



# The Triangulation of ACH Fraud, Wire Fraud and Check Fraud

Timothy B. Noone, CTP
Executive Vice President
Citizens Business Bank

David Sandomenico, CTP & CPA
Senior Director,
Capital Markets & Analysis
IQVIA

**Greg Litster President SAFEChecks** 







## **Fraud and the Coronavirus**



"...Moreover, the risk of B2B payments is even higher particularly as more employees work from home. Recently, Europol issued a warning of how cybercriminals and other fraudsters are adjusting their strategies to take advantage of the current climate uncertainty stemming from the

drivers-of-innovation--1243725

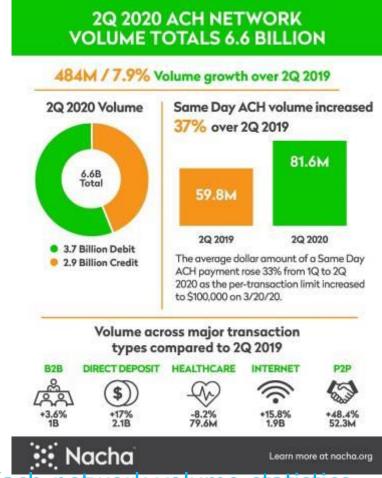
https://thepaypers.com/expert-opinion/b2b-payments-2019-2020-key-

∕IFP 2020 →

coronavirus...."

## Almost 7 Billion ACH transactions in 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2020 alone!





https://www.nacha.org/content/ach-network-volume-statistics







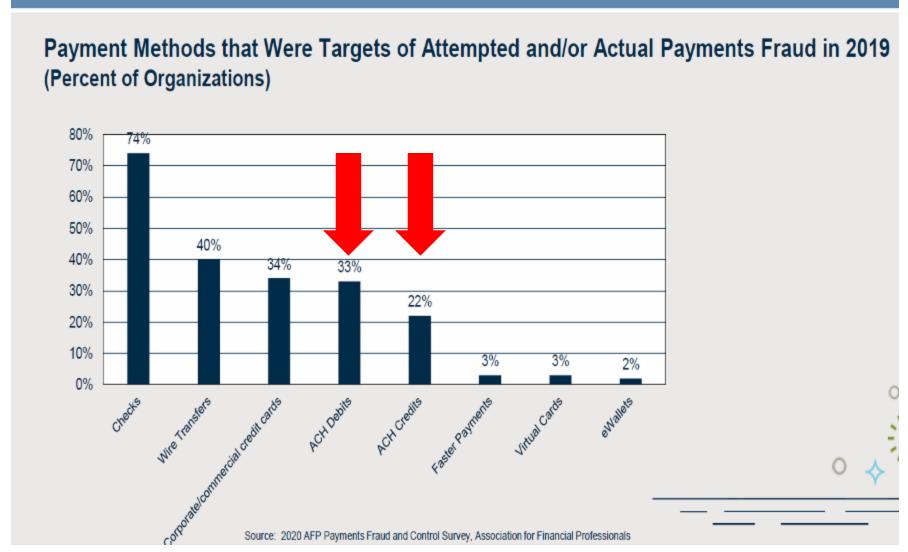
ACH Network = one of the safest payment systems in the world...but...

ACH fraud has almost tripled, from 12% in 2010 to 33% today (Unauthorized ACH Debits)

AFP 2020 Payments Fraud and Control Survey







AFP 2020 Payments Fraud and Control Survey





It is usually not the payment method itself that is compromised but the processes leading up to the payment initiation....by gaining access to internal systems, fraudsters may successfully be able to generate ACH files...." AFP 2020 Payments Fraud and Control Survey

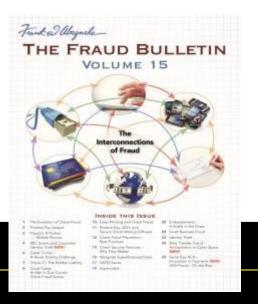






Most ACH fraud could have been prevented if "best practices" had been followed by organizations or individuals. Some of these practices include:

- Know the person with whom you are dealing fraud happens by incorrectly assuming an unknown party is legitimate
- Utilize your bank's fraud detection and prevention resources such as ACH Filters, Blocks, Transaction Review, UPIC codes
- Monitor your accounts daily



Abagnale Fraud Bulletin, Volume 15





## **ACH Filters and Blocks**

Prevent <u>unauthorized</u> ACH debits

from paying against your bank account

An unauthorized ACH debit MUST be returned within 24 hours after it posts or it

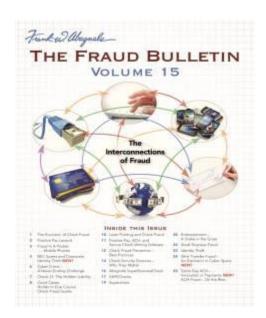
**CANNOT BE RETURNED!** 

**ACH Filters and Blocks are available through your Bank** 





- Segregate accounts for better control, e.g.
  - collections vs. disbursements
  - high volume vs. low volume
  - paper vs. electronic
- Use encrypted email for confidential information



- Mask account numbers and tax ID numbers in correspondence
- Collect bank tokens and change passwords when an employee leaves the company and contact your bank to remove them as a signer or authorized user of ACH origination services.

Abagnale Fraud Bulletin, Volume 15







Tim "Mayhem" Noone, Executive VP

## Wisdom from the Trenches





## Wire Fraud is Cybercrime

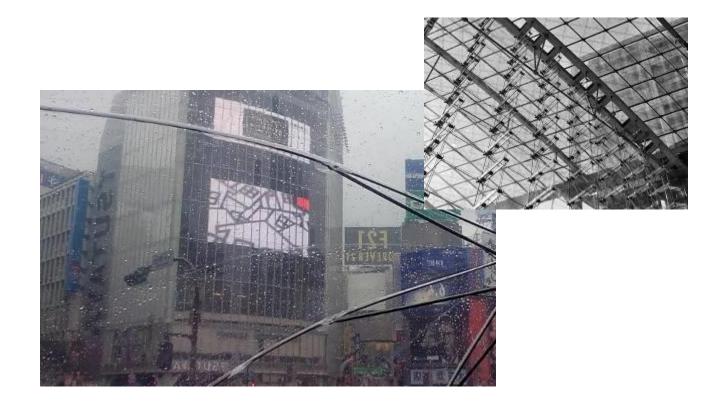
## **Cybercrime**

Hackers, **B**EC Scams & **V**EC Scams









The Transparent City....

Vendor Email Compromise / BEC





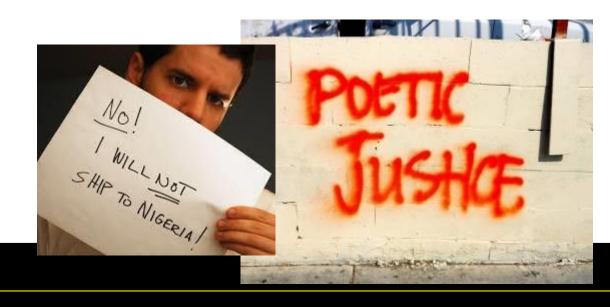




Top Secret Mergers and Acquisitions

## More BEC scams

Poetic Justice... Nigerian Letter









"Cyprus is nice this time of year..."



Lonely Hearts Club Chat Room Romance....

## Money Mules







"But we don't have that form on file..."

Phishing







"Please hold for the Managing Partner...."

