



CANADIAN ANTI-FRAUD CENTRE BULLETIN

Social Media: Business Scam

2021-04-12

FRAUD: RECOGNIZE, REJECT, REPORT

With the ongoing pandemic, small and medium sized businesses increasingly rely on social media to drive consumer engagement and stay connected. This presents opportunities for fraudsters who are actively spoofing social media accounts, to steal personal and financial information from Canadian citizens and businesses.

This bulletin was prepared to highlight ongoing social media scams that spoof online businesses and to provide Canadians with prevention tips.

Social Media Business Account Spoofs

Recent reporting to the CAFC has identified that business social media accounts are increasingly being spoofed by fraudsters. With the cloned or imposter accounts, fraudsters can target clients and employees with fraudulent messages and offers. For instance, they can send messages to existing clients (identified on the legitimate company's profile) and make claims that they have won a free giveaway or contest. In order to collect their winnings, potential victims are required to provide their credit card information.

Warning Signs

- Reporting from clients or employees about messages you did not send or post.
- Unusual requests or messages from clients and employees.
- Unusual messages from clients about how to claim a prize.

Top Tips to Protect Business

- Secure your social media accounts. Understand the terms of service for the social media platforms being used.
- Get "verified" on social media. "Verified" accounts provide a level of authenticity and credibility.
- Routinely monitor your social media accounts for unusual post and messages.
- Think about the information you share. Can it be used to create imposter accounts or solicit your clients and employees with fraudulent requests or offers?
- Routinely search social media platforms for imposter accounts.
- Provide clear instructions or details on any promotions, contests or giveaways.
- Provide fraud awareness messaging to clients and employees.



Royal Canadian Mounted Police
Gendarmerie royale du Canada



Competition Bureau
Canada

Bureau de la concurrence
Canada



Ontario Provincial Police

Canada

- Post warnings if, and when, spoof accounts are identified and report them to the platform.
- Learn [more tips and tricks for protecting yourself](#).

If you think you or someone you know has been a victim of fraud, please contact the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre at 1-888-495-8501 or report online at www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca.