

Computer Tips

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Michael's Computer Services

Beware of Scams...Again!

Recently we listed a few house hold items for sale on a well-known online classifieds website. We had never used this particular website before to list things for sale, and had heard good reports regarding it. So, the listings completed, we sat back and waited to receive any enquiries.

About 3 hours after completing the listings my wife received an SMS on her phone from a person called Mike, who expressed interest in one of our items for sale. The sender of the SMS wanted to know what was the lowest price we would take for the item. In the SMS, Mike had also asked for a reply via email & had included his email address. So my wife went to her computer and replied to the email, stating we would accept \$425 as our lowest price for the item.

Less than 3 minutes later, she received an email reply, and this is what it said:

"Thanks for the response. I will take it for \$500 including Paypal surcharges (this was the first mention of Paypal—we had not even hinted we could do payments through Paypal as the item was pick up only, COD) since I am interested in the immediate purchase. I just moved to the United Kingdom, where this is needed, and I will be making use of a shipping company to have this picked up from you and have it delivered to me. Further arrangements will be made with you in regards to the pickup once I have paid you. I would appreciate if you email me with more pictures too since I wont be able to see this in person. What's the Paypal email to send funds to in order for me to pay you ASAP. Thanks, Mike."

What struck us, was 1) why offer nearly \$100 more for an item than what we had said we'd be happy to take for it; and 2) why offer to pay us through Paypal, and ask for OUR Paypal email; and 3) it was apparently super urgent that he purchase our item. Smelling a rat, we sent a polite email in reply, saying we were not interested in such a transaction.

The sender of the SMS was not at all interested in either our item for sale, or our lowest price. He was after our Paypal details, which if we had sent him that information, would have been skimmed off, and used who knows where. Paypal accounts are usually linked to valid bank accounts or credit cards, and this is the information fraudsters are after.

This is why I am writing this article, to get the word out — beware of any offer, SMS, email, or phone call suggesting you give out personal details to complete a payment or transaction. Paypal is a large and reputable online business, which we use and recommend. Paypal has set in place processes that in normal transactions prevent unauthorised people obtaining your details; this is why scammers and identity fraudsters try to trick you into giving them your information.

If you are needing assistance with a computer problem, or need it repaired, call us on 4171 0981, or email us at info@mcsit.com.au

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