Reverse Phishing





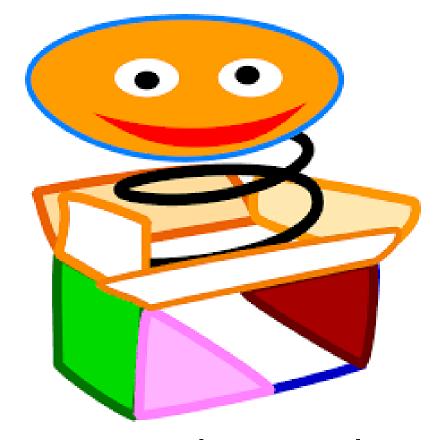


South of the Boarder Leasing....

**Vendor** Email Compromise







Pop goes the Fraudster....

Man in the Middle and Computer takeover





## << Video >>

Cyber Crime: Hackers, Zeus, Russian Mules & \$70 Million

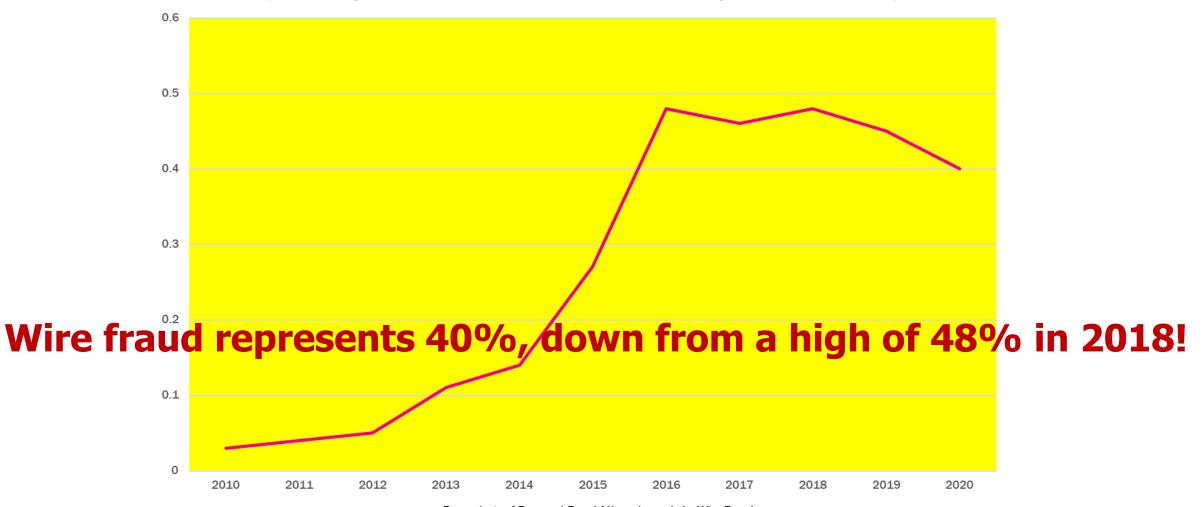






## Wire Fraud 2010 - 2020

(AFP Payments Fraud and Control Surveys 2010 - 2020)





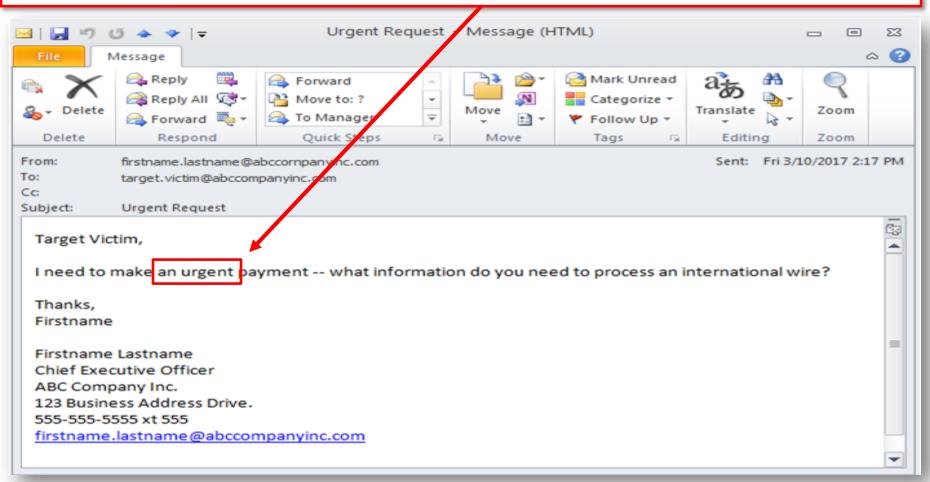


The problem is <u>not</u> the bank's wire transfer system.

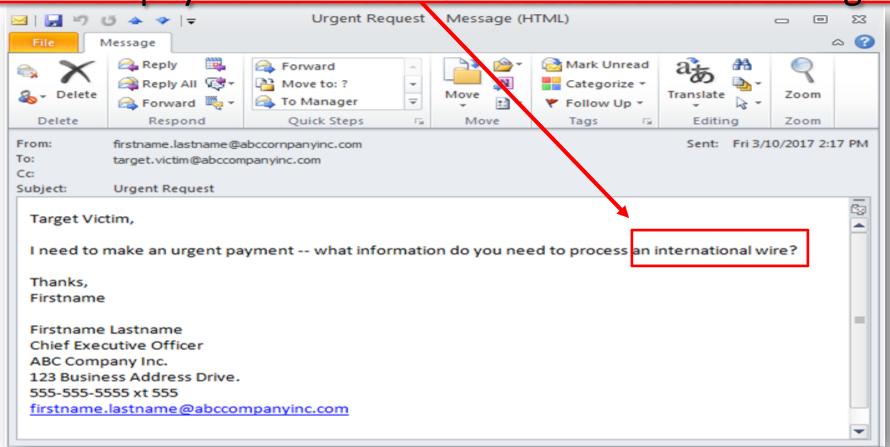
## It's a human failure.

Somebody falls for a clever social engineering scam.

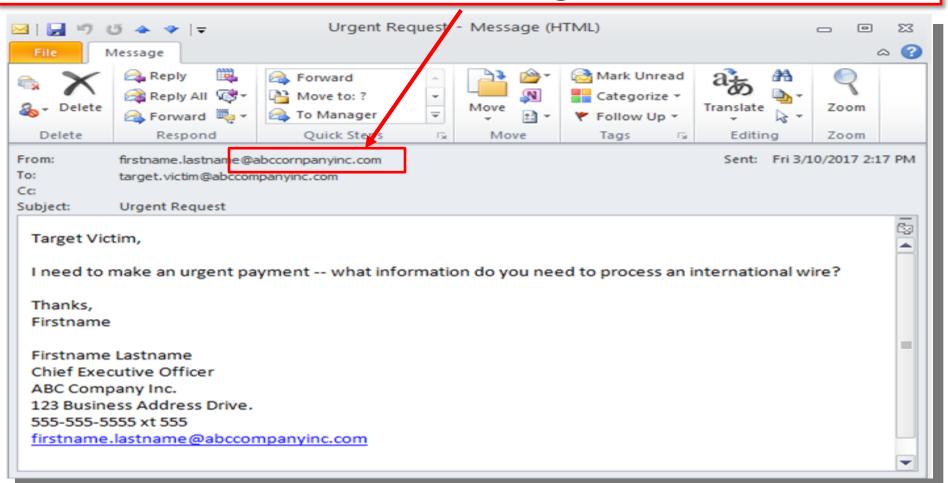
## Requests are typically urgent and confidential



International wires are most common, but requests for US payments and W-2 records are increasing



