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Author: Filip Šušulić, IV1 Gimnazija “Stevan Jakovljević“
Mentor: Biljana Pipović, English teacher

ABSTRACT

This essay will contain some facts about the internet which are not so known to common internet users. I will try to show how much information about our privacy we leave behind while using the internet, and how easily it is accessible. Without even noticing, the digital world is fundamentally changing. What was once an anonymous information and communication tool can now be used for soliciting and analyzing our personal data. You browse the internet, you open and close websites, sometimes you enter your personal information. While you do that, each and every page you visit leaves a little trace behind. If this information is not deleted, it can be used not only to track your browsing habits, but also to find out who you are. Are you curious to find out what the internet knows about you? I am sure that many of you are, and that is why I have decided to write about this subject and to show you this side of the internet and not just the good ones.

Keywords: Internet, privacy, information, browsing, social networks

REZIME

Ovaj rad će sadržati neke činjenice o internetu koje nisu toliko poznate običnim korisnicima interneta. Ja ću pokušati da pokažem koliko informacija o našoj privatnosti mi ostavljamo iza sebe dok koristimo internet, i koliko lako su one dostupne. Čak i bez primećivanja, digitalni svet se menja iz korena. Ono što je nekada bilo anonimno sredstvo za komunikaciju i informisanje se sada može koristiti za traženje i analiziranje naših ličnih podataka. Dok surfujete internetom, *vi* otvarate i zatvarate sajtove, ponekad unesete neke svoje lične informacije. Dok *vi* to radite, na svakoj stranici koju posetite ostavljate mali trag iza vas. Ako se ova informacija ne izbriše, može da se koristi ne samo za praćenje *vaših* navika pri surfovanju, već i da bi se saznalo ko ste *vi*. Da li ste zainteresovani da saznate šta internet zna o *vama*? Ja sam siguran da mnogi od *vas* jesu, i zato sam odlučio da pišem o ovoj temi i da *vam* pokažem i ovu stranu interneta a ne samo one dobre.

Ključne reči: Internet, privatnost, informacije, surfovanje, društvene mreže

The internet generally

It's new, it's different, and it's going to change just about everything. It's an amazing new Post Office. It's the biggest and best library there's ever been. It's the education of the future. It means hope, and empowerment. The last millennium ended with war, cruelty, poverty, hunger, injustice, inequality, exploitation, pollution, environmental destruction, mass extinction, global warming, a hole in the sky -- and the Internet, its saving grace.

What is the Internet as a matter of fact? Hardware - is the short answer. The Internet consists of a growing number of server computers and the telecommunications networks that connect them, using a technology called "packet-switching" that breaks up digital messages into bits, sends the bits via the most easily available routes and reassembles them at the other end. One of the greatest things about the Internet is that it really is a distributed, decentralized network -- nobody owns it and nobody can control it. It is a global collection of networks, both big and small. In fact, the very name comes from this idea of *interconnected* networks. When you connect to any website to read something, you are a user sitting at a client's machine. You are accessing that website's Web server. There are a number of valid claims to origins of the Internet but none of them is 100% certain. What is more, it is known that US government funded research programs which were involved in the beginnings of the Internet .

Benefits of the Internet

The Internet is possible to use for tons of good things . It has really improved and made life easier to all of its users. The most important and the most beneficial things that the Internet has brought to us are :

- Emailing and Instant messaging – no more postage, new free way allows us to electronically mail friends, family or anyone in the world with the Internet access, the Internet has made it possible for us to videochat with anyone using just a webcam and a mic via some programs, such as Skype, MSN, Yahoo!
- Free researching - thanks to google, getting *any* information and researching *anything* on the Internet is a cinch. We can, in a matter of seconds, get any information we need, anytime we want and, best of all, we get it free.
- Social networking - Facebook, Tweeter, Myspace, Google+ help us stay in contact with people we know and also meet new people.
- Online shopping - Ebay, Amazon made online shopping an easy thing.
- Job hunting – Looking for a new job? You can post your resume on tons of sites which seek for employees.
- Huge entertainment media – online games, videos, music, films, newspapers, magazines.

