



SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS URGED TO PROTECT PERSONAL INFORMATION BASED ON RESEARCH SHOWING THEM AT GREATER FRAUD RISK OF IDENTITY FRAUD

WASHINGTON, DC, March 10, 2010 – Small business owners have a higher risk of identity fraud than other adults according to a recent study co-sponsored by ITAC, the Identity Theft Assistance Center, and The Financial Services Roundtable.

The Javelin Strategy & Research 2010 *Identity Fraud Survey Report* found that overall identity fraud grew by 14% in 2009 to 11.1 million adults, in part due to the economic downturn. “The higher incidence of identity fraud is probably due to the fact that small business owners have more accounts and conduct more transactions,” said ITAC President Anne Wallace. “ITAC and its member companies are reaching out to help small business owners protect themselves from identity fraud.”

“Small businesses are the drivers of the economy and job growth. In addition to funding small business, financial services companies are working to protect small business owners against fraud,” said Steve Bartlett, President and CEO of The Financial Services Roundtable.

ITAC and the Roundtable encourage small business owners to protect personal information online and offline, protect computers with software to fight viruses and malware, sign up for electronic statements and account alerts to help detect fraud quickly, and report suspicious activity quickly. “The Javelin report shows that costs – for consumers and for institutions – increase dramatically as time passes,” said Wallace.

“Identity thieves target small businesses to exploit their lines of credit, cash reserves and business relationships,” said Stephen A. Cox, President and CEO of the Council of Better Business Bureaus. “It’s important for small business owners to realize that they are not alone and there are many resources available online for free, including BBB’s [Data Security-Made Simpler](#), which can help them fight back against hackers and data thieves.”

For more information on identity theft prevention, detection and recovery, visit www.identitytheftassistance.org and www.bbb.org/data-security/.

About ITAC

ITAC, the Identity Theft Assistance Center, is a nonprofit coalition of financial services companies that display the ITAC logo to demonstrate their commitment to protecting customers from identity theft. ITAC’s victim assistance service – which has helped more than 60,000 consumers recover from identity theft – is available at no cost to the millions of consumers who have an account at an ITAC member company. Through its partner Intersections Inc., ITAC offers the ITAC Sentinel® identity management service (www.itacsentinel.com).

Contact :

Kate Ennis

(301) 580-6726

kate@enniscommunications.com