

Online Security

It May Not be Visa or MasterCard Calling: The Visa and MasterCard Telephone Credit Card Scam

Beware of this new phishing scam where the crooks have all the information they need, except for one thing: your PIN number. Here's how it works. An individual receives a call from someone who identifies themselves and says, "I'm calling from the Security and Fraud Department at Visa (or MasterCard, or any institution). My badge number is 12460. Your card has been flagged for an unusual purchase pattern, and I'm calling to verify. This would be your Visa Card which has been issued by (name of bank). Did you purchase an Anti-Telemarketing Device for \$497.99 from a Marketing company based in Arizona?"

When you say, "no," the caller continues with, "Then we will be issuing a credit to your account. This is a company we have been watching and the charges range from \$297 to \$497, just under the \$500 purchase pattern that flags most cards. Before your next statement, the credit will be sent to (gives your address), is that correct?"

When you reply, "yes," the caller says, "I will be starting a Fraud investigation. If you have any questions, you should call the 1-800 number listed on the back of your card and ask for Security. You will need to refer to this control number." The caller then gives you a six digit number.

Here's the trick!

The caller then says, "I need to verify you are in possession of your card," and asks you to turn over your card to look at "some numbers". There are seven numbers. The first four digits are the last digits of your credit card number. The last three are the security numbers, that "verify you are the possessor of the card." These are the same numbers you use to make internet purchases to prove you have the card. The caller will ask you to read the three numbers. After you read the three numbers, the caller will say, "That's correct; I just needed to verify that the card has not been lost or stolen, and that you still have your card. Do you have any other questions?" After you say "no" the caller then thanks you and states, "Don't hesitate to call back if you do."

You actually say little, and you are never asked for or told your card number. If you were to call the 1-800 number and contact the REAL Visa Security Department, you would discover that it was a scam and a charge of \$497.99 was charged to your card.

What the thieves want is the PIN number on the back of the card, those three security numbers. Don't give it to them. Instead, tell them that you will contact Visa (or MasterCard) directly for verification of their conversation.

The real Visa would never ask for anything on the card, as they already know all the information since they issued the card.