

Rise in nomophobia -the terror of being without a mobile phone

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TWO-THIRDS of people suffer from 'nomophobia' - the fear of being without their phone - according to a new study.

Researchers found 66 per cent of people are terrified of being without their phone, and the younger they are the more worried they are.

First identified in 2008, it would appear nomophobia –defined as 'the fear of being out of mobile phone contact' - is increasing with far more admitting to the problem than when a similar poll was conducted four years ago.

A survey of 1,000 people in employment found two-thirds of them fear losing their mobile phone.

The study, commissioned by SecurEnvoy, revealed that 41 per cent of the people polled have two phones or more in an effort to stay connected.

When asked if they'd be upset if a partner looked at the messages and texts on their phone almost half said that they would.

Women worry about losing their phones than men - 70 per cent of the women surveyed, compared to 61 per cent of the men, yet it is men that are more likely to have two phones - scoring 47 per cent and 36 per cent respectively.

When split by age it is young adults, aged 18 to 24, who are more nomophobic (77 per cent), with the 25 to 34 age group second (68 per cent). The third most nomophobic age group were those aged 55 and overs.

Andy Kemshall, SecurEnvoy co-founder and chief technology officer, said: "The first study into nomophobia, conducted four years ago, revealed that 53 per cent of people suffered from the condition and our study reveals this has now risen to 66 per cent in the UK and shows no sign of abating.

"A reversal on the 2008 findings is that, back then, it was men that were more afflicted yet today it's women.

"I'd be inclined to draw the conclusion that, perhaps because more men have two phones, they're less likely to misplace both and therefore be left phone-less.

"There is another study into mobile phone use that found people check their phones, on average, 34 times a day so it wouldn't take long for you to realise if you'd misplaced your device."

The survey also found that although 49 per cent of people get upset if their messages and texts were viewed by a partner, they're still lax at securing these devices with 46 per cent do not use any protection at all, 41 per cent using a four pin access code; and just 10 per cent encrypting their device.

A security conscious three per cent use two factor authentication.

Mr Kemshall said: "With 58 per cent of the respondents using at least one device for business use, this lack of security is a worrying trend that needs addressing."

"What this study does highlight though is the extent that people now rely on their mobile phones.

"At SecurEnvoy we have certainly seen a huge spike in demand from local Government and the private sector looking to turn their staff's phones into security devices, where they can use SMS tokenless two factor authentication to access data securely and easily whilst on the move."?