



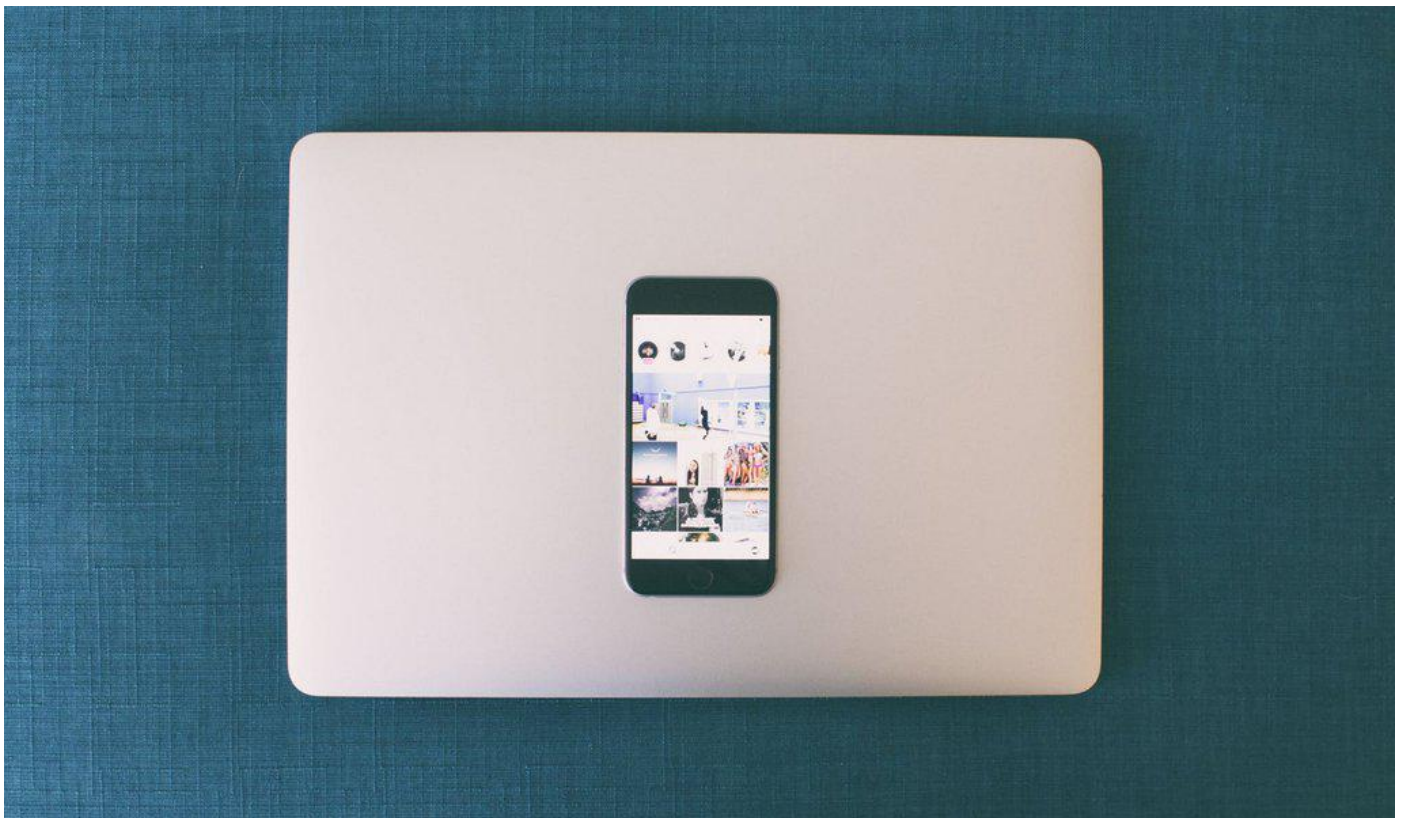
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TECH

Study: Malware Infections Drop During Lent

Trend May Be Connected to Refraining From Online Porn During 40-Day Religious Observance

March 21, 2018 12:39 PM — Tech — By Michael French



CYBERSPACE—With eight days remaining in the Christian fasting period **known as Lent**, one study claims to have shown that the 40-day religious observance has helped internet users protect their computers from dangerous viruses and other malware—by giving up porn. At least during Lent.

According to the study conducted by **Enigma Software Group**, since Lent began on February 14, malware infections have seen a 17 percent decline across the United States.

The largest drops were seen in Pittsburgh, where malware infections fell by 38 percent since the start of Lent; Boston, where they dropped 36 percent; and New York, where they fell by 31 percent. All of those cities have large Catholic populations, the group most likely to observe Lent.

So what does this apparent good news for internet users have to do with porn? As [AVN.com reported](#) earlier this month, a study by the online security firm Kaspersky Labs showed that more than a million users contracted malware infections on their computers and net-connected mobile devices last year alone, from visiting porn sites —particularly fake porn sites set up by cybercriminals for the single reason of infecting victims with malware.

While not every observant Christian fasts during Lent, most give up some regular habit for the 40-day period leading up to Easter. The drop in malware infections may be related to individuals refraining en masse from visiting porn sites during lent, according to ESG.

“It’s very common for people who participate in Lenten activities to curtail usage of things like social media and technology in general in the weeks leading up to Easter,” [ESG’s Ryan Gerding explained](#). “They may also reduce the amount of time spent on adult websites, which are common sources of malware infections.”

The 17 percent drop in malware infections is slightly up from last year, when infections dropped 14 percent during Lent, ESG found.

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