

## Methodology:

Methodology: Results are based on an online survey conducted from November 15 to November 17, 2024, among a representative sample of 800 adults in British Columbia. The data has been statistically weighted according to Canadian census figures for age, gender and region in British Columbia. The margin of error—which measures sample variability—is +/- 3.5 percentage points, nineteen times out of twenty.

## Have any of the following things ever happened to you?

You received a “phishing” email (somebody attempted to acquire your personal information by masquerading as a trustworthy entity) – 61% (-2)

You received an email offering you money for your help or assistance (such as the Nigerian scam) – 54% (-4)

Your computer became infected with a virus while you were browsing the Internet – 25% (-6)

Somebody hacked your social media platform (Facebook, Twitter) – 15% (-1)

Somebody hacked your email address – 15% (=)

## Most British Columbians Targeted by “Phishing” Scams

Compared to 2022, fewer of the province’s residents say their computer became infected with a virus while they were online.

Vancouver, BC [November 27, 2024] – More than three-in-five British Columbians recall receiving an email where somebody attempted to acquire personal information by masquerading as a trustworthy entity, a new Research Co. poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative provincial sample, 61% of British Columbians say they have received a “phishing” email, down two points since a similar Research Co. poll conducted in [April 2022](#).

More than half of British Columbians (54%, -4) received an email offering them money for their help and assistance, in what is usually referred to as the “Nigerian scam.”

Fewer of the province’s residents say their computer became infected with a virus while they were browsing the Internet (25%, -6), or endured hackers accessing their social media platform (15%, -1) or email address (15%, =).

More than three-in-four British Columbians participate in five activities online at least a few times per month: visiting websites or blogs (87%, -2), accessing banking information (also 87%, =), looking for deals on websites (78%, -3), using an instant messaging service (80%, +1) and looking for directions and/or maps to get to a destination (76%, +3).

Fewer British Columbians purchase goods from a website (59%, -1), post on social media (53%, -4), upload pictures or videos to the Internet (48%, -5) or use the Internet to place telephone calls (39%, =) at least a few times per month.

Roughly half of British Columbians have worried “frequently” or “occasionally” about having their personal information stolen over the Internet (50%, -1), computers and technology being used to invade their privacy (49%, -2) and somebody hacking into their own computer or smartphone (47%, +1).

Just over half of British Columbians (53%, -3) say they are “very” or “moderately” comfortable commenting on an online forum that requires an email address.

The level of comfort is significantly higher for other online activities, including making charitable donations (70%, -3), accessing

banking information (86%, -1), shopping (86%, -3) and sending emails (90%, -4).

“Only 29% of British Columbians aged 55 and over are very comfortable shopping online,” says Mario Canseco, President of Research Co. “The proportions are higher among their counterparts aged 35-to-54 (47%) and aged 18-to-34 (50%).”

More than half of British Columbians (57%, -5) have typed their name on Google to see what has been posted about them online.

Among the province’s residents who googled themselves, 57% (-4) claim that the information that came up was “accurate”, while 13% (+1) think it was “inaccurate”. Three-in-ten of these residents (30%, +3) did not find information about themselves online.

Just over one-in-four British Columbians (26%, +4) only have one email address, while 41% (=) possess two and 33% (-4) have three or more.

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#### **About Research Co.**

Simply put, we are curious about what people think and the decisions they will make. Some call it public opinion, others call it polling or public affairs. We never compromise facts for profit. Our agenda is the truth.

We have a global network of partners in the qualitative, data collection and data visualization specialities.

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