

# 2022 US Trends Study



## U.S. trends to watch in 2022:

1. While life online is loaded with conveniences, they're not enough. People want to be secure.
2. Consumers want a protected connection, even if it costs them.
3. Gamers will take a pass on so-called "free" videogames.
4. AI monitoring of healthcare? Not so fast.
5. Cryptocurrency fraud like the "Squid Game" scam will sour consumer taste for fintech.
6. Vax cards are the new credit cards, and Americans want them protected.
7. Online learning and consultations will increasingly take root with consumers—above and beyond COVID necessities.

## Top 7 Trends Explained

### **While life online is loaded with conveniences, they're not enough. People want to be secure.**

Security, and the feeling people get from it, appears to have an intrinsic value. In a series of "either, or" questions, consumers repeatedly chose protection over convenience.

For example, when asked to choose between connecting with others from anywhere to always being fully protected, the response was heavily in favor of strong protection

(63%) over ease of connection (16%). The same sentiment extended to the workplace, where "work meetings that are guaranteed seamless" trailed significantly at 14% versus "meetings that are guaranteed secure" at 62%.

### **Consumers want a protected connection, even if it costs them.**

Security appears to have a distinct dollar value as well. When asked to choose between cost savings and their security, consumers still favored protection, overwhelmingly so:

## About this study

- In November 2021, McAfee, LLC conducted a study about possible shifts in needs, attitudes and actions around online safety.
- From multiple countries, 10,000 individuals, between 20 and 60 years old, participated in the study.
- This factsheet reflects the survey responses received from 1,000 respondents in the US.

## STUDY

- In the toss-up between being offered zero-fee banking or utterly secure banking, only 18% opted for zero fees while 59% went with their security.
- 63% said they would pay an extra 10% for a secure purchase—whereas only 10% said they would risk leaking contact information for a purchase at a lower price.

Beyond expressing a stated preference for security in their online banking and shopping, consumers will additionally pay for apps and services that protect them. More than half of consumers said they addressed their security and privacy risks by using new tools on their devices—such as a VPN, antivirus apps, firewalls, credit monitoring services, and so forth.

### **Gamers will take a pass on so-called “free” videogames.**

Privacy remains a major consumer issue, with 41% of respondents saying they feel the risks to their online privacy have increased. Gamers who were surveyed share this feeling as well, particularly in a landscape [where many so-called “free” games actually have a hidden price—the capture and possible resale of personal information to third parties.](#)

When made aware of potential privacy issues, most gamers in our survey said they will protect themselves. The survey asked if they would “try the newest online game by sharing your personal information” (18%) or “don’t

share your info” and not play the game. Only 18% were willing to share their personal info, while the clear majority of 59% said they were not willing to trade their privacy for a game.

With 34% of U.S. consumers saying they expect to game more online in 2022, the topic of online games and privacy deserves increased coverage. Provided they have an awareness of the issues at hand, gamers (and in many cases, their parents) can make better decisions on which games to play and which ones to avoid.

### **AI monitoring of healthcare? Not so fast.**

Consumers embraced online healthcare services (doctor, hospital, treatments, etc.) out of a mix of convenience (38%) and COVID-related necessity (56%) and will continue to do so—within limits.

In our survey, 45% of consumers said that they shared personal or sensitive information about themselves or their family by way of online healthcare services, such as health status and health monitoring information. However, when asked if they would trust the monitoring of their healthcare to AI or simply stick with healthcare data that’s shared privately and securely, only 10% were willing to try AI whereas a full 69% simply wanted their info kept private and secure.

Even with this hesitancy, 31% said that “new features and services” in online healthcare would be a reason for them to either continue

with online healthcare or try it for the first time—indicating a climate with room for innovation.

### **Cryptocurrency fraud like the “Squid Game” scam will sour consumer taste for fintech.**

Already, 42% of those surveyed feel that their personal and financial information is particularly at risk. Yet this feeling of risk will increase as consumers increasingly participate in the burgeoning fintech market and face a new wave of attacks that target their virtual assets and cryptocurrencies.

Bogus cryptocurrencies will crop up, like [the “Squid Game” crypto that falsely capitalized on the name of the legitimate Netflix hit.](#) Likewise, consumers who make new investments in established cryptocurrencies and NFTs will find their crypto accounts prone to attack by cybercriminals looking to capitalize on this trend.

And the popularity of fintech is most certainly exploding:

- 52% of respondents stated that they created new accounts or logins associated with cryptocurrencies and virtual assets.
- 41% of crypto enthusiasts reported storing new digital property on their device in 2021.
- A further 42% said they keep personal data, shopping or transactions data, or records of conversations on their device, making such devices an attractive target for cybercriminals.

## STUDY

### **Vax cards are the new credit cards, and consumers in the US want them protected.**

The need for digital vaccine passports will continue, and Americans will want to ensure that their identity is protected. Nearly a third of respondents (30%) said that they expect increases in tracking vaccine status and storing proof of vaccination in 2022. However, they also expressed concerns that COVID-related online activities could potentially lead to data privacy issues or possible identity theft.

The survey further found:

- 51% of respondents said they would prefer the convenience of a digital vaccine passport.
- Only 25% said they preferred a paper copy.

### **Online learning and consultations will increasingly take root with consumers—above and beyond COVID necessities.**

Americans are showing more and more willingness to learn online and seek out online mental health consultations, at least in certain cases. While COVID-related concerns remain a driver for this increase (49%), a significant number of respondents cited convenience and time savings as a reason to seek out these services online (31%).

The survey also revealed that:

- 40% of respondents would be willing to visit a free online therapist with a small risk of that consultation leaking. By contrast, 39% said they preferred an in-person interaction.
- 30% said they'd be willing to learn online from the best experts, while 45% still preferred local teachers and records that cannot be hacked.



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