

ASK FRANK

Former Master Forger Frank Abagnale Jr. Answers Questions About Personal Security

by Frank Abagnale, Jr.

(NAPSA)—**Q: Online identity theft has been referred to as the “crime for the new millennium.” What can I do?**

A: The Internet age makes identity theft much easier. There will always be people who are willing to use technology in a self-serving way. One way to protect yourself on the



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Web is a service like Digital Protection-Plus (www.digitalprotectionplus.com or 800-826-1329). It provides both McAfee VirusScan Online (including automatic service upgrades for ongoing protection) and McAfee Personal Firewall protection against computer hackers and identity thieves as well as up to \$10,000 in ID Theft Insurance.

Q: What do I do if I become an identity theft victim?

A: As soon as you realize it, immediately notify the credit reporting agencies (Experian, Equifax and TransUnion) to request notification if anyone applies for credit using your name, Social Security number and/or driver's license number. Ask these agencies to contact you before any new credit is extended. Then:

- Report the crime to the police immediately and get a police report number.
- Keep a log of all conversations with authorities and financial institutions, including names, dates and time.
- Follow up with the credit reporting agencies with a letter and the police report.
- Notify your bank.
- Consider a service like PrivacyGuard (www.privacyguard.com



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or 1-866-GUARDME) that will alert you to inquiries or changes in your credit record. This lets you quickly see if anyone is applying for credit in your name.

Q: What can I do to make the recovery process easier?

A: Being the victim of any crime is troubling and recovering from identity theft can seem overwhelming. An identity fraud resolution service like IdentitySecure (1-866-263-8258) will help guide you through the process. IdentitySecure protects its members with identity fraud resolution and \$10,000 in ID theft insurance. It will even provide letters you can send to the appropriate agencies.

• *Frank Abagnale, Jr. is a retired master forger whose early life was the basis for the movie “Catch Me If You Can.” He now assists companies and consumers in preventing fraud. To have your questions considered for this column, please send it to askfrank@privacy.trilegiant.com.*

A three-month trial membership in PrivacyGuard, Digital ProtectionPlus or IdentitySecure can be enjoyed for only \$1. The trial membership can be canceled at any time during the three-month trial period by calling toll free and the member will owe nothing further. Unless the member calls to cancel, the membership will be extended automatically for an entire year at the \$89.99 annual fee for PrivacyGuard or the \$99.99 annual fee for IdentitySecure or Digital ProtectionPlus. The membership will be automatically renewed annually upon expiration at the then-current annual fee, billed to a credit card account, without the member having to do anything further. Additionally, members may call toll free to cancel at any time and receive a pro-rata refund.