It's already changing the way people work, shop, interact with each other, with society, and with the environment. Ordering something from a website and having it sent

overnight uses much less energy than driving to the supermarket and back. For companies, building a website is a whole lot cheaper than building a retail outlet.

E-commerce also saves paper - one study showed that there are savings of almost 7 million tons of paper a year saving trees, energy, and 10 million tons of CO₂ emissions a year. The Internet is changing the way we think. It's the first medium that isn't passive: the Internet users are far more assertive than TV viewers, and it becomes a habit. Less and less do the Internet users fit the cosy idea of communities as mere "markets" of passive consumers. And a significant factor: children *love* the Internet as a mass media for entertainment.



The other side of the Internet

Apart from its benefits, the Internet has also brought us the negative impact that cannot be ignored. The thing I will focus on first is the security threats. The development of the Internet has also led to developing a lot of methods for accessing our personal information which I will try to explain in more details.

Every machine on the Internet has a unique identifying number, called an **IP Address**. The IP stands for **Internet Protocol**, which is the language that computers use to communicate over the Internet. This is your personal signature on the internet which can be also used to harm you .

According to one Wall Street Journal study, the top 50 Internet sites, from CNN and Yahoo to MSN, install an average of 64 data-laden cookies and personal tracking beacons each. Search for a word like "depression" on Dictionary.com, and the site installs up to 223 tracking cookies and beacons on your computer so that other Web sites can target you with antidepressants. The new Internet doesn't just know you're a dog; it knows your breed and wants to sell you a bowl of premium kibble.

The race to know as much as possible about *you* – the user - has become the central battle of the era for the Internet giants like Google, Facebook, Apple, and Microsoft. As Chris

Palmer of the Electronic Frontier Foundation explained: "You're getting a free service, and the cost is information about you. And Google and Facebook translate that pretty directly into money."

The digital technology transformed everything, allowing the Internet to record, store and visualize every detail of our lives, from sleep cycles to eating habits. The goal? Ultimate self-awareness and reflection. "We've arrived at a time when the memory of machines creates ideas we've never considered".

I dig that notion but would never wear a *Fitbit* (to track every step I take) or use a service like *Moodscope* (to log my emotions). I just want to do my thing while passively. If service called *Mint* has access to my bank accounts, the service can tell me how much I spent on food each month in 2011. But personal stuff is, of course, the ripest area for the Internet analysis. For an example, there is a service called *Graph Your Inbox*, an extension for Google Chrome. The tool lets you graph the frequency of words, email addresses, subject lines, ex-girlfriends, unpaid bills or whatever else is hiding in your inbox.

As a business strategy, the Internet giants' formula is simple: The more personally relevant their information offerings are, the more ads they can sell, and the more likely you are to buy the products they're offering.

And the formula works. Amazon sells billions of dollars worth of merchandise by predicting what each customer is interested in and putting it in the front of the virtual store.

The basic code at the heart of the new Internet is pretty simple. The new generation of the Internet filters looks at the things you seem to like -- the actual things you've done, or the things people similar to you like -- and tries to extrapolate. You don't choose to enter your information. When you turn on some online News or read newspaper online you're making a decision about what kind of filter to use to make sense of the world. It's an active process, and just as you would if you put on tinted glasses, you can guess how the editors' leaning shapes your perception. By definition, a world constructed from the familiar is a world in which there's nothing to learn. If our internet personalization is too acute, it could prevent us from coming into contact with the mind-blowing, preconception-shattering experiences and ideas that change how we think about the world and ourselves. It's not too late to make sure that personalization avoids these traps. But to change its course, we need more people to become educated about how and why the Web is being edited for them, and we need the companies doing this filtering to show us not just what we'll click most, but what we need to know. Otherwise, we could each find ourselves trapped in a bubble for one. Unfortunately not many people know about this, and the ones that do know simple ignore it, so we need to change this and develop a better consciousness about the Internet .

