

Computer Support Scams

Devon Trading Standards are warning the public to be aware of ongoing attempts by computer fraudsters to scam cash from them by telephoning and claiming to represent Microsoft or other web support companies.

Over the last year there have been a large number of these unsolicited calls, usually originating from India. The caller typically advises the victim that their computer is infected with 'viruses', which can be repaired if the caller is given remote access to the machine. Attempts are then made to obtain money from victims, some of whom have lost several hundred pounds at a time for useless 'software fixes', some are also persuaded to download software onto their computers which may cause further damage which the trader will ask for more money to fix. Some of the traders become aggressive or abusive if the customer does not send them money and threaten to infect their computer further.

The public should be aware that Microsoft never use cold-calling methods to sell their products. These calls are from criminals, who are intent on taking victims' money and gaining access to personal information on computers.

The strong advice from Devon Trading Standards is to immediately hang up if you receive a phone call from anyone claiming that there is a problem with your computer. Likewise you should never allow strangers remote access to your computer or part with personal information which can be used to steal your identity and bank details.

Further advice on this or any other Trading Standards matter can be found by calling Consumer Direct on 08454 040506.