## Look for **SPOOFED** domain registrations because...



Identifying the Difference in Email Domains

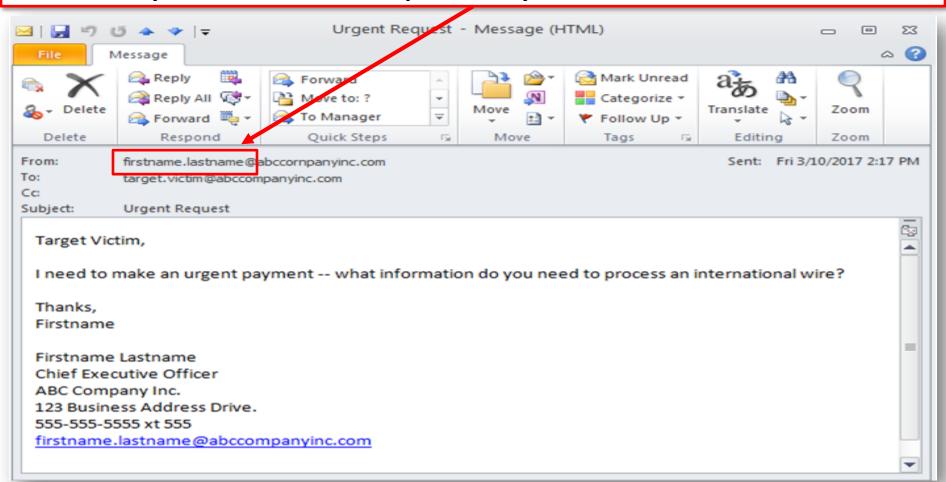
firstname.lastname@abccompanyinc.com

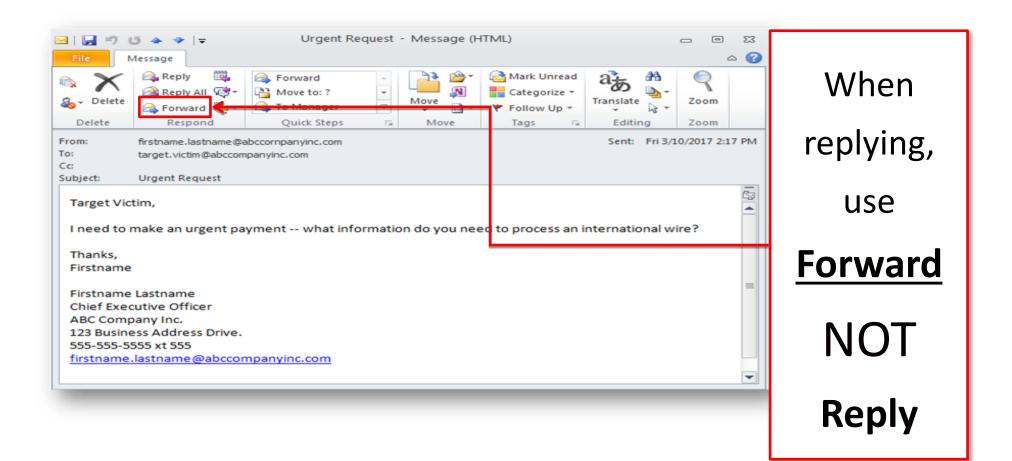
firstname.lastname@abccornpanyinc.com



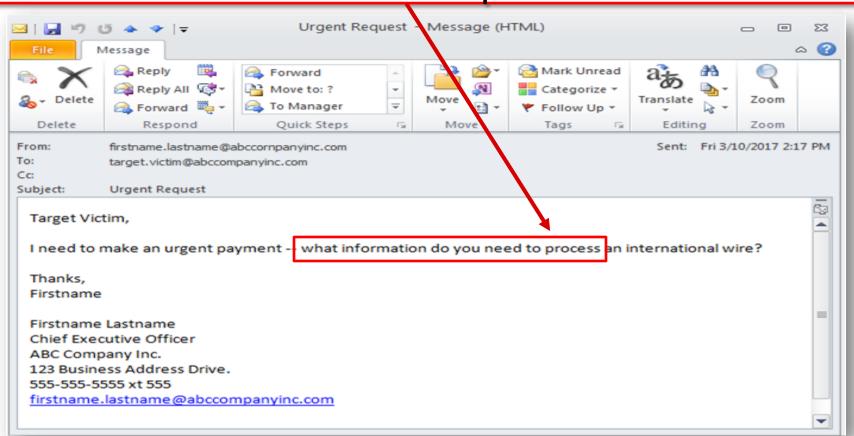


## It's very hard to **limit** publicly available information

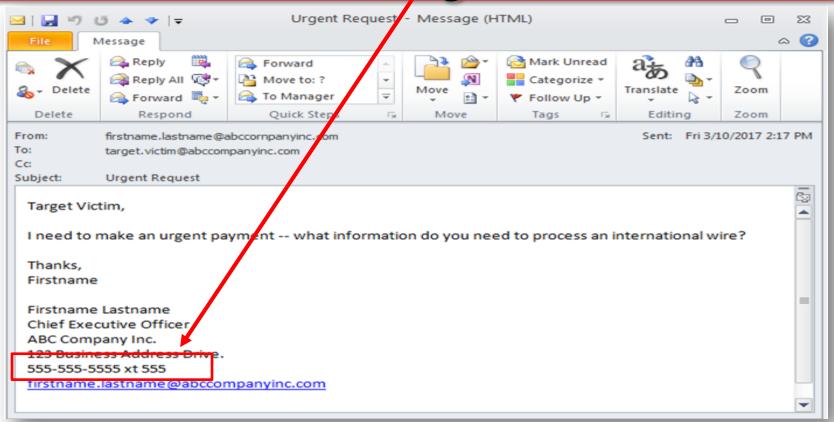




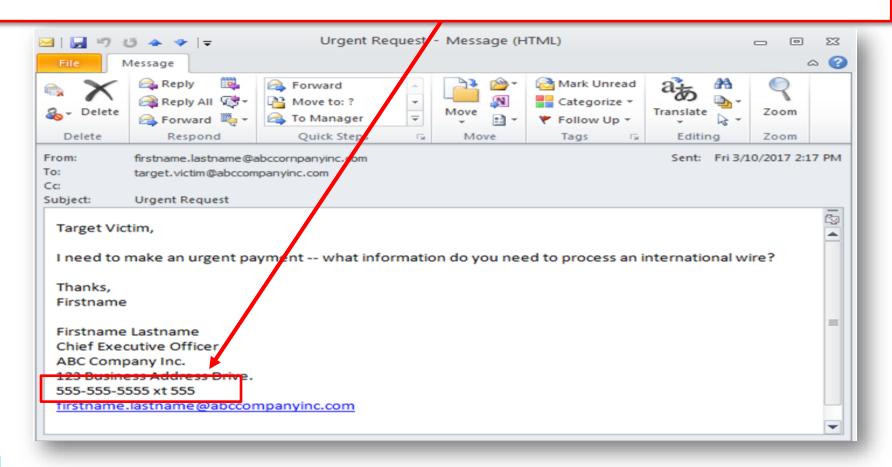
## Implement a **formal process** for Wire Transfers and W-2 requests



# Do **callbacks** or other **out-of-bank** verification to a known good contact source



## NEVER call the number on the email



### << BEC Scam Video >>



BEC scams

FILTER



## **Business Email Compromise**

Trend Micro • 6.5K views • 1 year ago

Business Email Compromise (BEC) scam years.

## << BEC Scam Video >>



### << BEC Scam Video >>

### This EXCELLENT video has been taken down (but I captured it)



### **Wire Fraud Court Case**

### **Choice Escrow and Land Title**

VS.

