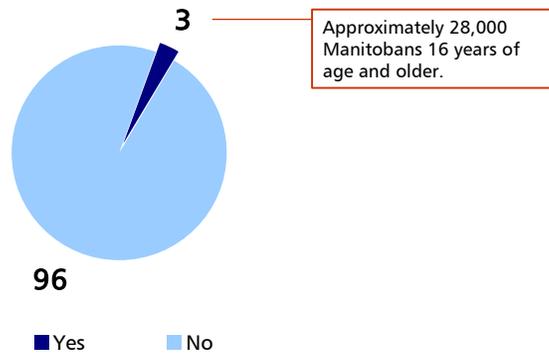
(BASE: Manitobans; Feb./Mar. 05, n=221)

Privacy concerns and health-care

In the past year, have you withheld information from a health-care provider because of concerns over who it might be shared with or how it might be used



In the past year, have you decided not to see a health-care provider because of concerns over who your health information might be shared with or how it might be used



(BASE: Manitobans; Feb./Mar. 05, n=221)

Appendix: Research Methodology

The research methodology for this study involved a panel-based design, with respondents first completing a telephone survey and then a second self-administered mail-back survey.

The results from the first wave are based on the following:

- A telephone survey completed with a stratified national random sample of 5,013 Canadians, aged 16 and over undertaken between January 4 and 18, 2005.
- The findings were statistically weighted by age, gender and region to ensure that the findings are representative of the Canadian public aged 16 and over.
- In areas, the survey was designed to randomize questions in order to test differences in attitudes across various indicators as well as to minimize response burden.
- Findings from questions posed on wave one full sample may be considered accurate within +/- 1.4 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.
- Findings from questions posed on wave one full Manitoba sample (n=503) may be considered accurate within +/- 4.4 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.
- There is a higher margin of error for regional and other subgroup findings.

The results from the second wave are based on the following:

- A self-administered mail-back survey was mailed to 3,467 respondents from the wave one survey who indicated they wished to participate in the second wave of the research.
- Several procedures to increase response rate were followed including a complete re-mailing of the survey as well as a lottery with appropriate prizes to encourage participation.
- 2,022 completed surveys were received between February 1st and March 24th, 2005; a response rate of 58.32%.
- Findings from questions posed on wave two full sample may be considered accurate within +/- 2.2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.
- Findings from questions posed on wave two full Manitoba sample (n=221) may be considered accurate within +/- 6.6 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.
- There is a higher margin of error for regional and other subgroup findings.