

Online scams are on the rise, up 87% since 2015, according to new BBB report

Submitted by the Better Business Bureau

Tactics used by scammers have shifted drastically during the past several years, with online scams up 87% since 2015, according to a new report published by the Better Business Bureau. During the same period, phone scams dropped by 42%.

Start with Trust Online: BBB Online Scams Report analyzes the changes in how scams are being perpetrated, and includes new information about impersonation and online purchase scams. This research is based on two sets of data:

- √ An analysis of more than 300,000 reports submitted to BBB Scam Tracker between 2015 and 2022, and

- √ Survey research was conducted in July 2022.

So far, in 2022, online scams are more prevalent (55%) than other methods, with a higher

percentage of people losing money when targeted (75%). Text scams rose from 11% in 2015 to 30% in 2022, and had a median dollar loss of \$800 in 2022 – higher than other reported means of contact.

Text messaging was the most reported method used to push people online.

About 70% of respondents said they continued the online engagement because they hoped to gain something, sell something, or were curious to learn more. That's compared to 30% who continued the engagement because they feared they'd lose something, were threatened, or thought there was an urgent situation they needed to address.

The top scam type with a monetary loss reported as beginning online:

- √ Online purchase scams (89%)

- √ Cryptocurrency scams (87%)

- √ Romance scams (85%)
- √ Investment scams (73%)
- √ Employment scams (68%)
- √ Government grant scams (64%).

Places people reported being targeted by a scam:

- √ Browsing social media (25%)

- √ Online shopping (24%)
- √ Email (14%)
- √ Search engine (10%)
- √ Job searching (7%).

Impersonation Scams

Fifty-four percent of survey respondents said the scammer claimed to be from a legitimate organization to perpetrate the scam. People who lost money to a scam were almost twice as likely as those who avoided losing money to say the scammer used impersonation as a tactic.

Online Purchase Scams

Online purchase scams con-

tinued to be the most reported scam type to BBB Scam Tracker in 2022, making up 30% of all scams reported, with 71.6% reporting a monetary loss. The reported median dollar loss for this type of scam rose from \$101 in 2021 to \$114 in 2022.

The reported median dollar loss for this scam type for ages 18-24 increased 25.8%, from \$124 in 2021 to \$156 in 2022; this age group also reported the highest median dollar loss.

Other Findings

Following their scam experience, 27% of those who lost money said they would hesitate to purchase products online; 19% of those who reported losing money said they would be more likely to purchase items in a store.

Thirty-one percent of survey respondents said they lost confidence/emotional well-being after being targeted by an

online scam.

Tips for avoiding losing money to online scams:

- √ If the deal looks too good to be true, it probably is.

- √ Be careful purchasing sought-after products.

- √ Before you buy, do your research with a trusted source.

- √ Avoid making quick purchases on social media.

- √ Use secure and traceable transactions.

- √ Choose your online payment system carefully.

- √ Don't believe everything you see.

- √ Ask for verification and take time to do research with a trustworthy source.

- √ Be skeptical about anyone who reaches out to you unsolicited.

Art on display in Lewiston

Continued from Page 1

More Art in Lewiston

Hibbard said, "Dan and I are restoring the 'Spirit of Victory' sculpture out towards Joe Davis."

On Monday, at the Board of Trustees work session, Mayor Anne Welch announced Lewiston residents Fran and Marie Williams are donating a bronze sculpture to the village. The piece was created by Lewiston-Porter graduate Julie Silver.

The target installation location is near the main entrance to Artpark State Park, at the southeast corner of Fourth and Tuscarora streets.

Welch said the Lewiston Garden Club would like to plant around the sculpture.

"It's really big – it's like 8 feet tall; but it's really, really kind of cool," she said. "We have had conversations with Artpark about doing something as you go into Artpark to make it look nice."

She told trustees, "It's like the shape of a woman. You've got to go and see it, because it's really, really, really cool. ... It will look nice. ... I think it would be a nice addition to that corner. It would kind of frame the entrance to Artpark."

Hibbard said, "We've really been talking about different things, and really introducing it to other artists, as well. So this is, like I said, the start of something



Fran and Marie Williams are donating a bronze sculpture to the Village of Lewiston. Artist Dan Buttery made this rendering showing the Julie Silver-created piece at the southeast corner of Fourth and Tuscarora streets.

I think we're on the right track with."

Not long after she was elected to her first term in office in 2018, Welch said she was intent on promoting the Lewiston art scene, bringing in pieces, and even installing works at Academy Park.

Artpark & Company also has increased the number of art works

surrounding the performing arts venue since President Sonia Kozlova Clark was hired in 2015.



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The Niagara County Department of Health nursing division, in partnership with the Niagara County Office for the Aging, is offering a free, six-week diabetes self-management workshop. The series is scheduled from 9-11:30 a.m. Mondays, Oct. 17, through Nov. 21, at the North Tonawanda Public Library.

NCDOH stated, "This program covers both the physical aspect of

managing diabetes, as well as the emotional aspect, and is designed to improve an individual's A1C's and reduce complications associated with diabetes."

Register by calling Nursing Operations Manager Stacy Knott, MSED, at 716-278-1900. For more information, visit <http://www.niagaracounty.com/health/Services/Nursing-Division/Diabetes-Self-Mgmt>.

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