



Public Service Announcement

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION



January 26, 2004

X-BOX GIVEAWAY

The Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) has received numerous reports regarding a spam e-mail designed to harvest debit or credit card information. The subjects are sending spam to thousands of potential victims, advising these recipients they have won a Microsoft X-Box. The e-mail instructs the recipients that in order to claim their prize, they need to go to a website, and a link is supplied in the e-mail. Once the victim visits the website, they are asked to supply their debit card account number and personal identification number (PIN) to pay the shipping and handling charges.

Victims who have provided this information have also reported unauthorized debits made from their accounts in excess of the shipping and handling charges. The victims become suspicious when they do not receive the item, and their monthly statement advises the debit was made in excess of the agreed amount. Some victims have reported that their accounts have not immediately been debited (the subject may be waiting to use or sell the information). The debit may not appear for several weeks or months. This way the debit is not directly associated to this subject.

The IC3 is cautioning citizens against participating in this type of transaction, and advising not to release any debit card or PIN information to unknown individuals or those soliciting this information via e-mail.

Anyone who believes they may have been a victim of this or a similar incident may notify the IC3 through its website, www.ic3.gov. It is critical for those filing complaints to include the original e-mail with the full headers, including the Internet protocol address.