

# SAFETY SENSE

## If It Looks Too Good To Be True, It Probably Is

(NAPSA)—In today's virtual society, online fraudsters continue to devise new ways to reach unsuspecting consumers. According to the Internet Crime Complaint Center, online fraud is on the rise—up 67 percent in 2004. Awareness is the best protection against these cyber criminals.

"The best approach to combat Internet fraud is to stay one step ahead of criminals," said Marcel Legrand, Senior Vice President of Strategy and Corporate Development, Monster.

Here are some common scams:

- Fraudulent online sales are the largest source of consumer fraud complaints, according to the Federal Trade Commission. Fraudulent sellers deceive buyers by sending an item of lesser value, sending stolen or counterfeit items or sending nothing—while disappearing with your money.

Tip: Research the seller's reputation with the Better Business Bureau, read all fine print associated with the transaction and pay through a trusted site.

- Phishing is when criminals send online communications to Internet users disguised as an e-mail or pop-up message from a reputable company. The message may contain errors and request an account update to lure users into sharing their personal data.

Tip: Don't click on links provided in a suspicious e-mail. Just clicking on a link can let viruses infiltrate your computer. Instead, call the company or go to their Web site to update information.

- Job scams most often appear as "work from home" offers, claiming that you can make easy money while you "set your own hours" or



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"be your own boss." These scams sometimes require prospective employees to provide personal information, make a down payment or cash foreign checks with the promise of retaining a percent of the transaction.

Tip: According to Monster's "Be Safe" site (<http://help.monster.com/besafe>), online job seekers should never provide personal information unless they are confident that the other party is who it claims to be. Seekers should also disregard e-mails offering employment opportunities that involve acting as a go-between for money transfers. Verify the legitimacy of a potential employer before engaging in any monetary transactions or providing information.

For more information, visit [www.LooksTooGoodToBeTrue.com](http://www.LooksTooGoodToBeTrue.com). The site is maintained by a task force of federal law enforcement and industry organizations and is funded by the United States Postal Inspection Service and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Key partners include the national White Collar Crime Center, Monster.com, Target and members of the Merchants Risk Council.