

## Media Release

# Digital Lives of Australians 2024: value of the internet up – but cyber security concerns holding Aussies back

23 May 2024

The .au Domain Administration (auDA) today released its *Digital Lives of Australians 2024* report. The report found almost all Australian consumers (99 per cent) and small businesses (97 per cent) gain value from the internet, however, almost two-thirds (64%) of consumers and half of small businesses (55%) limit their internet use due to cyber security fears.

The *Digital Lives* research is an annual study undertaken by auDA each year since 2021. It explores the online experiences of Australian consumers and small businesses, spanning the significant benefits of the internet, perceptions of emerging technologies, views about cyber security, confidence keeping personal information secure and digital skills required for the digital future.

The *Digital Lives of Australians 2024* research is informed by a survey of 1,500 Australian consumers and 400 small businesses. It identified cyber security remains the most pressing internet-related concern facing consumers and small businesses.

Other key findings include:

- **Value of the internet** – Nine of ten (88 per cent) working Australians rely on the internet to perform their job and eight of ten (78 per cent) small businesses would struggle to function without it
- **Growing interest in Artificial Intelligence (AI)** – Two of five (39 per cent) working Australians believe being able to use AI tools will increase their employment prospects and 48 per cent of small businesses believe AI tools will increase business efficiency
- **Majority of Australians impacted by cyber threat or attack** – Four of five (77 per cent) consumers recall experiencing a cyber security threat or attack in the past year, including receiving a scam message or falling victim to a hack
- **Additional cyber security support required** – Two of five consumers and small businesses would like to strengthen their online security but are unsure how (43 and 40 per cent respectively) and many do not know where to report a data breach (48 and 35 per cent)
- **High expectations of companies** – Four of five consumers and small businesses (83 and 79 per cent) believe companies should be doing more to protect the personal information of customers from cyber attack
- **Cyber security skill gap** – Consumers (62 per cent) and small businesses (77 per cent) consider cyber security skills the most important digital skill for their future, yet only 13 and 24 per cent respectively feel they have high capability.



auDA CEO Rosemary Sinclair AM said, “auDA’s *Digital Lives of Australians 2024* report reinforces the profound value an open, free, secure and global internet delivers to Australia’s society and economy. Notably, Australian consumers and small businesses both say the value they gain from the internet is hampered by cyber security concerns.

“auDA’s research continues to identify there is a clear need for trustworthy, accessible cyber security training and resources to help Australians feel confident online. Much like nation-wide road safety campaigns have helped save lives, now is the time for a coordinated, long-term, nation-wide effort to communicate cyber security basics to bolster the security knowledge and practices of all Australians and small businesses.

“I invite industry leaders, government bodies, businesses and educational institutions to read auDA’s Digital Lives research, share it widely and use it to inform decision-making that will support Australia to harness the full value of the internet securely and with confidence.”

You can find the [Digital Lives of Australians 2024](#) report on the auDA website.

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#### **Note to media:**

The Digital Lives research was undertaken on behalf of auDA by [SEC Newgate Research](#). The research comprised:

- A survey of 1,500 consumers and 400 small businesses
- An online discussion forum with 24 consumers and 16 small business representatives
- In-depth interviews conducted individually with 16 participants (eight consumers and eight small businesses).

The research was conducted in February and March 2024 and samples were weighted to reflect the Australian population.

A detailed methodology overview is provided in the report.

#### **For further information:**

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#### **About auDA:**

.au Domain Administration Limited (auDA) is the trusted administrator of the .au domain name system (DNS), which is Australian critical infrastructure, supporting more than 4 million .au domain names. auDA is a not-for-profit, endorsed by the Australian Government to innovate and invest in the Australian internet ecosystem to improve the utility of the .au domain for all



Australians. Through its steady stewardship of the .au domain and support of multi-stakeholder internet governance, auDA strives to ensure the internet remains open, free, secure and global.

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