

THE DOG DAYS OF CYBER

How cybersecurity threats and summer go hand-in-hand



THIS MONTH'S TOPICS:

Vacation Days

Vacation scams...

Game Days

Sporting event scams...

Scam of the Month:

Moving on out...

Cyber Zen Den:

Downward Dog...

Ancient Greeks and Romans referred to the "dog days of summer" as the time of the year when Sirius, the "dog star" shines brightest at night.

Sirius appeared to rise alongside the sun during this time, and so it was thought that the heat from the two stars made the summer months the hottest of the year, bringing with it fever, drought, thunderstorms, and overall bad luck.

In today's world, as Sirius takes it's heliacal rising once again, there's one more catastrophe we all need to keep any eye out for: cybersecurity threats!

Summer often brings along with it enough cyber scams to rival the winter holidays, and in this month's newsletter, we're going to give you a heads up on what cybercriminals have planned.

Enjoy Your Vacation Days

Scammers love summer as much as we do, but while we're taking time off to relax at the beach, they're hard at work pushing vacation scams that can affect every level of your trip.



Flight Booking

By using fake airline booking sites and fraudulent "customer service" phone numbers, scammers can trick you into purchasing a great deal on a flight that doesn't exist.



Hotel Stays

Vacationers may receive a phone call to their room from the "front desk" claiming there is a problem with the card on file, but this is really a phone scam.



Ordering Out

Fake menus distributed to hotel rooms, can result in vacationers handing over their credit card information, but never receiving any food.



Renting Cars

With rental cars being more difficult to come by, scammers are posing as fake rental companies, asking vacationers to pre-pay for a car using gift cards.



Do research before clicking "Book Now"



Check that the number is a real business



Never pay with gift cards

SUMMER
SPORTS

VS

SCAMS

This summer, sports fans should remain cyber-aware throughout the season, but especially during big games or important matches. Scammers know that these events get the most traction, and they monopolize on current events to trick the public.



TICKET SCAMS

Scammers have drafted online ads selling tickets to live sporting events. Once a fan has finalized the purchase, they receive an e-ticket with bogus barcodes, while their credit card information is now with the scammer.

STREAMING SCAMS

Millions of sports fans livestream games, but if they are tricked into using a scammer's page that is masquerading as a streaming service, they could be offering up their PII or downloading malware.

Typically, highly publicized and international events are a scammer's playing ground. When it comes to summer sporting events (and events throughout the rest of the year), keep your eye on the ball, and follow these tips:



BETTING SCAMS

Phishing emails and fake websites that offer betting opportunities or contests can also be a part of sport scams. Fans are often tricked into offering up their personal information with the lure of winning big.



Double check the authenticity of a website before offering up PII.



Stick to official online vendors, or buy tickets in person at the venue.



Verify the legitimacy of too-good-to-be-true opportunities.

SCAM OF THE MONTH

Each month we highlight a scam that demonstrates tactics criminals are using RIGHT NOW, that way you'll be better prepared when the next scam hits.

Georgia was planning to move to a new city for her job, and so she started the search for a rental. Every day she checked top housing websites, keeping her eye out for the perfect one. To her dismay, there wasn't much that her budget could afford in the area, but she kept looking.

Until, she found it!

A cute one bedroom with a park view. The price was listed well below other rentals in the area, but the Agent would be able to show her the property within the week (for a small fee). The owner was out of the country on business and so they did not want a lot of people in and out of the house unless they were serious.

Before Georgia could respond to the Agent's outreach with potential times to view the property, they replied that the week had already booked up with viewings. The Agent said the location wouldn't last long with its low price, and recommended that Georgia skip the formalities and sign the lease, directly wiring the deposit to the owner, so that should could lock in the space.



Even legitimate housing websites can be host to fraudulent homes and rentals. Should you encounter such a scam, be sure to report it to the website or app where the post was listed.



Scammers typically like to stay on-trend. And since summer is peak moving season for those considering a change in residence, use caution when looking into properties during these warmer months, or when searching around areas that have seen a lot of recent growth or an increase in population.

Did you spot the red flags?

- ▶ The rental was much lower in price than that of the other properties in the area.
- ▶ Georgia was requested to pay for a viewing, which is not a typical practice of viewing rental properties.
- ▶ The Agent used high-pressure tactics to urge Georgia into placing a deposit quickly.



Wiring money is essentially the same as sending cash. Once it's sent, it's gone. If you wouldn't feel comfortable sending cash for something like a deposit, think twice before agreeing to wire money.

Key Takeaways

Every season has its scams, and the cycle typically revolves around popular activities and events throughout that time of year.

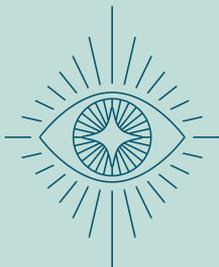
For summer, scams tend to target vacations, sporting events, and housing, but it is important to stay vigilant in other areas of those summertime vibes, as well: keeping in mind that where the people go, the scams will follow.



"Vacation Brain" is real: Scammers know that during a vacation, you just want to relax and unwind. That means your vigilance and deductive reasoning skills are on hiatus, too. Don't let scammers take advantage of your brain's vacation, and keep an eye out for their go-to vacation scams.



Scamming for sport: Don't let scammers play ball with your PII. Game responsibly, and watch for those top cybersecurity threats geared towards sports fans.



Lock out scams: Searching for a new place to live is exciting, but it can also be overwhelming and stressful. Don't let a housing scam get thrown into the mix! Check with your gut, and trust when it tells you that something doesn't feel right.

Downward Dog

Downward dog is a yoga stretch that helps to widen the Achilles tendon (along with other high-tension areas of the body). This tendon at the back of the foot was named after the Greek hero, Achilles, who was brought down after being shot in the heel with an arrow.

How does this relate to cybersecurity?

We all have a personal weakness in our lives. Areas where those with bad intentions can easily take advantage of our blind spots. But if we take steps to learn what angle scammers are coming from, we can work to stretch and strengthen those cyber "muscles" so that we are better prepared should the arrow ever be pointed towards us.

Now apply this concept to cyber- awareness.

Think about where your cyber-blind-spots are... Is it when you're stressed reading emails? Excited about upcoming events? Worried about personal things going wrong? What mental state do you have to be in to "click that link," and what would help to back you off the ledge?