Social networks

Social networking sites are one of the best man made creations of the last decade. Its vastness provides endless opportunities, while it saves precious time, it **kills**, too. Its impact is on everyone. Well, it's true that a person looks ugliest in its ID and smartest in Facebook profile picture. It's good to be involved in and socialize, but overuse is most of the time misuse. We often come across those explicit contents, we can't get away with them, it happens accidentally or deliberately. This virtual world is not a real world, one should not wear a facade. It has become our household now, its worth depends on how we choose to use it.

The influence of social networks is a huge topic to discuss having both positive as well as adverse affect. There are tons of social networks, but the most popular are Facebook, Tweeter , Google+ and LinkedIn. Of all the social networks, Facebook is the only one that knows no generational limits. From grandparents to teenagers, Facebook — the largest of the social networks — attracts users of all ages. Facebook beats the other social networking sites by a long-shot, too. For an example 96 % of US online adults have an account on Facebook. In my region, Serbia is the country with the highest number of Facebook users. What is more, we are 18th in Europe concerning this topic. That is a really high position for a country with a pretty small number of Internet users.



Positive effects of social networks

- The act of migration causes families, friends, lovers, and other related people to stay separated by distance. Social networks have made communication to distant places affordable and convenient to people. Social networking is a positive communication tool because it allows people to communicate effectively regardless of the distance between them. Although it cannot replace the feeling of being home with one's family in person, the technology of, for example Skype,

has made it possible for many people to make free Internet voice and video calls. People will worry less about the cost and converse in a relaxed manner. This is especially important for students studying abroad.

- It is true that people in a relationship sometimes cannot see each other for a while, either because of the various work activities or the distance between them. The evolution of social networking has really contributed to strengthening the bond between these people by giving them access to communication regardless of the distance involved.
- Social networking, thanks to the Internet, has changed and revolutionized education around the world. People can now graduate with a degree without even visiting the university they earned the degree from. This evolution is also important to people who want to further their education while working a full-time job. These people can comfortably take classes when it is convenient for them, and also decide on the pace of their classes. It is also important for elderly people who need or want to get a degree.
- Another benefit to communicating through social networking sites is the promotion of education and news. People can share information via links, reviews and applications. They may source this information from other places and share them with others or provide their own information for education, updates of news or support.
- Other activities offered by social networking sites include such services as multiplayer online games, polls, chat rooms and messaging services, all of which endorse the idea of communicating and interacting with others. Customisation of user profiles, such as background images and page layouts also provides a way of interaction through expression (and sharing) of interests or the sharing of these graphics.

Negative effects of social networks

- Daily overuse of social networks has a negative effect on the health of all children, preteens and teenagers by making them more prone to anxiety, depression, and other psychological disorders, as well as by making them more susceptible to future health problems.
- Facebook or other social networks can be distracting and can negatively impact learning. Studies found that middle school, high school and college students who checked Facebook at least once during a 15-minute study period achieved lower grades.
- Spending a lot of time on social networks can also increase the anti social behavior, nowadays teens tend to replace a good face to face conversation with chatting online which cannot be good in any way .

- Probably the most negative effect of the social networks is trading people information as a product. If the services are free, then, how do social networking websites earn such staggering sums of money? The answer is that you, the social network user, is the product these online giants sell to generate revenue. According to BBC News, social networking sites are uniquely positioned to make money by matching people to products. Since you generate content on a social networking site that indicates your interests, social and work background, and a great deal of other information about your personal preferences, the social networking sites can target advertisements specifically to you, a service for which advertisers are willing to pay significant amounts of money.

Cyber crime

Cybercrime is criminal activity done using computers and the Internet. This includes anything from downloading illegal music files to stealing millions of dollars from online bank accounts. Reports of alleged cyber crimes have been a hot news item of late. In this part of my survey I will focus on the most prominent form of cyber crime, which is identity theft where criminals use the Internet to steal personal information. Identity theft is not strictly a digital crime, or even a new one. But the crime of stealing someone else's good name - and clean credit rating - has been supercharged by the current wave of technological innovation. Identity theft today victimizes an estimated 10 million Americans a year, making it one of the country's fastest-growing crimes. It's not hard to see why we've become more vulnerable: The percentage of the Internet users with always-on broadband connections nowadays, increased highly, and as our connections to the world of commerce become more digital, our vulnerability grows. As the Internet allows easy flow of information and commerce it also gives cyber criminals seemingly endless opportunities to take advantage of others. I will now explain you some of the most common ways for stealing your information.

