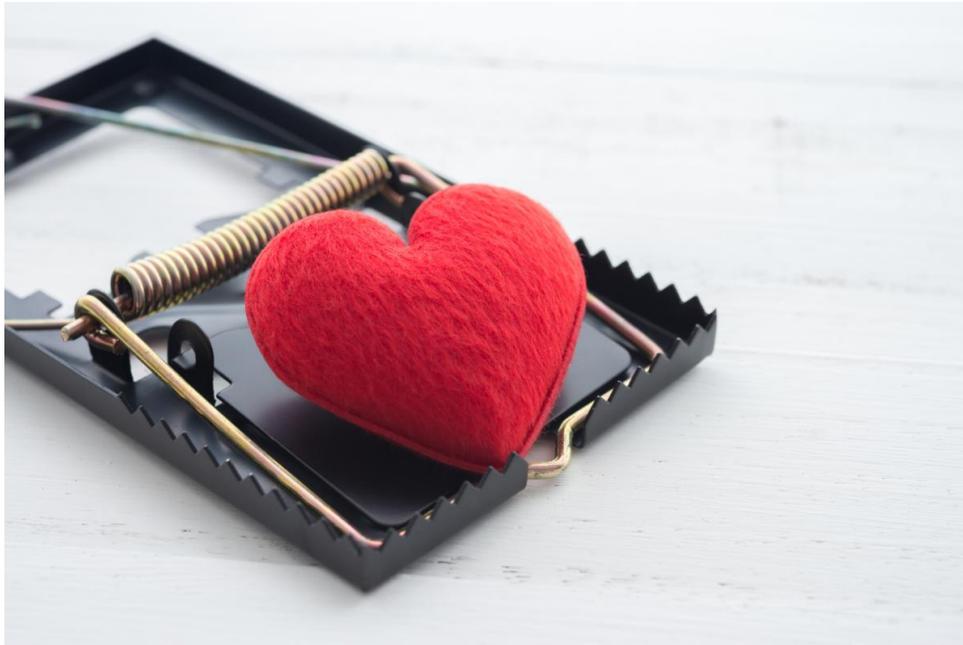

The Investigator Newsletter



Romance Scams - Valentine's Day Edition

Valentine's Day is approaching, and although it is supposed to be a time full of love and joy, it can also be a time full of loss to those who fall victim to **romance scams**. As the month of love is getting closer than ever, cybercriminals are preparing to plan their attacks. In 2020, statistics from the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center showed that over \$281 million was stolen from victims of romance scams. While romance scams are prevalent all year round, they may be more prominent than ever this month. In this week's newsletter, **BCSI** is here to inform you on how to avoid being a victim of a romance scam, as well as what the scam entails.

What is a romance scam?

- Romance scams occur when cybercriminals choose a victim, usually a female in their 50s to 60s, in hopes of making them believe that they have formed a solid, trusting relationship.
- By having formed this "trusting" relationship, criminals will then persuade victims into providing personal and/or financial information, purchasing items, or sending money via wire transfer, pre-paid gift cards, and so on to them.

How can you protect yourself?



Never send money or sensitive personal information to anyone you meet online!

- If someone you meet online is asking you to send them money, items, or personal/financial information about yourself... cut them out right away. If you do not personally know someone, do not give them anything.
- As well, avoid any suspicious requests via money wire or prepaid gift cards.



Go slow and ask lots of personal questions.

- If the person you are talking to is a scammer, their story may not add up. By going slow and asking personalized questions specific to them, you can better evaluate their legitimacy and see if they fumble any questions.



Do your research!

- Research the person's name, images, email, phone number, and so on to see if the details add up. Many cybercriminals take their images off the internet; therefore, you can use a tool like [google images](#) to conduct a reverse image search. By inserting their images into the [google images](#) search engine, you can then see if their images have been used elsewhere.



Have you talked to them over the phone, or via facetime?

- If the person you are talking to has never offered to or has refused to talk to you via facetime or phone call... they are most likely fraudulent.

Like we always say, if the person or deal seems “too good to be true”, then it most likely is too good to be true. Always trust your gut and remember to always be cautious around people you meet online.

About us



BCSI Investigations | Vancouver | Private Investigator | Firm Profile

BCSI has undertaken numerous cases involving **cyber crimes** such as **fraud** or enticement leading to fraud. If you or anyone you know has been a victim of a romance scam, please reach out to us for a free consultation with one of our experienced investigators at 604-922-6572 or via email at info@picanada.ca.

For more information about us and the types of services we offer, please visit our website to learn more at www.picanada.ca.

Visit our Website



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