



Indian Computer Emergency Response Team

Department of Information Technology  
Ministry of Communications & Information Technology  
(Government of India)



CCAOI

Representing the ecosystem of Internet - Bharat Model

## Security Newsletter

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*As internet is becoming an integral part of our lives, it is important that we are aware of the threats we face in the Cyberspace. Cybercrime is on the rise as is evident from the number of cases that are reported in the media. The number of compromised records in the last few years is in excess of 900 million globally. The need of the hour is to be aware and adequately equipped to protect ourselves online.*

*Keeping this in view, with the support of **Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (Certin), Department of Information Technology, VeriSign India and Sify Technologies Ltd** we are releasing the next edition of our **Forth nightly Security Newsletter**.*

## Tips to Avoid Scammers

Online Scams are on the rise trying to lure online users with attractive offers ranging from job offers, donations, business deals through unsolicited emails. However by being cautious and careful you can avoid being scammed. It is also important that one is able to identify some of the common scams when doing business online, and be wary of any deal that seems too good to be true.

- **Beware of Offers which are too good to be True**

Always be wary if you get an email stating that you are a winner of a contest or lottery, donation or free prize. Never provide any personal information especially to companies or people who proclaim to provide contest awards and donations. A genuine company would either contact the winner personally and give you a time period to collect your award, or offer to physically ship the prize to you without worry of a sales pitch or catch.

- **Be careful of virtual Companies**

While dealing with any company online always ensure that the company has proper credentials - a real life physical presence with active contact details like – active phone number, business registration and address. In case someone is offering /selling a product that you have never heard of, it is always advisable to do a search of the product over the various search engines. If it is a genuine product, there should be a record of other users' experience with the company and/or product for you to review. In case there is no record, then the chances of the site being a fraud are high.

- **Be wary of Unsolicited Sales Pitches**

As discussed, you should always be wary of unsolicited sales email that may come your way and always avoid a blanket sales pitch. A genuine and reputable company will always offer proper credentials, authentic payment methods and would have a secure merchant account and a verified rating with known processing company. Moreover the company personal, with proper credentials would contact you personally. If the company demands that you pay by cash (or wire), you should shy away from the company, as that is an initial signal for scams. Even if you come across a new product that you are interested in, there are likely multiple vendors to choose from so you do not have to opt for the first company that contacts you, even if they may be legitimate.

- **Always avoid the Inheritance Mails**

Always be wary of emails claiming to be heirs to a fortune that they cannot access. Whenever you get an email like this, you need to invoke your own internal scam watch. Most commonly, they will request your bank information so that they can wire you some money. It is always advisable never to give out any financial information. In other variants of the scam, you may be requested to send an initial forwarding loan amount in exchange for the right to a piece of the larger fortune, but you should never send any payment either, especially by wire or cash.

- **Be wary of Surrogate Representation Mails**

Any time that you are dealing with a person who claims they are a stand-in for the person you originally attempted to contact, whatever the reason given (vacation, sickness, etc.), you should be wary and watch out for a possible scam. Always make direct contact with the person whom you intended to work with, as this is the most surefire way to guarantee legitimacy. Seek out references with anyone you work with, and call a company to verify a new employee in case you are assigned a new point of contact.



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