“Phishing”

Phishers e-mail customers of an online business or bank in an attempt to fool them into divulging confidential personal and financial information.

“Trojan Horses”

These malicious files infiltrate your PC by hiding in seemingly innocuous documents. Some Trojans, called "keystroke loggers," record their victims' keystrokes and send them to an attacker.

“URL frauds”

Taking advantage of human error, some phishing e-mails guide recipients to fraudulent sites with names similar to established sites (e.g., "monneybank.com" versus "moneybank.com").

“Evil Twins”

An "evil twin" is a fake wireless the Internet hot spot that looks like a legitimate service. When a victim connects, the hacker can launch man-in-the-middle attacks on transactions on the Internet, or just ask for credit card information in the standard pay-for-access deal.

Because of endless ways of cyber criminals to steal your information I strongly recommend you to protect your „online“ self . These are some of my tips which will improve your security.

- Keep your antivirus and spyware software up-to-date and scan your computer regularly.
- Be wary of any e-mail asking you to provide personal or financial information. Banks and retailers almost never send e-mails urging customers to "update their account." If you have doubts about the authenticity of a message you've received, call the company that sent it.
- Many e-mail-borne viruses and worms require only a single click by you to install themselves. Also, if an e-mail automatically launches a Web page requesting login information, try re-entering the URL for the company manually.
- Always keep back up volumes so that one may not suffer data loss in case of virus contamination.
- Never send your credit card number to any site that is not secured, to guard against frauds.



A survey

I have conducted a survey and interviewed around 60 people within 15 to 18 years of age. I have asked them questions about social networks and awareness of the Internet crime. The questions were :

Do you have the Internet access at home?

Do you have a personal profile on any social network?

How much time do you approximately spend on your social network profiles?

Have you ever been a victim of cyber crime?

Are you aware of possibility of hijacking your personal information from the Internet?

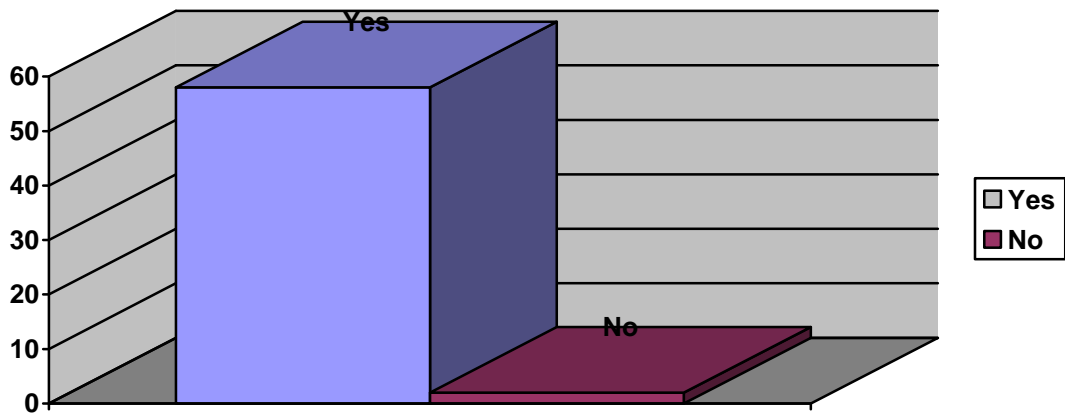
Have you noticed any changes in your behaviour or the behaviour of your friends when using the Internet a lot?

Are you aware of the danger you are exposing yourself on the Internet ?
 Are you using any kind of antivirus software on your computer?
 Do you know who to talk to if you encounter a problem?

