

Bitdefender Warns of Top 10 Valentine's Day Scams

Cyber-criminals trick users with fake limousine offers and online 'heart experts'

SYDNEY/AUCKLAND – February 12, 2012 – Bitdefender, creator of the world's leading antivirus software, is issuing an alert to Valentine's Day lovers, after spotting a wave of scams spreading worldwide before the love holiday. Bitdefender advises users to stay away from fake limousine offers and online 'heart experts' who claim to heal troubled relationships. This type of scam spreads through spam and redirects users to phishing, fraud and malware-infected websites.

As men plan to spend 75 percent more than women for 2013 Valentine's Day, according to a survey by CreditDonkey.com, scammers lure them with gift ideas. The bait that tricks men these days includes fake chocolate offers, diamond-like rings, perfumes, personalised gifts, heart-shaped jewelry and replica watches.

"Scammers have taken a shotgun approach to lovers on Valentine's, with dating spam counting for almost 7 percent of all spam sent around the globe," said Bitdefender Chief Security Strategist Catalin Cosoi. "Valentine's Day brings an increase of romance scams, so people should be careful to avoid fake dating websites, love giveaways and phony social media profiles. These all collect their personal details for impersonation, extortion and money muling."

A fast spreading scam tricks victims to download Valentine's Day wallpapers which redirect to fraudulent websites. Users are told they won an iPhone 5 and asked for personal details. In the name of Cupid, similar scams circulate on Facebook, too.

Valentine's Day games and Android apps downloaded from unofficial marketplaces such as free love calculators may install adware and malware. In Australia, lovebirds should be wary of online Valentine's Day cards, especially surprise emails that are labelled from secret admirers. Much like what happens in Germany, through BlackHat SEO techniques, they are redirected to poisoned search results that may install Trojans on their devices. Also they must be careful of opening any attachments that might enable malicious software like spyware or key-loggers to be downloaded to computers, leaving them vulnerable to cyber-criminals.

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About Bitdefender®

Bitdefender is the creator of one of the world's fastest and most effective lines of internationally certified internet security software. The company is an industry pioneer, introducing and developing award-winning protection since 2001. Today, Bitdefender technology secures the digital experience of around 400 million home and corporate users across the globe.

Recently, Bitdefender won a series of important awards and accolades in the global security industry, including "Product of the Year" by AV-Comparatives, "Best Repair 2012" by AV-Test, and "Editor's Choice" by PC Mag, that confirmed the antivirus software's leadership status among security products. More information about Bitdefender's products is available from the company's security press room. Additionally, Bitdefender publishes the HOTforSecurity blog, where readers can find stories from the underworld of internet fraud, scams, malicious software – and gossip.

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