4.5 million smartphones were lost or stolen in US in 2013

April 20 2014

A report released Thursday said 4.5 million smartphones were lost or stolen in the U.S. last year, up from 2.8 million in 2012.

Thefts were largely responsible for the increase in devices that were permanently separated from their owners, according to Consumer Reports' annual State of the Net Survey. The organization, which tests products, said device thefts nearly doubled from 1.6 million in 2012 to 3.1 million in 2013.

The number of lost devices increased from 1.2 million in 2012 to 1.4 million in 2013. More than 3,100 adults in the U.S. participated in the Consumer Reports survey that was used to calculate the figures.

"Our survey revealed that the number of lost and stolen smartphones is on the rise, and too many smartphone users are needlessly imperiling their personal data by not taking basic security measures," said Glenn Derene, Consumer Reports' electronics editor.

Consumer Reports recommends that at the minimum consumers secure their smartphones by setting up a four-digit lock code.

The survey comes shortly after top phone manufacturers and wireless carriers announced their commitment to begin including basic anti-theft tools on all smartphones made after July 2015 for sale in the U.S. These tools will enable users to remotely lock their devices as well as remotely erase any data on the phones.

Backing the commitment were Apple, Samsung, Google, Microsoft and several other companies.

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