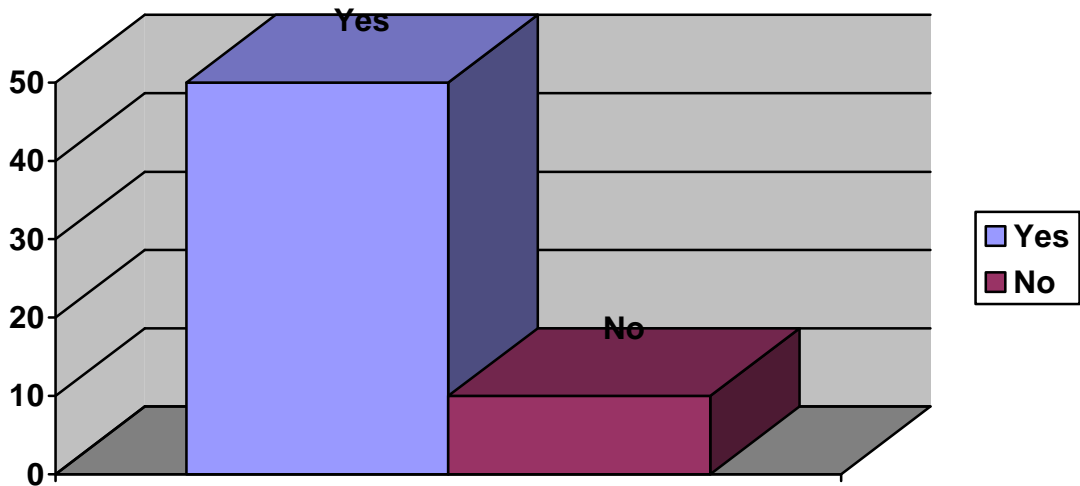
In this survey I have wanted to find out the amount of knowledge that young adults posses when it comes to the Internet generally, the time spent on it and social networks. I have also wanted to find out if young adults in my community are aware of the danger that the Internet presents. The survey's finding was not so supprising having in mind the level of will that our state is showing in informing us about the Internet and its bad sides.

These were the results:

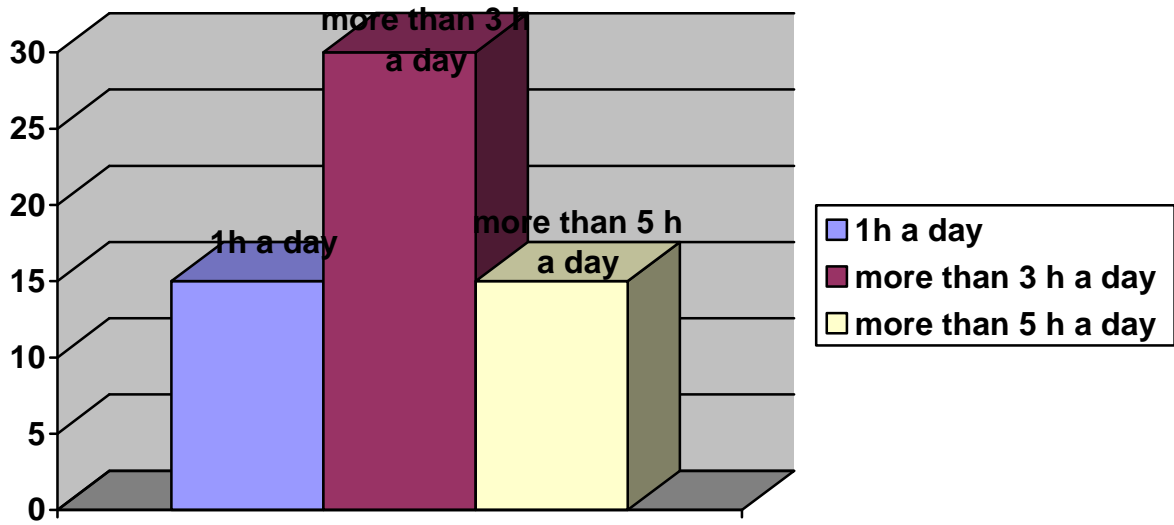
Do you have the Internet access at home ?



