



CYBER SECURITY & YOU

DECEMBER 2021

ONLINE SCAMS

Over the last few years, the number of online scams has grown rapidly and have become harder to spot. Here are some ideas I hope you find helpful in identifying and avoiding these scams.

- **Be wary of people requesting information.** Any time someone else initiates an email, do not reply or click a link they supply. Rather, use a new email and select the address from your contacts list or go to the company's homepage and navigate from there. If it is coming from a friend, pick up the phone and call to verify. The worst thing that could happen is you have a conversation with them.
- **Do your homework.** Search for unique phrases in the email to see if there are already reports of fraudulent behavior. This is often a quickest way to eliminate a scam.
- **Do not believe your caller ID.** Faking the name or number is easier than you would think.
- **Hang up on robocalls.** Any interaction will likely prompt more calls in the future. If they know you just hang up, they will be much less likely to waste resources on calling you again.
- **Do not wire money or send reloadable cards to someone unless you initiated the call.** Does it seem strange that your cousin that you rarely speak to is asking you for money to be wired because they are in a bind? It should. Do not do it!
- **If a company (like Microsoft) or a branch of government (like the IRS) call you to help you in some way, hang up.** They never contact people by phone, always by traditional mail.



WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION?

There are many resources available to help you stay safe from these schemes. The FTC has a list of current scams available at <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/features/scam-alerts>. Report scams and fraudulent behavior you discover to <https://www.usa.gov/online-safety> if possible. It may save someone from learning an expensive lesson. ■

QUICK TIP

Be on the lookout for our cyber security training emails. They are short, educational videos followed by a quick 10 question knowledge check. These emails are sent on the 1st of the month shortly after midnight, and are sent from this address: notifications@LASERS.securityiq-notifications.com.

I hope you have been enjoying them!

**Happy New Year from your
LASERS IT Department!**