

## Internet Scams and the Charlatans Behind Them

If you've ever been interested in making money on the internet, then at some point you've probably visited your favorite search engine and typed in one of the following phrases: "Make Money" - "Work From Home" - "Get Rich Online." And, you've encountered some deliciously interesting results.

My personal favorites are the websites that have a collage of a husband and wife living their lives blissfully. One picture shows them holding each other lovingly. Another picture shows them playing tennis on their own private court. The next photo shows them standing in front of their private mansion inside of a gated community as they point to the home as if to say to you "Look at how big this thing is! With a house this size we must be telling the truth!" I especially like the pictures that show the lucky couple on their yacht, sailing in the Pacific, holding up a fish they caught that's not even half as large as the lie they're telling you about how they can teach you to make millions on the internet if you just fill out the email form on their website so they can begin sending you informative tidbits about making money that will "change your life."

So with fervent anticipation, you fill out the email form on their website, and an autoresponder begins sending you a series of emails, usually spread 24 hours apart, about how this "revolutionary new system" has changed their lives and the lives of others they've recruited into their business. As you're reading the email, you start to ask yourself, "Hmmm....I wonder what the heck this business actually is. The website doesn't say what the business is, and the email doesn't say what the business is....I wonder how these wonderful people are lining their pockets with so much cash?"

By the time they've sent you the fifth email, you're so excited that you simply can't hold out any longer, so you order their program, and then a few days later you receive a package in the mail. What do you find inside? You find books and/or CD's telling you how you can get rich online if you set up the same kind of website they did that tells people that they can get rich online if they purchase the same scam you just did. I love it when this happens.

Don't get me wrong, some of these websites do actually have a legitimate service for which they want to train you so that you can resell it, such as being a vitamin distributor, or teaching people about internet marketing, or, my personal favorite, hosting and inviting people to Christian mentor conferences (I love that one). Yes, there are a slew of defrauders in cyberspace who actually try to convince people how they can "Get rich with Christian mentor conferences." Jeez, if only I had thought of that. Here I am working 10 hours a day with a legitimate company, all the while I could've been cashing in on those hot Christian mentor conferences.

But, most of the time, there is no legitimate product or service whatsoever, and when there is, they're usually like the stuff I've already mentioned - items or services that no one needs or wants, things that aren't practical and don't make any sense. So, these charlatans have a very simple approach - they set up a convincing sales pitch, they keep pushing it by bombarding you with emails until your mouth is watering, then you place your order and they send you a business venture that is unremarkable or a waste of your time.

I'm also a big fan of the Multi-Level-Marketing (MLM) scams that are pervading the internet these days. Don't you just adore these cute little MLM sycophants who call you at the dinner hour from a galaxy far, far away (I live in New Jersey, and I once got a call from someone in London, England, asking me if I wanted to team up with him and become part of his MLM campaign)? You've probably come across these MLM companies on the internet before. They have this thing called a "downline" where you recruit people to join the business to sell some sort of newfangled product or device, and those people then recruit people, and the recruits of the recruits then recruit more recruits, until you have the entire population of planet Earth and half of the population of Jupiter in your downline, and you get a percentage of all of their sales. The closer the recruit is to you in your downline, the higher the commission percentage you get. For the recruits of the recruits of the recruits of the recruits, you get a smaller percentage of their sales, roughly 0.00000000000001%.

The IRS is not a big fan of MLM's as they are often scams, and often there's no way you can make money if you're at the bottom of a downline that consists of 30 or 40 people. It's the guys at the top, the ones who own the MLM, that make the real money, while you order the program and then make only a couple of sales; but since the owners of the company have recruited so many people into their program, a few sales apiece from thousands and thousands of recruited sales reps adds up to a substantial amount.

So, the best advice you can extract from this reading is to only become involved with internet companies that offer a legitimate product or service. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

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