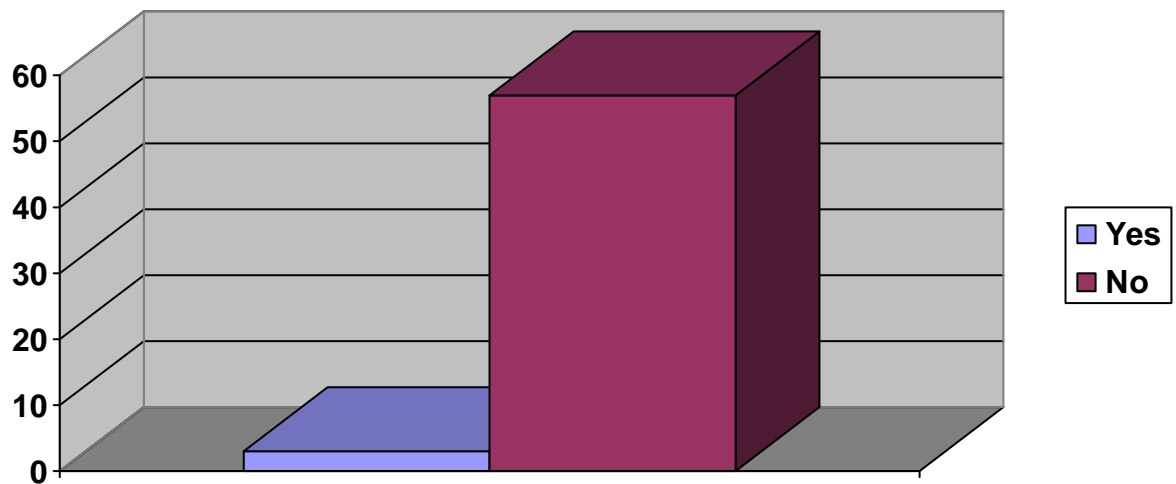
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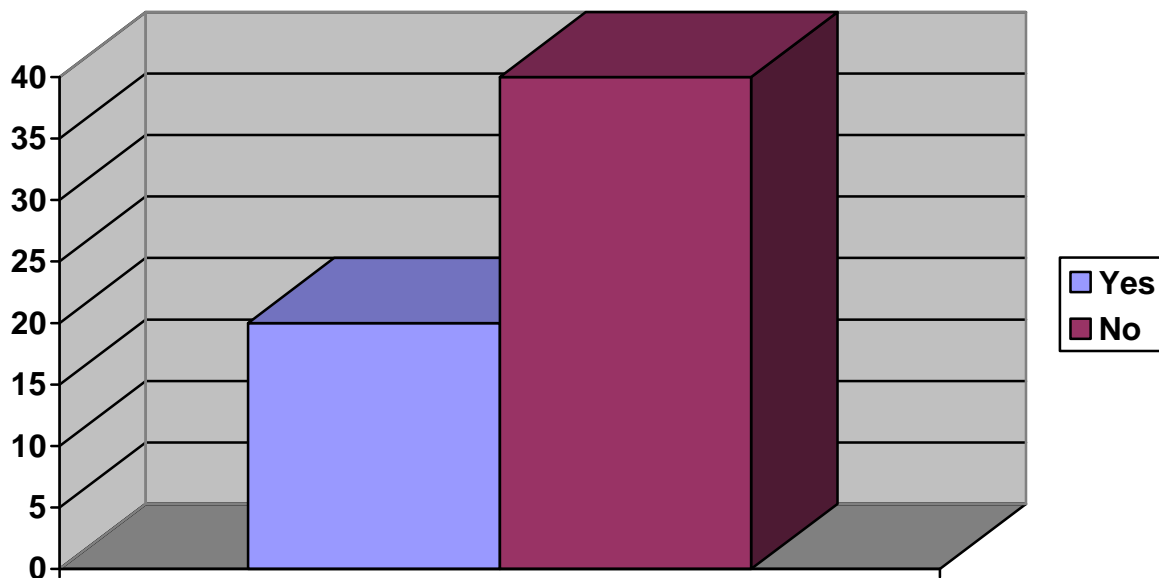
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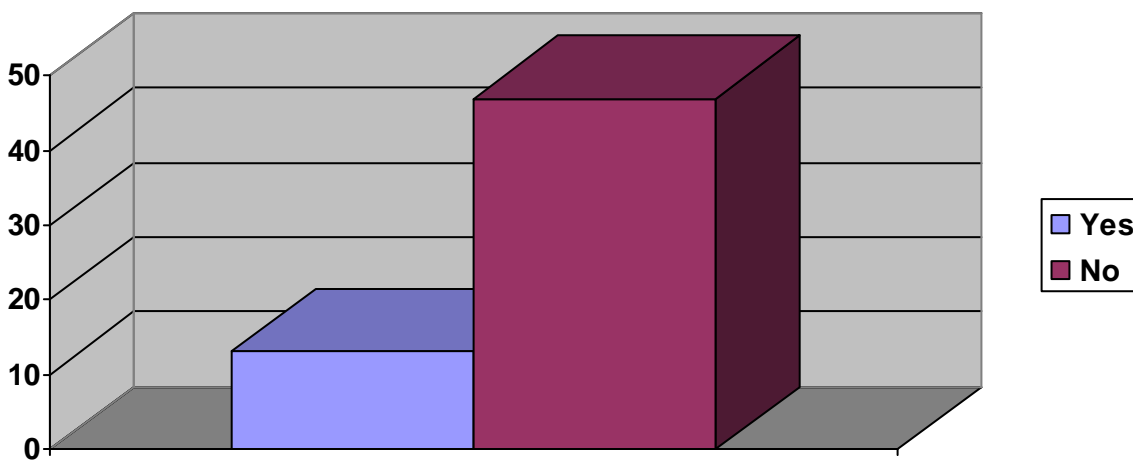
Have you ever been a victim of cyber crime ?



