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Fraudsters Target Online Car Sales

By Jim Limerick

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There is a growing car shipping scam on the internet which has been targeting sellers of cars, boats, motorbikes and other single high value items, even horses !

We first came across this in January when we were approached by a car dealer in Australia who had been directed to a website purporting to be 1st Move International's car shipping site.

Car Shipping Scam: The hook

Fraudsters had copied aspects of our site and were advising potential victims that they would buy their vehicle and ship it via their approved shippers, pointing the victim to this so called shipping site which they had published themselves.

Once the seller had been "hooked" the fraudster then sends a cheque to the seller for the cost of the vehicle and, very kindly, includes in this payment the costs for shipping the vehicle overseas.

Car Shipping Scam: The Con.

Say the car is being sold for £ 4000.00 and the shipping costs are £1000.00, you, the seller, get a nice little cheque for £ 5000.00 which you duly bank. The bank may even advise you that the funds are in your account, cleared and safe.

Car Shipping Scam: The Sting.

Within a few days you will be asked to send a slice of this money to the shipping agent in order to pay for the shipping. (the shipping costs of £1000.00)

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You are requested to send this money by Moneygram which you do as you have been paid.. This Moneygram is untraceable and cashed immediately.

Meanwhile your bank tells you 10 days later that the original cheque has bounced and promptly takes the money out of your account.

You have just been conned. For £ 1000.00 !

Good advice.

Always, always, get your bank to confirm, in writing, that funds have cleared, are available for use and cannot be taken back from your account. Be cautious of overcomplicated transactions involving shipping agents, business partners, middle men and so on, all designed to leave you seriously out of pocket, and the crooks with your cash.

As with all online transactions please check the credentials of who are you are dealing with. If it sounds to good to be true, then it normally is.

UK shipping companies, or Freight Forwarders, belong to the British International Freight Association (BIFA). You can check their site here: www.bifa.org. Better still why not call the shipping agent personally and check them out. They do a good job and will be happy to help and advise on all things shipping.

This article has been written by Jim Limerick, managing director of 1st Move International Removals () and Autoshippers UK ().

Members of the British International Freight Association., Membership Number 1884

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How To Make Sure You Don't Fall For A Credit Card Scam

By Joseph Kenny

Credit card fraudsters are having to up their game and are becoming ever more ingenious with the scams they try to pull off. As a UK credit cardholder you need to staying on your toes and ahead of the game. You need to ensure you keep up to date with all the different types of credit card scams that fraudsters might try on you. In this regard we are fairly lucky in the UK in that most UK credit card frauds have been tried previously elsewhere, notably the Unites States.

The following are some general tips to ensure that you do not fall foul of any fraudster:

Phishing Phonecalls

Never give your credit card number to anyone who phones you asking for these details unless you are certain that the call is a genuine call. Currently a number of fraudster are trying to get UK credit cardholders to give them vital information about their credit cards by `cold' calling and asking for these details on the pre-fix that a fraud has been carried out on the card. If you are in any doubt about the genuineness of a call, tell the caller you will phone them back and then independently check the number you need to call.

You Need My Personal Details?

Never respond to an email asking you for personal financial information. Always remember that banks and UK credit card providers will never solicit this information from you in an e-mail as they're fully aware of the dangers of phishing scam e-mails.

Phishing Emails

Never click on a link in an e-mail if you are not sure of the genuineness of the e-mail sender. More and more fraudsters are obtaining vital personal information about credit cardholders by persuading them to click on e-mail links and complete bogus online forms.

Dispose Your Statemenst Carefully

Never throw your card statement away in the rubbish bin. It may be hard to believe, but it is known that credit card fraudsters are not adverse to checking through people's rubbish to see if they have thrown away vital financial information that can be used to defraud them. If you really want to dispose of old credit card statements, then make sure you put these through a shredder at the office.

Take Command of the Situation

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Never leave your credit card unattended. Today all credit card transactions can be completed via the Chip and PIN. There is no reason whatsoever why you should ever have to let your credit card out of your sight. If the salesman tells you then need to check something, tell them they have to do this in front of you.

Combating credit card fraud is the responsibility of every credit card user in the UK. If we can help to

reduce the cost to UK credit card providers for losses arising from fraud the savings should trickle down to us as credit card users. More importantly, however, is if the UK credit card user can show that you did not act in a way that would have reduced the chances of your having been defrauded, then they may be able to hold you accountable for some of the loss incurred as a result of that behavior. So always remain vigilant and aware of any scam that UK credit card fraudsters may try on you.

Joe Kenny writes for the UK personal finance sites

and also

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