

# HOW LOVE MET CYBER SCAMS

Summarizing the season of romance,  
and its connections with cyber scams



## **THIS MONTH'S TOPICS:**

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The Dating App

*Can you spot the fraud...*

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Sweet Hearts:

*Cyber stats never looked so good...*

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Scam of the Month:

*And the final rose goes to...*

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Cyber Zen Den:

*Self & Cyber Love*

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This February, shower the ones you love with cybersecurity tips!

Nothing says "I care about you" more than a comprehensive list of benefits to using multi-factor authentication, or an ode to password managers.

The season of love is often intertwined with cyber scams, as love is one of the high-profile emotions cybercriminals exploit to get you to fall for their schemes.

In this month's newsletter, we'll uncover all things in love and cyber crime to help you stay vigilant this season.



## THIS IS STACY

STAGE & FILM ACTRESS

**Likes:** Beaches & ice cream

**Dislikes:** Waking up early

**Favorite quote:** "If you always do what interests you, at least one person is pleased." (Katharine Hepburn)

A FEW YEARS AGO, STACY'S SOCIAL MEDIA PHOTOS WERE TAKEN TO CREATE FAKE PROFILES.

Her personal social media profile has since been marked private, but her likeness is still being used on dating apps to swindle others out of money.

### RED FLAGS TO SPOT A CATFISH:


- ▶ Not being able to meet the person
- ▶ Any mention of money
- ▶ Being asked to move off the social media app to another form of communication
- ▶ If they profess their love too quickly

### Tips to prevent becoming a victim of identity theft on social media:

- Set your social media accounts to the most private settings.
- Consider a watermark, or extra design layer, on top of profile pictures. Recent testing has shown that these additions decrease a photo's likelihood of being copied by 75%.
- Consider forgoing profile pictures all together.
- Stay up to date on your image's security by doing a reverse Google image search, to find out if your photos are being used elsewhere.

## CAN YOU SPOT THE FRAUD

Only one of these dating profiles is Stacy's. Can you guess which are fake, and which is real?



**S.  
M.**


Joined: 2020    4 Friends

From: N/A

THE DATING  
*App*

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**Posts**



Hate using this app. Feel free to text me at 555-432-1098

Write a comment... 👍❤️ 4

#1



**Stacy  
Marks**


Joined: 2018    1,058 Friends

From: NYC

THE DATING  
*App*

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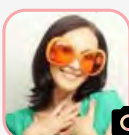
**Posts**



Nursing Student here. If you'd like to help support the nursing community please donate [here](#). Me and my colleagues appreciate it!

Write a comment... 👍❤️ 17 5

#2



**Stacy  
Macy**


Joined: 2018    30 Friends

From: Utah

THE DATING  
*App*

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**Posts**



If you obey all the rules, you miss all the fun.  
#Icon #InPersonDatingIsSoLastYear

Write a comment... 👍❤️ 5 7

#3



**Stacy  
M.**


Joined: 2019    25 Friends

From: LA

THE DATING  
*App*

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**Posts**



Hate to break hearts here, but the camera on my laptop died, so no more video chats.

I'm pretty sure this is a catfish, just FYL...

👍❤️ 7

#4

**Answer Key:**

#3 is the real Stacy.

25% of  
online daters  
overshare PII  
on dating  
apps

1 in 10 online  
daters have had  
their devices  
hacked or data  
infected

Online daters are  
twice as likely to  
encounter IT  
security  
incidents

57% of online daters  
worry about  
becoming a victim  
of fraud by  
helping a match  
financially

Despite risks,  
51% of people log  
into dating apps  
through work  
devices

17% of online  
daters are likely  
to share PII after  
only days of  
chatting

**LOVE IS SWEET  
LOVE IS KIND**

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**Practice cyber awareness**

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**AND HAVE PEACE  
OF MIND**



# SCAM OF THE MONTH

Each month we highlight a scam that demonstrates tactics criminals are using RIGHT NOW, that way you'll be better prepared when the next scam hits.

Rose was tired of online dating... and then she met Sam. They connected on a dating app, but Sam quickly moved the conversation to texts since he hardly used the app. After a week of banter and flirting, Rose suggested meeting in person. Unfortunately, Sam worked overseas for the winter. But, once week two rolled around, Sam proclaimed his love for Rose and promised to meet her in person when he returned in the Spring.

Rose felt that this could finally be the man of her dreams. Her sister, however, was much more cautious. When Rose told Sam about her sister's concerns of them moving too fast, he got very angry. He felt Rose's sister was unsupportive, and shouldn't meddle. To calm the situation, Rose agreed to stop sharing as much information about their relationship with her sister.

Now, Sam is having difficulty putting money together for a flight home. He wants to finally meet Rose in person (hinting that a proposal might be involved). He's asked Rose to help with purchasing the tickets, but he doesn't want her to tell anyone because he's ashamed that he needs the help.



## Did you spot the red flags?

- ▶ Sam proclaimed his love very quickly. Scammers use strong emotions, such as love to have you fall more easily for their tricks, and not second guess their actions.
- ▶ Sam claims he works overseas. Scammers make up similar excuses as to why they can't meet in person, or video chat. If it's been a month or two, it may be a suspicious sign if you still haven't met.
- ▶ Sam asked for money. Never give money to someone you have not met in real life.



Many scammers will try to isolate you from your family and friends. This makes it easier to manipulate you, and places less hurdles in front of them. Be sure to stay close with people you trust in your life, and seek their guidance if you feel hesitant about suspicious messages.



Most dating apps provide in-app messaging. This helps keep personal information safe, and can assist in tracking down a scammer if you fall victim to fraud. Be wary of tactics pressuring you to take conversations off the app, and do not give out personal contact details until after you've vetted your match in person.



Always do your research: Search for your new interest on the internet. Do a reverse image search. Make sure their story matches up with what you find online.

## Key Takeaways

Love is a strong and powerful emotion that can make us do crazy things. Cybercriminals take advantage of this notion, and use it against us, to trick us into doing things we normally would not.

Though it's important to let your guard down in order to find love, be sure to keep these warning signs in mind, and remain vigilant when online dating.



**Not being able to meet in person, and requests for money:** These are two huge red flags that you may come across when dating an online scammer.



**Be cautious when sharing information:** You wouldn't give your phone number and email to a mysterious figure in a shadowy corner that you just met. Practice this same caution online.



**Do your research.** Reverse image search and other search tools on the internet can help you learn about potential scam situations much earlier on.

## Self-Love

They say, you have to love yourself before you can love someone else...

### How does this relate to cybersecurity?

Your social media presence, your email inbox, and your texting exchanges are all an extension of you! Take care of these technological embodiments and be sure to show them the love and care you deserve.

### Now apply this concept to cyber-awareness.

Review your Social Media pages. Do these platforms all have the privacy settings that you want in place? If not, now is the time to make some adjustments.