



S.C.R.A.M. GAZETTE

“Card cracking” scams are cranking up on social media

Promises of easy money are luring young people into a scam called "[card cracking](#)," in which they let criminals deposit phony checks in their bank accounts in exchange for a small cut of the illicit profits.

Sometimes the schemes are disguised as contests or scholarship opportunities, but more recently criminals have taken to social media to flaunt their supposed wealth and recruit new participants.

"This has been going on for a long time," said Avivah Litan, vice president and distinguished analyst at information technology firm Gartner ([IT](#)). "What's new is the videos and the bragging about it."

Last year, Chicago police arrested 29 people, including rapper [Bandman Kevo](#), for a fraud authorities said cost banks millions of dollars. Court documents claimed the group used YouTube ([GOOG](#)), Facebook ([FB](#)), Instagram and Twitter ([TWTR](#)) to promote the con, and that Kevo -- also known as Kevin Ford --



posted images of himself behind the wheel of a Maserati and counting money to lure people to the scheme.

Recruits give up their debit card numbers and personal identification numbers (PINs) so that criminals can deposit multiple counterfeit checks and then quickly withdraw the money from ATMs. Participants are often advised to file fraud claims against the banks.

An American Banker Association survey in August last year found responding [banks reported more than \\$18 million](#) in card cracking attempts since January 2013 and actually lost \$6 million from more than 2,600 card cracking cases.

"Many of the 'victims' do not understand they are facilitating a crime in which they could receive up to 30 years in prison for their participation," the ABA warned in a statement.

The frauds often succeed because banks haven't invested in updating their antiquated check-processing system, which allows delays between when the bogus checks are deposited and when the fraud is discovered, Litan said.

The current system is far more likely to flag a legitimate check as fraudulent than to detect real fraud, she said. "They get 1,001 false positives," Litan said. "Everyone says checks are going away, but they're the biggest source of financial fraud."

Source: [CBS News](#)

Coffee with a Cop is coming to town

Join us at Hardees Restaurant, 9109 Milwaukee on October 16th, (Friday) from 9 am to 11 am. Have a free cup of coffee on Hardees and join your neighbors and Police Officers for a conversation.

There is no agenda, no speeches, just a chance to ask questions, voice concerns, learn what Police Officers do and get to know Officers in the Village of Niles.

There is no charge and no need to register for this community event. Just join us at 9 am.



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 7000 W. Touhy Ave
 Niles, IL 60714
 847-588-6500
 www.nilespd.com
Connect with US!

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Consumer Reports: Financial Scams Target Seniors

Scam artists are targeting older people more than ever and making off with huge amounts of money.

A recent survey finds that 1-in-20 seniors report being exploited. They and their families have lost billions. Consumer Reports looked into this frightening phenomenon and has advice on how to spot scams and avoid being taken in by them.

Marjorie DeGrace said while she was in the yard weeding last June, a man drove up and offered to pave her driveway for a third of what he said he normally charges. She never imagined the bill would be \$9,000.

"I was shocked, completely shocked. He said they needed the money right then and there," DeGrace said.

Intimidated, she paid up. But later a licensed contractor told her the work she got should have cost no more than \$2,400.

Consumer Reports has investigated fraud against seniors and interviewed victim after victim. Some fall for IRS imposters claiming they owe money.

Others are fooled by bogus promises of big prizes or a mail notification of a huge sweepstake win and then there are people defrauded by unscrupulous financial advisers.

"The elderly are vulnerable to financial abuse for several reasons. One, they have the money in retirement savings. Two, they may be lonely or isolated. In some cases, there's cognitive decline," said Tobie Stanger, Consumer Reports.

To protect against fraud, first use caller ID and don't answer calls with numbers you don't recognize. That will thwart many robocallers with phony offers.

You can also opt out of commercial mail solicitations for five years through www.dmachoice.org.

Always check out contractors through the Better Business Bureau and local licensing agencies.

"One of the main things that families can do is to make sure the senior is out there in the community and isn't isolated. Isolation is a major reason that people get victimized," Stanger said.

Source: [ABC 7 Chicago News](http://ABC7ChicagoNews.com)

Telephone Scams are on the Rise—They target everyone!

There are numerous phone scams that are showing up recently. According to the Better Business Bureau, there is a common denominator to all of them.

You are called by the scammer! The most recent one which appeared in the area back in July of 2015, is the "Microsoft Scam".

Originally known as the "Tech Support Scam", it goes something like this. The scammer calls and says they are from "Microsoft Support Team" and they have detected your computer has been hacked.

The 'Scammer' then says they can provide a solution to the problem, usually costing hundreds or thousands of dollars.



Well now the scam has morphed a bit and it involves pop up adds and emails which install an icon on your computer.

Once you click on the link, a window opens telling you that your computer has been hacked and that you need to contact the

telephone number that is provided in the popup. Once this is initiated the person on the other end of the call says they can fix the problem. Again this will cost you hundreds or thousands of dollars.

The Better Business Bureau says there are simple ways to avoid being a victim of a scam.

- If you get a call from someone who claims to be from technical support, hang up and call the company yourself from a telephone number that you know to be real.
- Never release financial information or passwords to someone who calls.
- Make sure your computer has security software, downloaded and updated regularly.