**BancorpSouth Bank** 

Important Link

http://courtweb.pamd.uscourts.gov/courtwebsearch/mowd/qmC2dt555T.pdf





# Choice Escrow and Land Title vs.

## **BancorpSouth Bank**

March 17, 2010: Bank received an online banking wire transfer request to wire \$440,000 from Choice Escrow's Trust Account to the <u>Isle of Cypress</u>

Request NOT legitimate – Choice Escrow employee's computer had been hacked; taken over by fraudsters

http://courtweb.pamd.uscourts.gov/courtwebsearch/mowd/qmC2dt555T.pdf





## Customer failed to implement Dual Control

Bank required online banking customers sending wires to utilize "Dual Control"

Wire transfer could only be effectuated by two individuals using separate User IDs and passwords

Choice declined in writing, TWICE, to use Dual Control



# Choice Escrow and Land Title vs. BancorpSouth Bank

- ✓ Choice Escrow's attorney contended "Dual Control" was not 
  "commercially reasonable" because...
- ✓ Attorney: "...at times, one or both of the two individuals authorized to perform wire transfers through the [bank] system were out of the office due to various reasons."
- Court disagreed. Choice Escrow held liable for loss.



## Official Comments to the Funds Transfers provisions of the UCC

"The purpose of having a security procedure deemed to be commercially reasonable is to encourage banks to institute reasonable safeguards against fraud but not to make them insurers against fraud.

"A security procedure is not commercially unreasonable simply because another procedure might have been better or because the judge deciding the question would have opted for a more stringent procedure. The standard is not whether the security procedure is the best available."





## Official Comments to the Funds Transfers provisions of the UCC

"Sometimes an informed customer refuses a security procedure that is commercially reasonable and suitable for that customer and insists on using a higher-risk procedure because it is more convenient or cheaper. In that case, under the last sentence of subsection (c), the customer has voluntarily assumed the risk of failure of the procedure and cannot shift the loss to the bank."



### **Prevent Unauthorized Wire Transfers**

Wiring money: Require <u>two</u> different computers, <u>two</u> different users/passwords: FIRST to <u>initiate</u>, SECOND to approve and <u>release</u> funds.

Employees initiate Wire/ACH via own computer

Release Wires/ACH only using a dedicated, banking-only computer.



### **Prevent Unauthorized Wire Transfers**

✓ VERBALLY confirm ALL bank change notifications

✓ CALL phone # in file – not # on notification

✓ Buy check fraud and cyber crime insurance

### **Prevent Unauthorized Wire Transfers**

To help avoid losses and <u>shift liability</u> for cyber and fraud losses, follow your bank's internal controls and tech recommendations.

Failure to implement your bank's recommendations may result in your organization being held liable for losses.

Your bank <u>IS NOT RESPONSIBLE</u> to monitor your computers or hire or educate your employees.

## Mobile Banking Fraud — merging the new with the old....







### Mobile Banking Deposit Fraud

### Scenario: A check is mailed to Dishonest Don

- ✓ Don uses a smart phone app to deposit check
  - ✓ Takes pix of front of check
  - ✓ Endorses the back of a different check
  - ✓ Uploads check; pays at drawer's bank
- ✓ 3 days later, Don cashes the same check at a check cashing store, endorsed for first time
  - ✓ 2<sup>nd</sup> check hits the drawer's bank account (check is presented for payment twice)



## Who Takes The Loss?

### The answer is found in the Rules governing

### Check 21

**AND** 

The Uniform Commercial Code (UCC):

**Holder In Due Course** 



### **Mobile Banking & Check 21**

- 1. Mobile depositing is Remote Deposit Capture, part of Check 21
- 2. Check 21 has specific rules that govern Remote Deposit Capture (mRDC)
- 3. The Rules determine who takes the loss

### **Check 21 Rules**

### **Two Warranties:**

- ✓ Image of check is clean & legible;
- Check is presented for payment only one time; no double presentments.

In 2004, the Fed did not envision mobile banking smart phone apps or desktop scanners, and yet the Rules are relevant and applicable today!





### Under the § 229.56 Warranty...

Bank of First Deposit (BOFD) can charge the loss against its customer's account

Liability for the loss falls on the bank that allowed its customer to download the app

### **Warranty Claims**

- ✓ A Breach of Warranty claim can be filed within <u>one year</u> from the cause of action.
- ✓ Cause of action begins to run the date the injured party first learns of the loss.
- ✓ <u>Claims</u> must be made within <u>30 days</u> after the person has reason to know or further losses cannot be claimed.
- ✓ Comparative negligence applies.



### **Email: Breach of Warranty Claim**

### **Greg Litster**

From: .ca.us>
Sent: Wednesday, February 7, 2018 10:54 AM

To:

Cc: greg@safechecks.com

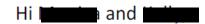
Subject: Re: UNRESOLVED: Check 21 Breach of Warranty Claim - City of

Thank you for the update I will look for the \$30.00 credit and will contact the check cashing store to let them know that reimbursement for the \$125.00 check and \$30.00 returned check charge are forthcoming.



Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 7, 2018, at 10:42 AM, the second second second bank.com wrote:



According to our back office: A Breach of Warranty claim was submitted to Bank of America on January 12, 2018. The claim was honored and and and a submitted to Bank of America's recourse will be to seek reimbursement from their customer have credited \$30 to City as well.



Thank you,

### << Mobile Banking Fraud Video >>







### **Checks & Check Fraud**



Why talk about Check Fraud?

















## **Association for Financial Professionals Payments Fraud Survey**

**50%** of large organizations

(plus millions of smaller organizations)

still issue checks





## "Checks remain the most-often targeted payment method by those committing fraud attacks."

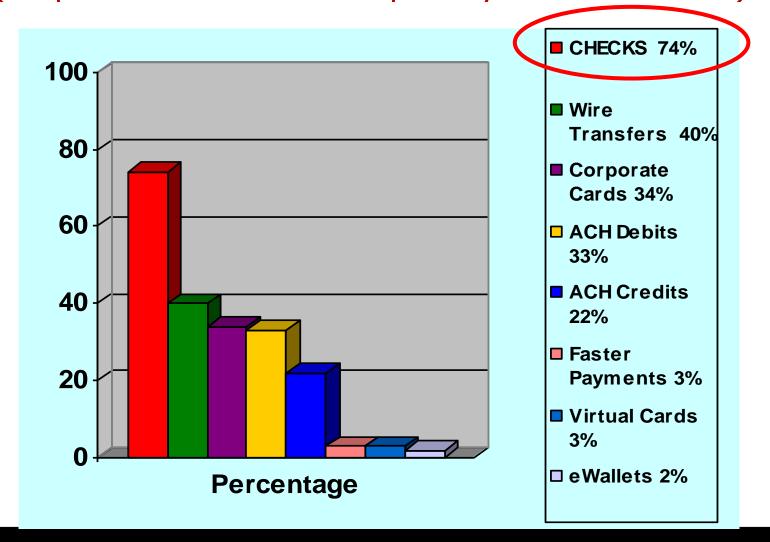






### Fraudulent Payment <u>Attempts</u> (by Method)

(Respondents were hit multiple ways-- total > 100%)







## **Quik Quiz**

**True or False?** 





### **QUIZ:** True or False?

1) Placing a Stop Payment on a check ends your legal responsibility to pay the check





Holder in Due Course trumps Stop Payments



Print: "THIS CHECK EXPIRES AND IS VOID 25 DAYS FROM ISSUE DATE"

Banks don't care what you print (This will prevent some HIDC claims)





Print: "THIS CHECK EXPIRES AND IS VOID 25 DAYS FROM ISSUE DATE"

Don't reissue the check until Day 26

("90 days" or "180 days" are too long!)





