



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CYBER THIEVES MAKING A BUNDLE POSING AS "FRIENDS"

RICHMOND, VA Impersonating "friends" on social networking sites such as Facebook has become an increasingly profitable business for Internet crooks. Thieves are hijacking accounts and using them to send emotional pleas for help like "I lost my wallet in London and desperately need money to get home!" In many cases, the recipients wind up wiring hundreds, sometimes thousands of dollars to the thieves.

National White Collar Crime Center (NW3C) computer crime specialist Nick Newman was invited to appear on NBC's Today Show recently to talk about this type of scam and demonstrate just how easy it is to hack into someone's account. According to Newman, "everyone who has a computer and access to the Internet in America is potentially vulnerable."

In recognition of National Cyber Security Month, NW3C reminds consumers that they should always challenge suspicious emails by asking the sender questions that only the "real" sender would know. Recipients of these emails should also attempt to contact the sender through some other means such as a simple phone call or a call to the sender's friends, family or co-workers to verify the legitimacy of the communication.

People who feel they've been victimized should notify their local police and file a complaint with the Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) at www.ic3.gov

About NW3C

NW3C is a leader in helping law enforcement combat economic and cybercrime. Visit the NW3C Web site at www.nw3c.org