HOME CYBER DEFENSE
ARE YOU SAFE FROM CYBER CRIME?
WEEKLY

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This is a weekly publication dedicated to your personal cyber security. Our newsletter is designed to help the public recognize and avoid cyber threats while they are online. If you are not a subscriber, please go to HomeCyberDefense.net to sign up.

Most Common Scams of 2017

The Federal Trade Commission has released its breakdown of consumer complaints for 2017. It received nearly 2.7 million complaints last year, and 42.5% were fraud reports.

The Top Fraud Categories of 2017
The **FTC's list for 2017** breaks down complaints into three primary categories: fraud, identity theft and other. The "other" category came in at

No. 1 in terms of the number of reports, but it covers a lot of turf. Fraud, on the other hand, outpaced identity theft by about a 3-to-1 margin.

So if that many people are experiencing fraud, how is it happening? Here are the top five ways scammers are trying to get your money.

1. Imposter Scams: That Fraudster's Not Who They Say They Are

People **posing** as government officials, tech support or even loved ones in dire trouble grabbed a reported $328 million from unsuspecting people last year. The FTC received about 350,000 reports of imposter scams, with the median loss around $500.

2. Telephone and Mobile Services: Can You Hear Me Now? Fraud!

Nearly 150,000 people reported phone-related fraud. This covered everything from unauthorized charges on their accounts, to scams involving text messages and even apps. The median loss was only $223, but it still accounted for $17 million in total losses.

3. Prizes, Sweepstakes and Lotteries: Won the Nigerian Lottery Without Leaving Your Couch?

Yep, people still fall for this. Hint: If you get an email or a phone call telling you that you're the winner of some lottery you've never entered or even heard of, you're getting scammed. Oh, and if you need to wire money to someone to receive your winnings, ditto. Last year, 142,870 people reported falling for such scams, and the median loss was $511.

The FTC's official statement on this was "SMH." (Not really)

4. Shop-at-Home and Catalog Sales: I've Got a Great Bridge to Sell You

For 126,387 consumers, that too-good-to-be-true deal they found was just that. The median reported loss was $261 when people didn't get what they paid for.

5. Internet Services: That Free Movie Download Will Probably Have a Terrible Ending

Internet service fraud came in at No. 5, with 45,093 people filing complaints. Phishing scams, malware, gaming scams and social media scams all played a part here. The median loss was $183 for a total of $19 million dollars wasted.

Some eye opening stats from this report:

Scammers Are Targeting the Inexperienced
A higher number of younger people reported losses to fraud than older people. A disturbing 40% of reported cases were from people ages 20 to 29. However, those **over the age of 70** who reported losses to fraud lost a lot more money on average.

Your Phone Is Not Your Friend
How do scammers reach people? Your little buddy in your pocket was the **No. 1 tool for fraud**. It was the contact method in 70% of all fraud reports in 2017. Phone scams are abundant and seem to get more creative all the time.

Wire Transfer Requests Should Be Red Flags
The No. 1 way scammers will ask you to send money? Wire transfer. If someone you don't know **requests a wire transfer**, be wary. Be very wary.

The 3 States Where Residents Were Most Likely to Report Fraud
Based on number of reports per 100,000 residents, Florida, Georgia and Nevada were the top states for fraud.

Being in the age of wireless information makes life a lot easier, but also a little more dangerous. After a rocky 2017, don't expect 2018 to be any less fraudulent. It's likely to be even more so. Be on your guard and keep an **eye out for scams** so you can catch them before they catch your hard-earned money.

This Week's Cyber Alerts:

Alert Issued 3/16/18 Researchers Find 29 Types of USB Attacks, Recommend Never Plugging into a USB You Don't Own

Alert Issued 3/15/18 POS Malware Found at 160 Applebee's Restaurant Locations

Alert Issued 3/15/18 Why You Should Never Pay A Ransomware Ransom

Alert Issued 3/15/18 Your Smart Camera may have been Spying on You

Alert Issued 3/14/18 Microsoft Removes Antivirus Restriction Blocking Windows 10 from Getting Updates

Alert Issued 3/13/18 macOS Malware Increased by 270%

Alert Issued 3/11/18 Newest ID Scam Creates Fake People

Alert Issued 3/9/18 Cyber Threats are Coming at Us from All Sides.

Alert Issued 3/7/18 Locked Windows machines Can Be Compromised through Cortana

Alert Issued 3/7/18 Cyber Attacks Becoming No. 1 Business Risk

Alert Issued 3/7/18 Most Top US Higher Ed Institutions Fail to Protect Students from Phishing

Alert Issued 3/5/18 Android Phones Caught Selling with Pre-Installed Factory Malware

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