### **QUIZ:** True or False?

2) Positive Pay will catch all check fraud attempts



Pos Pay won't catch <u>Altered</u> Payee Names or counterfeit checks <u>using the same check number</u>





### **QUIZ:** True or False?

3) Payee Positive Pay will catch all check fraud attempts including added payee names



Won't catch ADDED Payee Names placed two (2) lines above the original payee name





### **QUIZ:** True or False?

4) If you're using <u>Payee</u> Positive Pay the quality of your check stock doesn't matter



If the counterfeit checks looks "genuine" you can be held liable for the check under Holder in due course

(See Triffin v. Somerset Valley Bank and Hauser Contracting Co.)





Frank W. abagnale\_

#### THE FRAUD BULLETIN

VOLUME 15



#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 10 Laser Printing and Check Fraud
- 11 Positive Pay, ACH, and Secure Check Writing Software
- 12 Check Fraud Prevention -**Best Practices**
- 14 Check Security Features -Why They Matter
- 16 Abagnale SuperBusinessCheck
- 17 SAFEChecks
- 19 Supercheck

- 20 Embezzlement
- 22 Ransomware NEW! eChecks NEW!
- 23 Identity Theft
- 24 Wire Transfer Fraud -An Explosion In Cyber Space
- 25 Same Day ACH -Innovation in Payments NEW! ACH Fraud - On the Rise...

#### ROBERT J. TRIFFIN v. SOMERSET VALLEY BANK AND HAUSER CONTRACTING CO.

You May Be Held Liable For Checks You Did Not Issue or Authorize

Hauser Contracting Co. used ADP for payroll services. A thief obtained check stock that looked identical to ADP's checks and created 80 counterfeit payroll checks totaling nearly \$25,000 that were identical to the ADP checks used by Hauser Contracting Co.

A retailer who knew Mr. Hauser became suspicious and called him. Somerset Valley Bank also called. Mr. Hauser reviewed the in-clearing checks, which looked just like his, and confirmed the checks were unauthorized and the payees were not his employees. The bank returned the checks marked as "Stolen Check - Do Not Present Again."

Robert Triffin bought 18 of these checks totalling \$8800 from four check cashing agencies, claimed HIDC status, and sued both Mr. Hauser and his bank for negligence for not safeguarding the payroll checks

and facsimile stamp. Because the counterfeit and authentic checks looked identical, the lower court ruled for Triffin. Hauser appealed, but the Federal Appellate Court upheld the lower court. The Court said the counterfeit check met the definition of a negotiable instrument, and because the check and signature were identical to an authentic check, the check cashing agency could not have known it was not authentic.

Recommendation: Use a controlled check stock, which means using checks that are uniquely designed or customized for your organization and are not available blank to others. SAFEChecks and the **SuperBusinessCheck** are controlled check stocks.

Superior Court of New Jersey, Appellate Division, A-163-00T5 lawlibrary.rutgers.edu/courts/appellate/a0163-00.opn.html

ABAGNALE FRAUD BULLETIN, VOLUME 15 | Page 9



1 The Evolution of Check Fraud

Corporate Imposter Fraud NEW!

Check 21: The Hidden Liability

2 Positive Pay Lawsuit

4 BEC Scame NEW!

Cyber Crime -A Never-Ending Challenge

Court Cases:

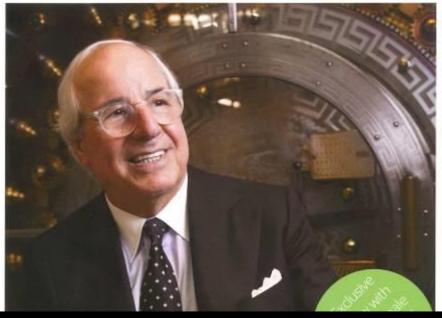
Fraud In A Pocket

Mobile Phones

Holder In Due Course Check Fraud Scams







For information:
Steve Hines
SHines@nxtsoft.com
800.915.3381

### **Online:**

https://view.publitas.com/threatadvice/threatadvice-cybersecurity-journal-issue-3/page/1

New!!

2019 | \$5.95

https://www.zulualphakilo.com/press/homeequity-catch-the-scam/





### **QUIZ:** True or False?

5) In a Check 21 world, check security features don't matter if you're using Payee Positive Pay





## FALSE

Holder in Due Course trumps Payee Pos Pay





## **QUIZ:** True or False?

6) Your payables are outsourced to a third party (your bank?) that uses Payee Positive Pay. The quality of the checks they use doesn't matter to you because if there is loss, they will take the hit.



# Depends...

...on what the contract says.

If it is silent, you have liability.





## **QUIZ:** True or False?

7) If you have a great relationship with your bank, you'll never be held liable for a check fraud loss.



# HA

Cincinnati Insurance Co. vs. Wachovia Bank





## Yesterday's generation What once was "old" is NEW



## Willie Sutton

Profession: Bank Robber

(1901 - 1980)



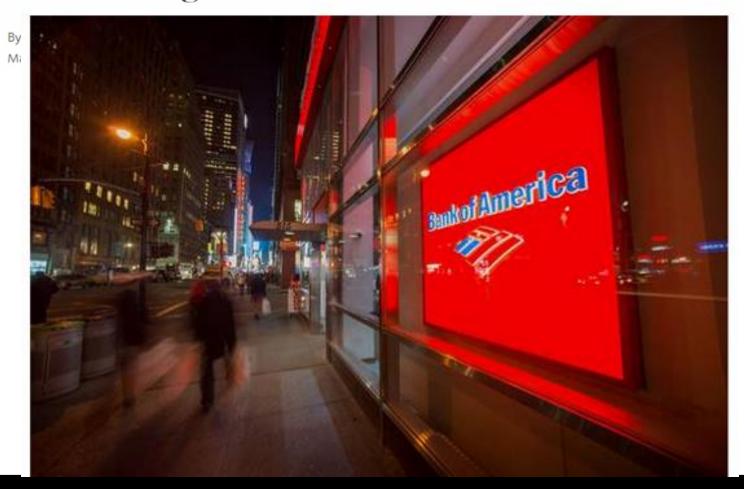
"I rob banks because that's where the money is."





## THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

#### Street Gangs Venture into White-Collar Crime







## **Outlaw Gangsta Crips, Brooklyn, NY**





"...Gangs traditionally associated with drugs and violent crimes are increasingly committing financial frauds.

Gangs are getting into crimes like <u>check fraud</u> and <u>identity theft</u> because they are more lucrative, harder to detect, <u>and carry lighter prison sentences</u>...."

Wall Street Journal, March 8, 2016









## **Don't Write Checks!**

- Use Commercial Purchase Cards
- Pay electronically (ACH)



# Which is Safer? Checks vs ACH or Wire





#### Which is Safer? Checks vs ACH or Wire

- Northern CA city population < 100,000 (happened 2018)</li>
- School bond construction money
- City received fraudulent change of bank notification
- Sent <u>two</u> \$450,000 ACH payments to fraudsters
- \$900,000 Taxpayer school bond money gone!
- If paid by check, City could file an <u>Affidavit of Forged</u>
   <u>Endorsement</u> get the money back from BOFD
- Forged Endorsement is the liability of BOFD 3 years





#### Which is Safer? Checks vs ACH or Wire

- Colorado School District (happened in 2019)
- IT Director at Gov Finance Officers Assoc 2019
- In 2019 FIVE (5) incidents Bogus <u>change of</u> <u>bank notifications</u>
- \$500,000+ ACH payments to sent fraudsters
- Taxpayer school money gone!
- IT Director "No More ACH Payments!"