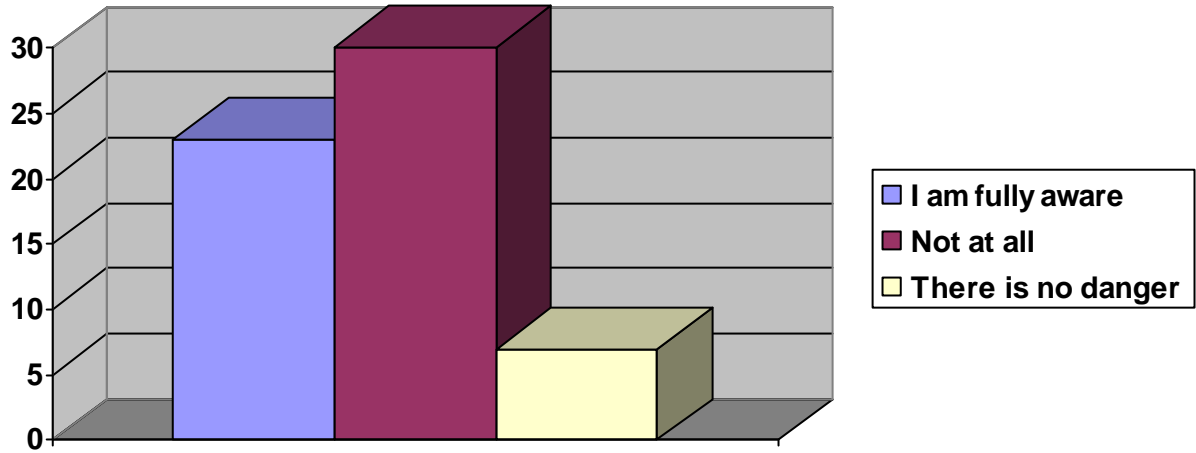
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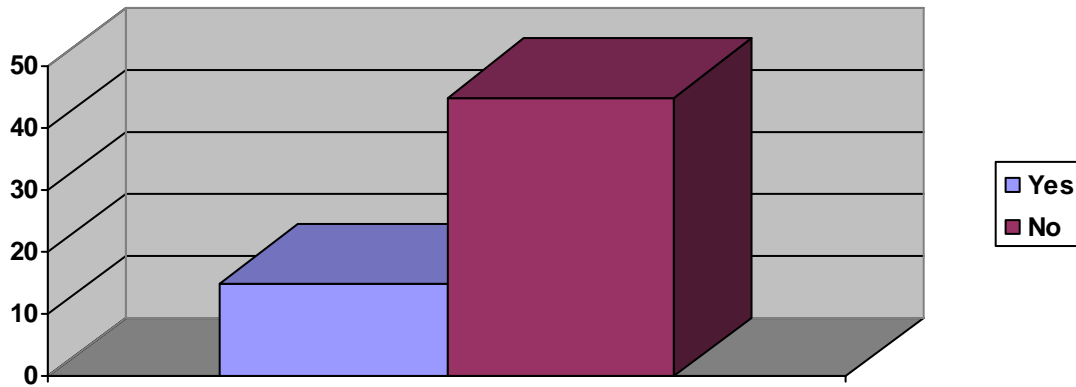
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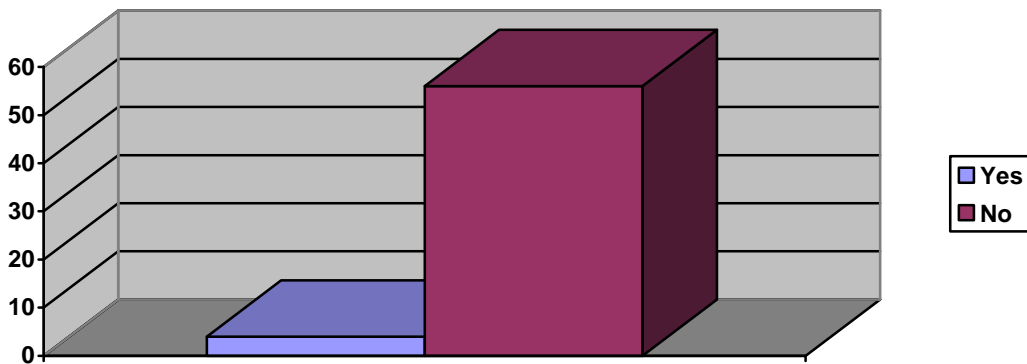
Are you aware of the danger you are exposing yourself on the Internet ?



