

## **DID YOU KNOW?**

### **There are approximately 206 million adults in the U. S.:**

- 144 million credit card users in US (70% of US adult population)
- 1.3 billion credit cards in circulation (end of 2003, growing)
- 154.5 million US adults are eligible for credit (75% of US adult population)
- 82 million full time workers in US (40% of US adult population)

70% of US adults use credit cards. That means they have a credit history which can be exploited by identity thieves. Anyone with decent credit can apply for more credit and easily obtain it—you don't even have to be fully employed; or, in the case of identity theft, you don't even have to be who you claim to be.

### **At least 48,606,000 identifying records have been stolen or lost since last year. Some of the bigger heists include:**

- 40 million credit card numbers (Cardsystems—stolen from database)
- 3.9 million financial records (CitiFinancial—lost in transit)
- 150,000 individuals' records (ChoicePoint—sold to a suspected criminal company)
- 310,000 individuals' records (LexisNexis—stolen from database)
- 1.4 million credit card numbers (DSW Shoe Warehouse—stolen from database)
- 100,000 individuals' records (UC Berkeley—stolen computer)
- 676,000 individuals' financial records (Wachovia/Bank of America/Commerce—stolen by employees)
- 1.2 million government worker records (BofA—lost backup tapes)
- 600,000 employee records (Time Warner—lost)
- 270,000 applicant records (USC—stolen from database)

This only represents the records stolen in bulk last year. This does not include any “dumpster diving,” “phishing,” “pharming,” or “pretexting” done on an individual level. Because the victim most often has no clue he or she has become a victim, these crimes often go unreported.

### **There will be approximately 10,000,000 victims of identity theft this year:**

- 27,400 every day
- 1,140 every hour
- 19 every minute
- 1 new victim every 3 seconds

### **Identity Theft Is Underreported:**

Of the 10 million Americans that the Federal Trade Commission estimates were the victims of identity theft in 2005, only 255,565 filed complaints with the FTC. Of those 255,565, less than 100,000 notified their local police department of the theft, making identity theft one of the most underreported offenses in the country. It is estimated that over 100,000 cases of identity theft in Wisconsin go unreported each year.