

Online Marketplace Fraud: Advice for Sellers



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New Intelligence

Action Fraud has received several reports indicating that sellers of items on online marketplace websites are falling victim to fraud by bogus buyers. Typically, the bogus buyers contact the seller wanting to purchase the item for sale and advise they will be sending the requested amount via PayPal or other electronic payment method. The seller then receives a fake, but official looking email stating they have been paid more than the asking price and to send the difference back to the buyer's bank account. In reality, no money has ever been sent to the seller; the bogus buyer has spoofed an email and purported to be an online payment company. All contact is then severed with the seller.

It is important to remember that selling anything could make you a target to these fraudsters however the NFIB has identified that those offering sofas, large furniture and homeware are particularly vulnerable.

What you need to do

- **Don't assume an email or phone call is authentic.** Remember criminals can imitate any email address. Stay in control. Always use a trusted payment method online, such as Paypal, and have the confidence to refuse unusual requests for payment like bank transfers.
- **Don't be rushed or pressured into making a decision:** Always verify that you have received payment from the buyer before completing a sale.
- **Listen to your instincts:** Criminals will try and make unusual behaviour, like overpaying, seem like a genuine mistake.

Visit Take Five (takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/advice/) and Cyber Aware (cyberaware.gov.uk) for more information about how to protect yourself online.

If you have been affected by this, or any other type of fraud, report it to Action Fraud by visiting www.actionfraud.police.uk or by calling 0300 123 2040.

Every Report Matters

If you have been a victim of fraud or cyber crime, report it to us at Actionfraud.police.uk, or by calling 0300 123 2040.