



# INTERNET SAFETY TIPS



## Securing Holiday Transactions



(NAPSA)—The benefits of online shopping have always outweighed the risks—particularly during the holiday season. Online stores are always open and busy holiday shoppers can avoid long lines and crowded stores while saving on gas, parking and time. And the selection is unparalleled. When you shop online, you can get almost anything you want from almost anywhere in the world.

However, as consumers turn to the Web to complete holiday shopping this year, they should be aware that doing business online comes with some very real risks. Online transactions involve some of our most sensitive personal and financial information. In notorious scams such as phishing and pharming, cybercriminals use fake e-mails or Web pages to trick people into divulging account numbers, passwords and even Social Security numbers.

The good news is consumers are starting to take note of risks. A survey of 2,500 consumers conducted by Harris Interactive for Symantec Corporation showed that while 61 percent participate in online shopping, one in five online adults feel safer using the Internet today as compared to one year ago, likely because 67 percent indicated they have a better understanding of how to protect themselves.

This holiday season, consumers can take several basic steps to stay safe online:

- **Know your sellers:** Look for basic corporate information on the store's Web site. You should be able to find a vendor's physical address, phone number and other essential corporate information.

- **Use secure sites:** Secure sites will also have a slightly modified Internet address. Rather

than beginning with `http://`, the site's URL will begin with `https://`. The "s" means the sight is using a secure server.

- **Pay by credit card:** Paying by credit card is the safest way to transact business over the Web. Encryption and validation technologies have made most transactions quite secure.

- **Keep transaction records:** Keep a record of all your online transactions. Transaction records are a convenient way to track shipping dates and other details.

- **Protect your computer:** Keep digital means of commerce safe with security software. A complete transaction security solution will ferret out scams, protect passwords, block crime-ware, and combat phishing and pharming.

- **Take action through the Symantec Phish Report Network:** Consumers can be good cyber citizens and help prevent others from becoming victims of online fraud. Symantec recently announced the opening of the Symantec Phish Report Network to consumers worldwide. Launched in May 2006, the Symantec Phish Report Network is one of the world's largest anti-fraud communities.

Now consumers can join in the fight against online fraud by submitting suspected phishing URLs to the Symantec Phish Report Network at [www.phishreport.net/consumers.html](http://www.phishreport.net/consumers.html). Upon receiving the URLs, Symantec researchers verify that the Web site is fraudulent and distribute it to Symantec Phish Report Network participants, who then use the data as part of their own solutions and services, helping to alert and protect consumers from phishing threats.