

# In Brief: Britain cautions risks of Internet use

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Consumers can best protect themselves online with self-regulation, Britain's Office of Communications said in a report Wednesday.

In its study on consumer protection on the Internet, Ofcom said consumers "expect to be protected from fraud and other forms of harm whether online or not. Inappropriate content should be prevented from reaching children and illegal content, of which child pornography is an obvious example, should be removed from view."

The agency pointed out that the open nature of the Internet has many consumers wary of undertaking transactions online, with only 28 percent of users willing to disclose credit-card information. Meanwhile, identity theft and phishing are becoming increasingly common, and unilateral national-level approaches to blocking or removing illegal and harmful content "are of limited effectiveness without international cooperation."

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