PC Tools™: 1 in 4 Americans Online During March College Basketball Championships

SAN FRANCISCO -- (BUSINESS WIRE) -- Online activity spikes this Sunday as the tournament brackets are announced. College basketball fever hits as fans go crazy researching teams and players for their top pool “winning picks.” Today, PC Tools™ announced the findings of its March college basketball survey conducted by TNS Global. The national independent omnibus poll of 1,000 U.S. adults reveals online behaviors related to March’s big college basketball tournament and the results show that Americans are watching games or viewing sports-related content online.

* Nearly one in four Americans (24.4%) report they are online while watching basketball on TV, with men watching up to three hours a day of sports games or highlights on their computers.

* Fans are increasingly watching games online, with over 41% citing the convenience over TV, followed by less advertising (24.5%), being at work (18.6%) and favoring the interactive capabilities of watching sports online (13.9%).

* The most common online activity while watching basketball on TV is chatting with friends via instant messaging, followed by watching online shows and videos, and of course, trash-talking through social networking. Other popular online activities included flirting, checking statistics, looking at betting lines and hooking up.

* When it came to the best spot to check scores, the number one place was at work, especially for those under fifty. The toilet was the second favorite place to check scores, especially with those under thirty. Sports fans also checked scores when driving, when someone wants to talk about feelings, in arguments with a significant other or when their boss was talking. Church was the least popular place to check scores.

“Our survey findings show that college basketball fans are online constantly during the championships. They need a good defense against cybercriminals lurking online with credit card scams, spreading malware through social networks, or installing bots to steal your personal data or identity,” said Morgan Hudson, PC Tools Director of Marketing. “People can defend themselves by making sure their online protection software, like PC Tools™ Internet Security 2011, is running with real-time updates.”

“Sports fans want their online news, highlights and stats immediately without any lags or delays,” Hudson added. “They can speed up their PC and give their system a powerful boost simply by using performance software like PC Tools™ Performance Toolkit 2011.”

To ensure the best tournament experience, PC Tools recommends six tips to avoid

the madness.

BLOCK OUT POP-UP ADS AND VIDEOS

Avoid clicking pop –up ads and videos promoting “cheerleaders,” “watch game replays” or “player or celebrity” ads or apps because they may download viruses or other malware. Run up-to-date antivirus software to keep your systems safe and protected. PC Tools Internet Security 2011 protects against web-based attacks like phishing attempts and malicious downloads before they infect your system.

PICK AND ROLL THREATS BEFORE THEY ATTACK

As fans furiously research the teams, players and bracket predictions, they may click on less reputable sports sites. These sites may launch spyware, malware and other malicious exploits to attack users. Browser Defender protects against web-based attacks like phishing attempts and malicious downloads before they infect your system.

BOX OUT FAKE AV ALERTS WHILE BROWSING

While checking the latest brackets and scores, do not click on the pop up alerts “You’re Not Protected, Install Antivirus Protection. Click Here.” These are fake AV programs with malicious spyware, malware and bots that infect your system and steal your personal information.

SLAM DUNK SUSPICIOUS MESSAGES

When a friend sends you a link or a strange message via IM or a social network site, don’t click on the link - especially if it has an .exe suffix or a foreign country suffix from top malware-producing countries like China or Russia (.cn and .ru). Hidden malware can creep into your system so set your automatic security scans.

FAST BREAK WITH HIGH PERFORMANCE

Top athletes and division winning teams work out to maintain strength and speed on the courts. PC optimization software, like PC Tools Performance Toolkit 2011, improves performance and optimizes browsers for optimal use.

CRUSH OPPONENTS WITH A POWERFUL DEFENSE

Prevent cyber criminals from taking your credit card and other personal information via scams and drive-by-downloads. Install real-time security and firewall software to block unauthorized users from gaining access to your computer. Use PC Tools Spyware Doctor Antivirus 2011 and PC Tools™ Firewall Plus 7 available on: http://cts

.businesswire.com/ct/CT?id=smartlink&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.pctools.com&esheet=6640377&lan=en-US&anchor=www.pctools.com&index=4&md5=d495217a45dfc71933fad7f7d84aa2de

This survey was conducted by TNS between February 17 – 20, 2011 on the Online Express Omnibus among 1,000 adults age 18 years and over.

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