Gen Launches Scam Artists to Highlight Emotional Toll of Cybercrime Through Creative Artwork

2024-07-10

69% of Americans surveyed believe they could be vulnerable to cybercrime; award-winning psychologist Lee Chambers explains what stops people from acting

TEMPE, Ariz. and PRAGUE, July 10, 2024 /PRNewswire/ -- Gen™ (NASDAQ: GEN), a global leader dedicated to powering Digital Freedom, has launched Scam Artists, an educational campaign using art to visually demonstrate the emotional impact of cybercrime. In collaboration with award-winning psychologist Lee Chambers, the campaign shines a light on the inherent human instincts that often result in complacent behavior when it comes to digital safety. This campaign aims to help people recognize the need to be proactive about online protection to maintain control, confidence and freedom in the digital world.

To showcase cybercrime's impact, three victims of scams and identity theft were equipped with Electroencephalography (EEG) headsets to monitor their brain reactions to their experiences. They were prompted to recall their emotional states before, during and after the attacks, with the final session occurring after introductions to cyber protection. The headsets recorded how the brain reacted to each state and transformed the data into creative visuals.

The artwork included shows Lynn's emotional reactions to the prompts. State one indicates relaxation, state two shows links with anxious thinking and stress after recalling the incident, and state three suggests a return to relaxation and psychological wellbeing when presented with solutions for Cyber Safety.

"Experiencing a cyberattack is traumatic and will cause a negative emotional response," said Lee Chambers, psychologist and wellbeing expert. "When the victims were asked to recall their experiences of cybercrime, the resulting artwork showed an eruption of brain activity that is often associated with stress, anxiety, and uncertainty – feelings that can be long-lasting and have a significant life impact. Often, when we think we have control, or perceive an event as unlikely, it can encourage excessive optimism and an inadequate assessment of risk, a trait known as optimism bias. As cybercrime increases, it's important to recognize these tendencies, assess situations from all angles, and take the necessary steps to alleviate the threat."

As part of the campaign, new research was conducted to uncover people's feelings toward cyberthreats and cyber protection. Over two thirds (69%) of American's surveyed believe they could be vulnerable to cybercrime, and of the respondents who have suffered cyberattacks, anger (56%) and stress (51%) were the top two emotions felt. The research also revealed that only half (52%) have some form of cybersecurity solution, and nearly two-thirds (63%) agreed that understanding optimism bias will make them more likely to consider cybersecurity measures to protect themselves.

"Cyberthreats today are bigger, more widespread, and more sophisticated than ever before, and they are here to stay," said Leena Elias, Chief Product Officer at Gen. "In fact, last year Gen blocked more than 14 billion attacks. We're focused on helping people to feel confident engaging with the digital world with solutions that

help protect against evolving and emerging threats. Our mission is to provide peace of mind. This campaign brings to life the harmful effects of cybercrime but also the positive impact on wellbeing that proper online protection provides."

To learn more about the Scam Artists campaign and view all the artwork, visit GenDigital.com. For more background on the victim stories and how Gen helps protect people from the impact of scams and identity theft through its family of consumer brands including Norton, Avast and LifeLock, visit the links below:

- Moya Crockett, scam victim
- Kyle Frank, small business scam victim
- Lynn Beattie, identity theft victim

About Gen
Gen™ (NASDAQ: GEN) is a global company dedicated to powering Digital Freedom through its trusted Cyber Safety brands, Norton, Avast, LifeLock, Avira, AVG, ReputationDefender and CCleaner. The Gen family of consumer brands is rooted in providing safety for the first digital generations. Now, Gen empowers people to live their digital lives safely, privately, and confidently today and for generations to come. Gen brings award-winning products and services in cybersecurity, online privacy and identity protection to nearly 500 million users in more than 150 countries. Learn more at GenDigital.com.

About the Scam Artists Study
This research was conducted within the United States by Gen in March 2024 among 1,000 people.

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