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## Confidentially Yours, Symantec

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**Abstract:** Traditional security products simply do not protect consumers against identity theft and loss of confidential information from phishing, pharming and crimeware attacks. ESG believes that Symantec's new Norton Confidential and Norton Confidential Online Edition are ground-breaking products in the battle to protect the confidential information of online consumers while conducting financial transactions.

Consumers do not have the benefit of experienced IT teams and layers of best of breed security products to protect their identities and secure their home computers. Standalone security products simply cannot protect consumers against identity theft and loss of confidential information from phishing, pharming and crimeware attacks. The solution to effective consumer protection entails proactive cooperation between consumer security software, enterprise security mechanisms and applied security threat intelligence services. The Symantec Corporation is on a strategic mission to make the Internet safe for consumers for work, play, banking, shopping or social networking. ESG believes that Norton Confidential and Norton Confidential Online Edition are ground-breaking releases in the battle to protect the confidential information of online consumers while conducting financial transactions.

### Consumer Identity at Risk

Consumers can be easily tricked into inadvertently submitting confidential information to rogue web sites. The technical problem with protecting personal information against crimeware, phishing and pharming attacks is that not all participants in the attack are executing security software. It is the ability to differentiate between a legitimate web site and its criminal twin that makes securing consumer transactions a difficult challenge that is best met by an independent security vendor. Briefly, crimeware, phishing and pharming are summarized as:

- **Crimeware** is malicious code created with the intent of financial gain that steals confidential information from the consumer's desktop. Crimeware can take many forms, including key loggers that record passwords as they are typed, memory mappers that copy credit card numbers from internal locations and active code that transparently submits transactions. Crimeware is best detected, and can only be removed, with client-based security software.
- **Phishing and Pharming** are attacks intended to dupe consumers into entering confidential information into rogue web sites. These attacks redirect the consumer's browsing session to a rogue site, where the unsuspecting consumer may give a username/password to login or identify themselves with private information such as an account number, data of birth and social security number. Since there is no security dialog between the web site and consumer, the consumer never knows that they have just given confidential data to a rogue site.

Symantec's Norton Confidential meets a critical requirement by providing for secure conversations to take place between a consumer and legitimate web site, and to identify when a consumer may be connected to a rogue web site. *Norton Confidential acts on behalf of the consumer to ensure that attacks by crimeware, phishing or pharming are thwarted.*

### What's Exciting about Norton Confidential

Symantec's consumer security vision is a comprehensive approach to providing consumers with a safe environment for browsing, shopping, banking, socializing and working from home. The front end for consumer protection for Internet transactions is Norton Confidential. ESG believes that consumers will respond positively to the unobtrusive user experience of Norton Confidential and will appreciate the security attention in

protecting their confidential information. The role of security is to protect the users, and not force them to have to discriminate between legitimate web sites and phishing or pharming attacks. Symantec Norton Confidential takes this consumer-friendly approach with the following prime features:

- Norton Confidential self-activates when the consumer is presented input forms for confidential information. At this point, Confidential initiates safety checks that include scanning every executing process for eavesdropping crimeware activity and authenticating web sites to detect phishing and pharming attacks. The product keeps out of the way of the consumer's computing experience until needed to protect identity information.
- Symantec authenticates SSL pages of select web sites before allowing consumer credentials to be transmitted. Norton Confidential approves communications with legitimate businesses that have registered their web sites with an established certification authority, without having to rely on behavior heuristics. This effectively refutes pharming and other types of misdirection attacks in a way that desktop-only solutions cannot do.
- The full power of Symantec's threat services come into play for web sites that do not possess an approved certificate. In this case, the Symantec service checks the list of known phishing sites and also scans the web site for traits indicative of phishing or pharming. The service leverages Symantec's worldwide threat monitoring network to rapidly mobilize consumer defenses against new phishing attacks. Norton Confidential does not allow the consumer to even enter data to an identified rogue web site.
- Norton Confidential Online is a lightweight version of Norton Confidential suitable for download from financial institutions and online retailers. ESG believes that enterprises need to drive the solutions for phishing and pharming attacks to protect their consumers - distributing Norton Confidential Online features with business applications will become one of security's best practices.
- Norton 360 is a robust security suite that integrates Confidential with system security (such as antivirus, anti-spyware), backup and restore and PC performance optimization. This is an integrated solution that gives consumers blanket protection in addition to the transactional protection afforded by Norton Confidential.
- Providing Norton Confidential as a subscription service allows consumers and businesses to get the value of Symantec's threat network without software upgrades or modifications. The ability to automatically receive enhanced services is a clear benefit to subscribers.
- Symantec is embarking on innovative education programs to teach consumers the traits and perils of attacks, such as phishing. ESG thinks this is a pretty cool approach that will benefit everyone in the consumer household.

This is a very good start by Symantec, and if they execute well, Norton Confidential can have a great impact on the manner in which consumers conduct financial transactions on the web. ESG believes that Norton Confidential has the potential to set a market trend by being offered to all consumers as a Symantec security subscription.

### **The Bottom Line**

The Symantec approach to consumer protection, leading with Norton Confidential, is serious stuff. The three-prong approach, led by Norton Confidential and Norton Confidential Online Edition, covers consumer desktops, enterprise web sites and Symantec threat intelligence services. This is an approach that Symantec is well positioned to deliver to the market. ESG recommends that consumers conducting online banking or shopping evaluate Norton Confidential to implement extra protection for their identities. This is a good approach that Symantec is introducing, and the integrated approach to protecting consumers is the type of leadership that consumers like to see from Symantec.

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