### **Checks are Safer!**

- ✓ If payment had been made by <u>check</u> and mailed to a PO Box controlled by fraudster, fraudster would forge endorsement and deposit the check, wire out the money in 3 days. <u>Money is gone!!</u>
- ✓ UCC: Forged Endorsement is liability of bank of first deposit (BOFD) for 3 years (except Florida & Georgia = 1 year)
- ✓ Drawer/issuer files Affidavit of Forged Endorsement; check is charged back to BOFD. Money recovered.
- ✓ BOFD takes the loss.



## When you issue checks...

use High Security Checks





## Strategies to Prevent Check Fraud

- 1. High Security Checks
- 2. Positive Pay
- 3. Payee Positive Pay
- 4. ACH Filters or Blocks



# Effective check fraud prevention strategies START

with high security checks

Q: Which security features matter most?





## 1. Controlled check stock

Controlled check stock: Checks are not sold <u>blank</u> unless the face is customized for that organization, and

The account name, account number, & ship-to address has been verified with the bank.





## **Uncontrolled** check stock

Checks that can be purchased entirely blank by anyone and

The seller doesn't verify the check order info with the bank

Why important? → Because buyers can be <u>fraudsters!</u>





## How is

**Uncontrolled** 

Check Stock a problem?





#### **Fraudsters Create Counterfeit Checks**

#### Fraudsters use:

- ✓ Adobe Illustrator
- ✓ Scanner
- ✓ ORIGINAL blank (<u>uncontrolled</u>) check stock to create authentic-looking counterfeit checks, including <u>Cashiers</u> <u>Checks</u> & <u>Official Checks</u>.

#### << Video >>

## **Creating Counterfeit Checks**



For these videos, email Robin@SAFEChecks.com





#### Counterfeit Cashier's Checks

#### CHECK FRAUD SCAM — IT CAN HAPPEN TO ANYONE

Greenberg, Trager & Herbst, LLP v. HSBC Bank, USA 17 N.Y.3d 565 (2011)

In a landmark decision, the New York Court of Appeals upheld that the depositor of a counterfeit check is responsible for risk of loss "until the settlement becomes final. Statements concerning 'clearing' of a check and funds availability are irrelevant."

A New York City law firm (Greenberg) received an email requesting legal services from a potential client in Hong Kong. As part of the transaction, the client requested that the law firm accept a check for \$197,750, deduct \$10,000 for its fee, and wire the balance to another firm in Hong Kong. (This should have been the first clue that this was a scam.) The law firm deposited the check, which appeared to be drawn on a Citibank account, into its account at HSBC Bank.

The next business day, HSBC provisionally credited the firm for \$197,750, per federal funds availability regulations. A day later, the law firm called HSBC, asking if the check had "cleared" the account. Being told that it had, the firm wired \$187,750 to the other firm in Hong Kong as instructed. The check ultimately proved to be counterfeit, and HSBC charged back \$197,750 to the Greenberg account.

Greenberg sued Citibank for "failing to discover that the check was counterfeit" and sued HSBC for "negligent misrepresentation" for stating that the check had cleared when in fact it had been returned to HSBC, re-routed to a different Citibank processing center, and then returned again as counterfeit to HSBC.

The New York Supreme Court issued summary judgment for both banks and dismissed all of Greenberg's claims. Upon appeal, the Court of Appeals upheld the first court's decision. Citing the Uniform Commercial Code, Citibank had no obligation to detect fraud for Greenberg because Greenberg was not Citibank's client. Its only obligation was to pay the check, return it, or send written notice that it had been dishonored. It had returned the check within the prescribed deadline.

Both claims against HSBC were also dismissed. The bank's contract specifically stated that clients may not pursue claims based on a bank employee's oral representations. The Court also held that the term "a check has cleared" is ambiguous and not definitive that final settlement had occurred.

Furthermore, the Court rejected Greenberg's argument that both banks should have had procedures in place that would have prevented the fraud. The Court ruled that the law firm itself was in the best position to prevent fraud, and had a responsibility to know its client.

This scam was a text-book-case scenario, and while it is shocking that a law firm could be taken in by such a classic scam, it should serve as a warning that anyone can be deceived. Vigilance and intelligence must be used when accepting a check. Do not accept a check for more than the amount due and then wire out the difference. Visit **www.safechecks.cpm** for additional fraud prevention tips.

ABAGNALE FRAUD BULLETIN, VOLUME 15 • Page 9





## Who Sells Blank, <u>Uncontrolled</u> Checks?

✓ Virtually ALL business accounting & check writing software vendors

## **✓ Virtually ALL check printers:**

- ✓ Large, national check printers
- ✓ Small print brokers buying from wholesalers



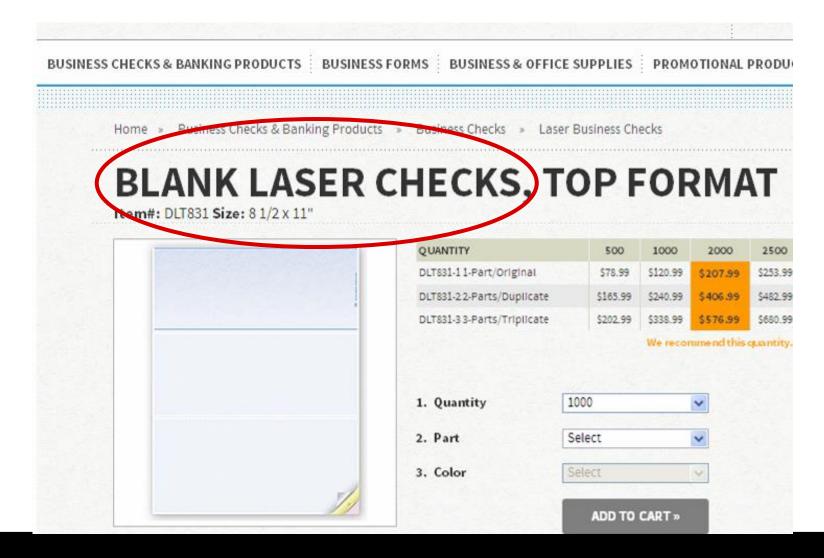
## I bought high-security checks from XXXXXX (Major National Check Printer)...

...using a bogus name and

...a closed account number!