Are you using any kind of antivirus software on your computer?



Do you know who to talk to if you encounter a problem?



By analyzing the results of this survey I have concluded that over 95% of students questioned have the Internet access and that over 70 % of them have at least one social network profile, what is more only 25 % of them spend about 1 hour a day "online" on the Internet which is not so good. Unfortunately, this survey has shown that there are a lot of things to be concerned about. Only 35 % of the students questioned are aware that their personal information on the Internet can easily be stolen and used against them, nevertheless another bad fact is that more than 70 % of them don't have any kind of antivirus protection which leaves their computer vulnerable to any form of cyber attacks. The most devastating facts are that more than 65 % of the students questioned aren't aware of the danger on the Internet or even think that the Internet cannot be dangerous for them at all. What is more, only 10% of the students asked know who to call if they become victims of the cyber crime. Looking at the bright side of this survey, over 90 % of students asked have never been the victims of cyber crime and an encouraging fact is that over 80% of them said that spending a lot of time on the Internet (e.g. social network) had not affected in any way their behaviour.

Conclusion

Recent technological developments have made, and are making the Internet available to more and more users every minute. The Internet is generally a fascinating thing. It has many great sides. However, its usefulness really depends on the way we use it. If we use it in a correct way we will benefit a lot. If we misuse it, we are the ones who can and *will* face the consequences. Whether you are aware of the vulnerability that you are exposing yourself every moment while you are online on the Internet or not, you should try to do everything that you can to protect yourself from the danger that is more and more present even now as we speak. In this essay I have tried to show you in brief some general facts about the Internet and to increase the amount of information that you possess about the Internet's bad sides. Unfortunately, as we have concluded from my survey the level of students awareness about this fact is really low which I personally find really concerning. The Internet is becoming the town square for the global village of tomorrow that is why we urgently need to make it safe to all of us. Therefore as Dan Millman said: "I have an almost religious zeal - not for technology per se, but for the Internet which is for me, the nervous system of mother Earth, which I see as a living creature, linking up."

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Filip
Šušulic

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