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HAPPY NEW YEAR

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TRENDING TOPICS

- Stay Sharp: How to Outsmart Phishing Scams and Tax Fraud (Page 1)
- Protect Your Business from Health Data Risks: Health-related businesses, Beware! (Page 2)
- Key Takeaways From National Tax Security Awareness Week (Page 3)
- Tell Us Your Story: Promotional Opportunity



Stay Sharp: How to Outsmart Phishing Scams and Tax Fraud

Cybercriminals and fraudsters are ramping up their efforts, using convincing emails, texts, and social media posts to steal your information or push you into filing false tax returns. Don't let them catch you off guard! Let's look at ways to protect your wallet and your business.





NEWS & SCAM ALERTS

Spot the Red Flags

- **Think twice before clicking:** Unexpected messages with links or attachments—no matter how legit they look—are often traps.
- **Verify first:** Contact organizations directly through official websites or numbers, not the info in suspicious messages.
- **Protect your data:** Never share personal or financial information unless you're 100% certain it's secure.

The Tax Fraud Trap

- **Fake Refund Promises:** Scammers hype up bogus credits like the "Self Employment Tax Credit" to lure you in.
- **Misleading Forms:** Fraudsters misuse legitimate forms, such as the Fuel Tax Credit, to con taxpayers.
- **Social Media Misinformation:** Some influencers spread false business advice for clout or cash, leaving followers exposed to penalties or audits.

Your Game Plan

- **Stick to Trusted Sources:** Use IRS.gov or a certified tax professional for accurate advice.
- **Double-Check Claims:** If a refund offer seems too good to be true, it probably is.
- **Report Scams:** Help shut down fraud by reporting phishing and tax scams to the IRS or other authorities.

Stay alert this holiday season and beyond—your vigilance is the best defense against fraud.



Protect Your Business from Health Data Risks: Health-related businesses, Beware!

Tracking technologies like Meta/Facebook Pixel and Google Analytics may be compromising your customers' sensitive health information without their consent.

The FTC and HHS have issued a joint warning urging companies to safeguard personal health data to avoid identity theft, discrimination, and legal consequences.

Whether you're HIPAA-regulated or not, you must ensure third-party data sharing complies with privacy laws. Take action now to protect your business, maintain consumer trust, and avoid costly breaches.

Stay proactive and compliant!

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Key Takeaways From National Tax Security Awareness Week

During National Tax Security Awareness Week (Dec 2-6), the IRS and its Security Summit partners highlighted the rising threats of identity theft targeting businesses.

Scammers are using social media, phishing emails, and fake tax advice to deceive businesses into revealing sensitive information, including passwords, account details, and even personal health data. Stay vigilant and protect your business from these growing cyber threats!

Scammers are exploiting tax credits like the Fuel Tax Credit and Paid Sick and Family Leave Credit to deceive businesses, alongside fraudulent offers from impersonated charities. The IRS strongly encourages businesses of all sizes to take immediate action to protect their data. Key steps include regularly updating security software, using multi-factor authentication with strong passwords, and encrypting all devices.

As the holiday shopping season and tax season approach, staying vigilant is crucial. ***Never click on unfamiliar links or respond to unsolicited messages without proper verification.***

To help safeguard your business, visit the **[FTC's Cybersecurity for Small Business](#)** page, report any suspicious activity to the IRS, and ensure your business information, such as your EIN, is up-to-date.

You can enhance your security measures and defend your business against the growing risk of identity theft.

3 Key Tactics To Secure Your Business:

- **Protect Your Business Email:** Scammers impersonate your business by spoofing your email to steal passwords, bank info, or money. Protect your business with email authentication, security updates, staff training, and prompt reporting of incidents.
- **Understand The Importance of NIST Cybersecurity Framework:** NIST Cybersecurity Framework helps businesses manage cybersecurity risks. It covers five areas: Identify, Protect, Detect, Respond, and Recover. These guidelines help to safeguard networks and data, and is voluntary for businesses.
- **Insurance For Cyber Attacks:** Cyber insurance can help protect your business from costly cyber attack losses. Consider first-party and third-party coverage for data breaches, legal expenses, business interruption, consumer claims, and crisis management.

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