

## **Alertsec Survey: Ninety-Seven Percent of Americans Find Data Breaches Unsettling**

*Alertsec's Brand Perception Study determined that Americans are slow to forgive companies for data breaches – even when they are not directly affected.*

**Palo Alto, CA, September 27, 2016** – Alertsec, the cloud-based encryption company, today released findings from their recent Brand Perception Study that reveal significant concern about data breaches. The study, fielded among 1,200 Americans, determined that data breaches “unsettle” American consumers and result in negative brand perception.

### **Forgive and forget? Probably not**

Customers who are affected by data breaches suffer a significant loss of trust, and this is particularly true of men. According to the survey results, nearly one in three Americans (29 percent) said it would take them several months to begin trusting a company again following a data breach. Twenty-two percent said it would only take them a month to forgive, but 17 percent of men and 11 percent of women said their trust would be permanently lost. Men (16 percent) are also more likely to switch to a competitor following a data breach than are women (6 percent).

“This is no surprise to me,” said Ebba Blitz, CEO of Alertsec. “People’s personal information is, in many ways, the key to their financial and psychological well-being. When a company has allowed their customers’ data to fall into the hands of criminals, the resulting lack of trust is difficult to repair.”

In terms of brand perception, when a company suffers a data breach, 35 percent of the respondents said this reflects sloppiness, 32 percent said it reflects a lack of professionalism, and 26 percent said it makes the company a target for lawsuits.

### **Data breaches unsettle**

Ninety-seven percent of those surveyed said a data breach affects them in some way, even if they have no direct affiliation to the company whose data has been breached.

When Americans learn a company has had a data breach, 67 percent check to see if their information or identity has been compromised, and 35 percent worry about their information, even if they are not directly connected to the company. Twenty-nine percent said data breaches prompt them to focus on improving their own online security.

Only three percent of Americans reported feeling unfazed by data breaches. Men generally have a stronger reaction to data breaches than do women:

<b>How do you react when a data breach has occurred?</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>
Check to see if information/identity has been compromised	78%	55%
Worry about information, even if not directly connected to breach	38%	27%
Improve personal security	32%	21%
Don't trust company affected by data breach	22%	24%

When asked which actions companies should take after suffering a data breach, 81 percent of those surveyed said the company must tell everyone affected, and 72 percent suggested the company immediately invest in new encryption technology.

### **About Alertsec**

Alertsec, a Palo Alto-based laptop encryption company, provides a cloud-based encryption software with 24/7 helpdesk. No server, IT knowledge or training is needed, as everything is included in the subscription. The implemented encryption has the highest security certifications – FIPS & Common Criteria.

Learn more at:  
[www.alertsec.com](http://www.alertsec.com)