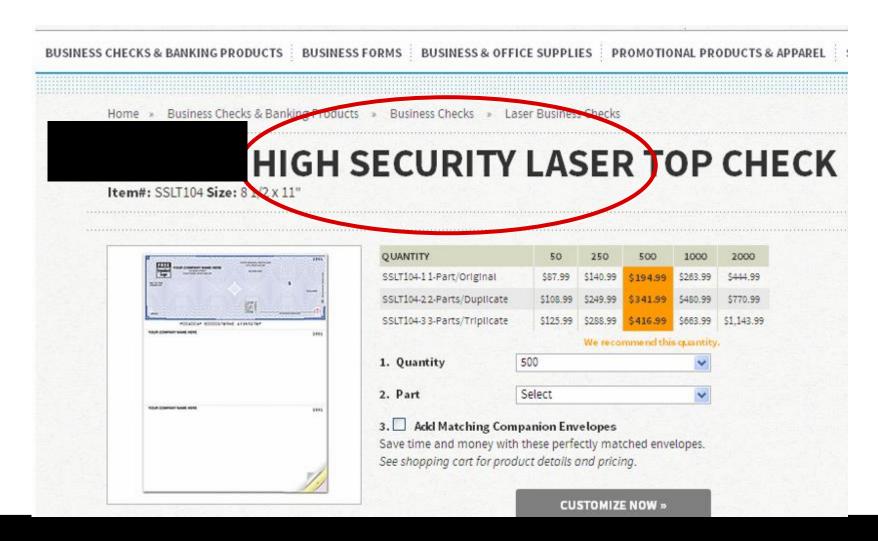
## **Uncontrolled Checks**

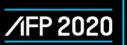




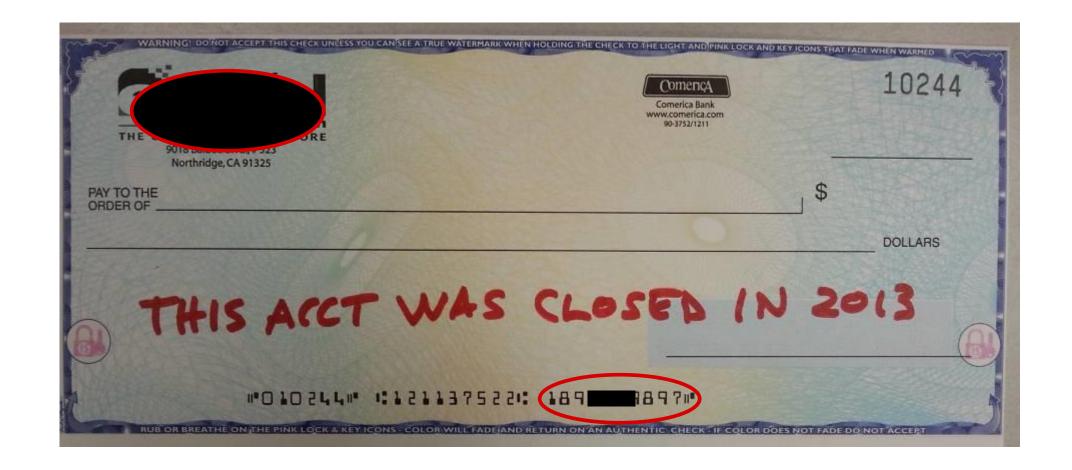


## **Uncontrolled Checks**











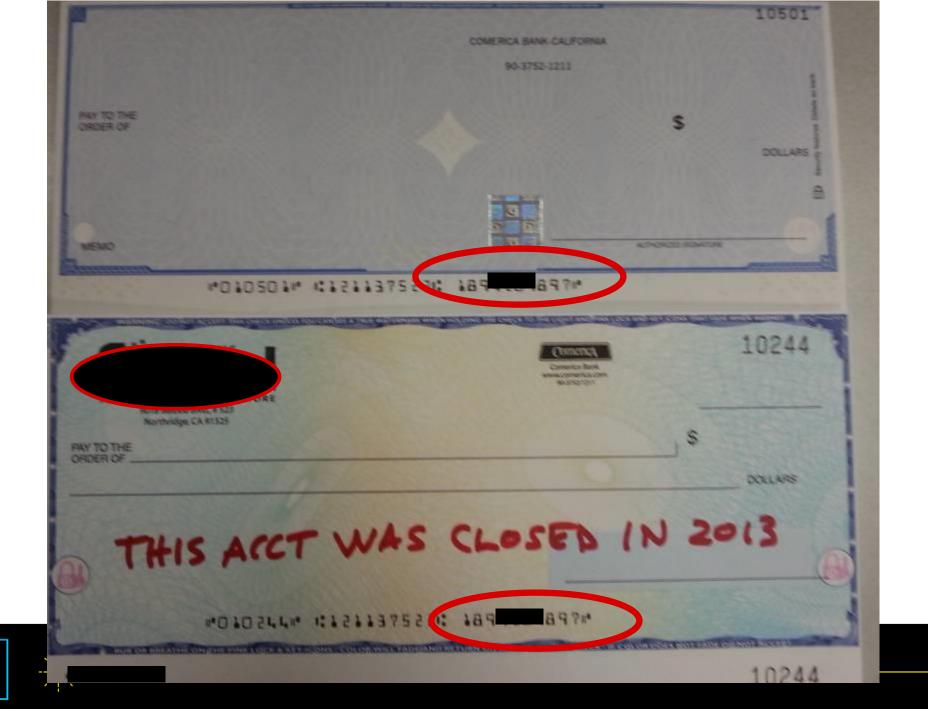


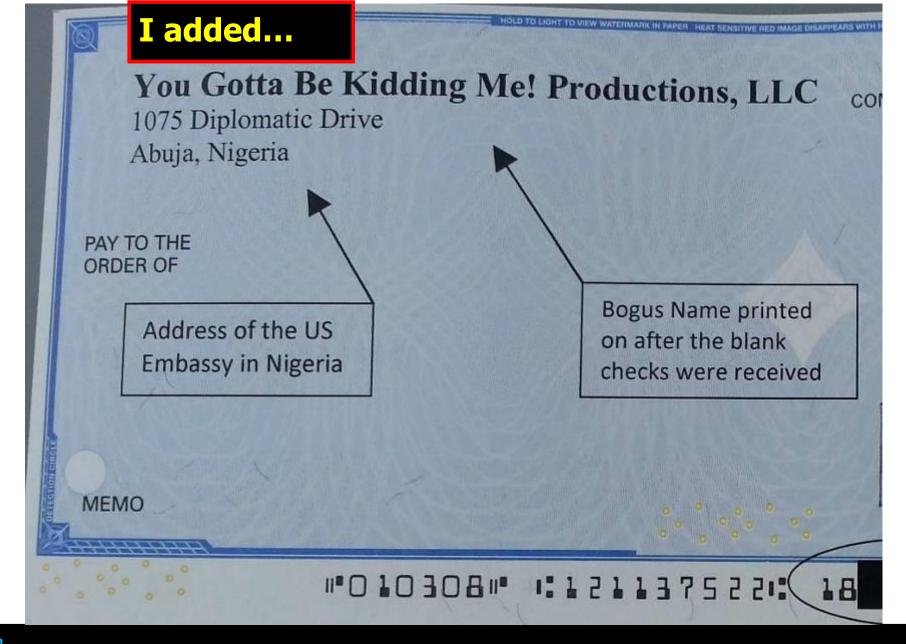
#### **BOGUS Name**







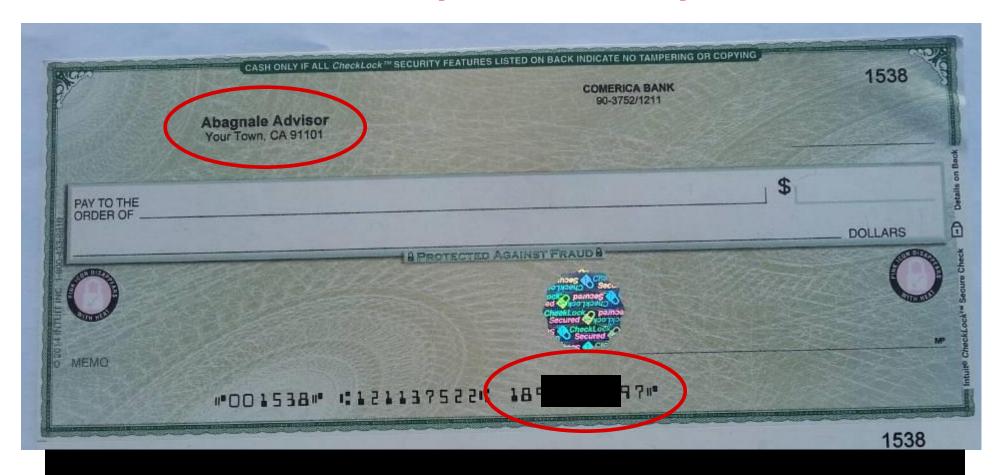








### **Intuit (Quickbooks)**

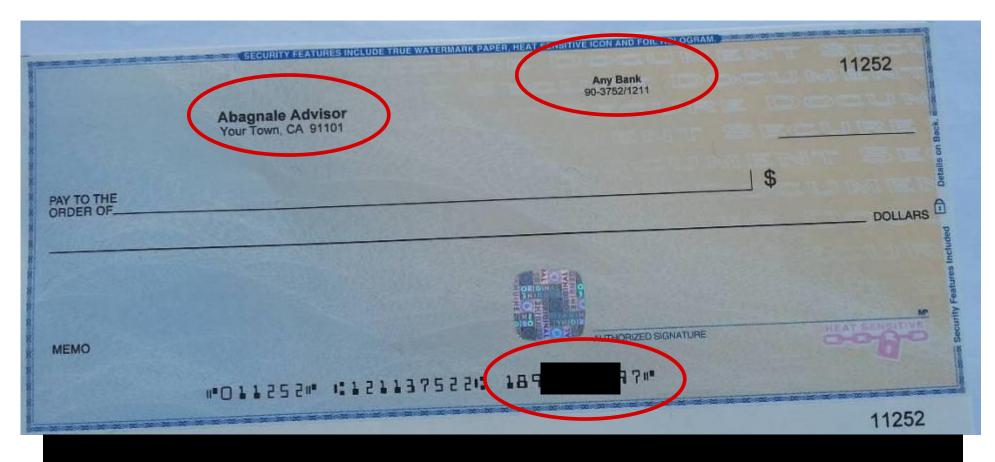


I used the same **closed** account number... & **BOGUS Name** 





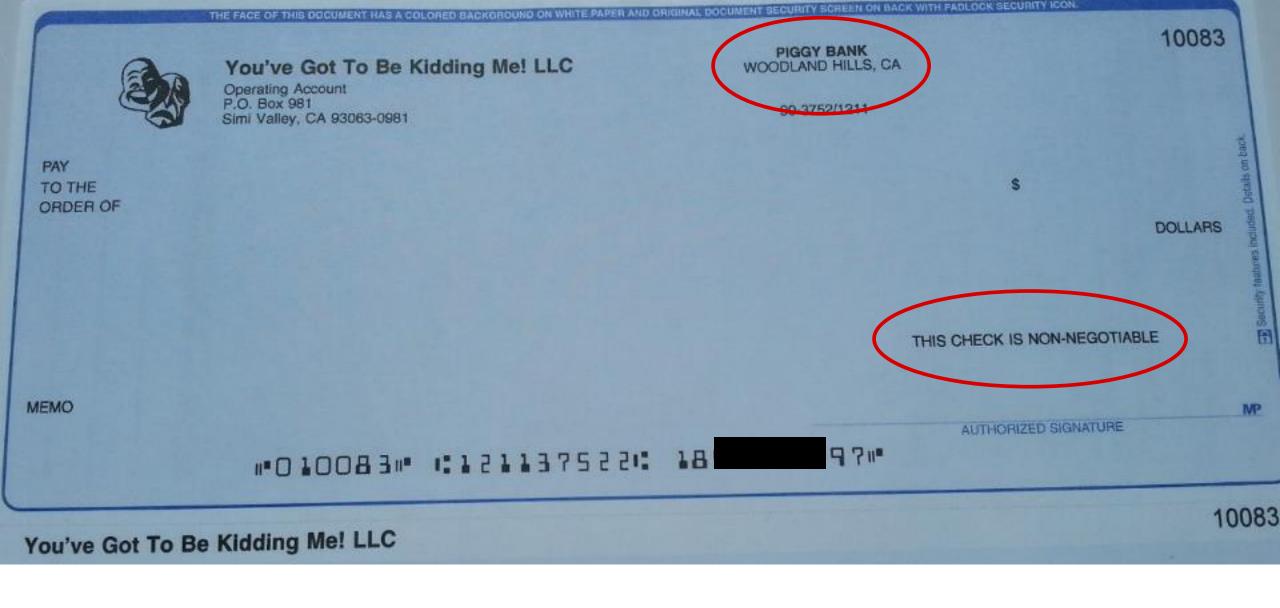
#### Costco



I used the same **closed** account number... & **BOGUS Name** 













#### You've Got To Be Kidding Me! LLC

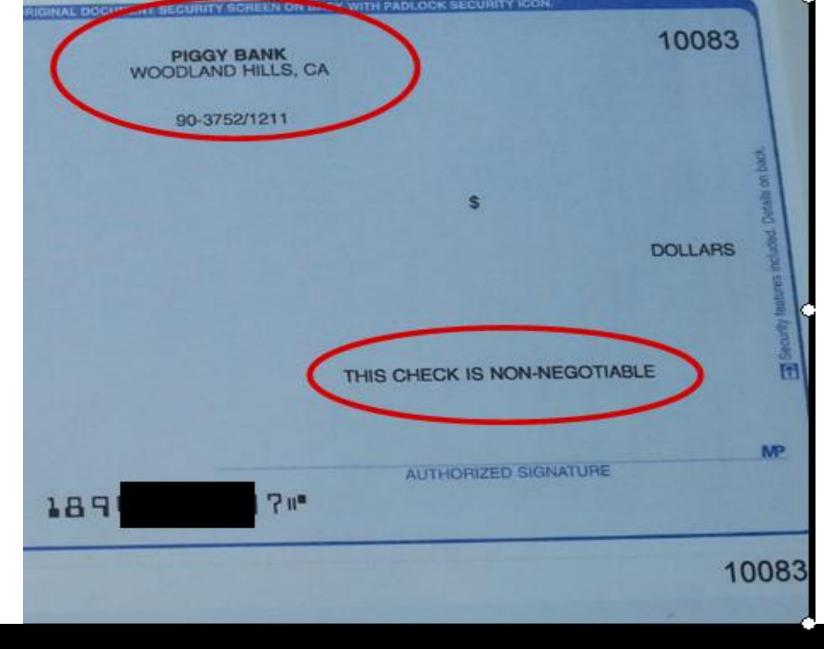
Operating Account P.O. Box 981 Simi Valley, CA 93063-0981

PAY TO THE ORDER OF

MEMO











### **Assess Your Vulnerability**

Ask your check supplier for a copy of their "order processing protocols"

Ask if the checks you buy are available totally blank, and if they are sold blank to other organizations

Why? Holder in due course → You can be held liable!





### Protocol: Every new check order is verified with the bank

#### SAFE Checks' SECURE ORDERING PROCEDURES

To prevent unauthorized persons from ordering checks on your account, all new check orders are verified with your bank. We confirm that the name, address and account number on the order form match the information on file with the bank. Check orders are shipped to the address on file with the bank. Reorders with a change of address are re-confirmed with the bank.

SAFEChecks has <u>never</u> had a check replicated or used in a scam in 24 years

ALL blank check orders are customized for that customer, with sequenced inventory control number printed on thr back.

We print their website along the edge, or logo on the face, etc.





### **Additional Security Features**

**Dual-tone True watermark** 

Thermochromatic ink

Correctly worded warning banners

Toner anchorage

Copy void pantograph

Chemical sensitivity

Chemical wash detection box

Inventory control numbers





# positive





### **Positive Pay**

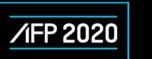
Positive Pay is an automated check-matching service offered by many banks. Each day checks are issued a file of those checks is sent to the bank.





### Positive Pay does not protect against:

- 1. <u>Counterfeit Checks</u> using the <u>identical</u> check number and dollar amount
- 2. Altered Payee Names
- 3. Added Payee Names





# Payee Positive Pay





# Payee Positive Pay Will Catch <u>Altered</u> Payee Names





## Payee Positive Pay Will Not Catch Added Payee Names

Printed two (2) lines above the original payee name

Banks don't have a solution for checks with a bogus name printed two (2) lines above the original payee name





### The "Solution" is a Secure Name Font

Secure Name Font





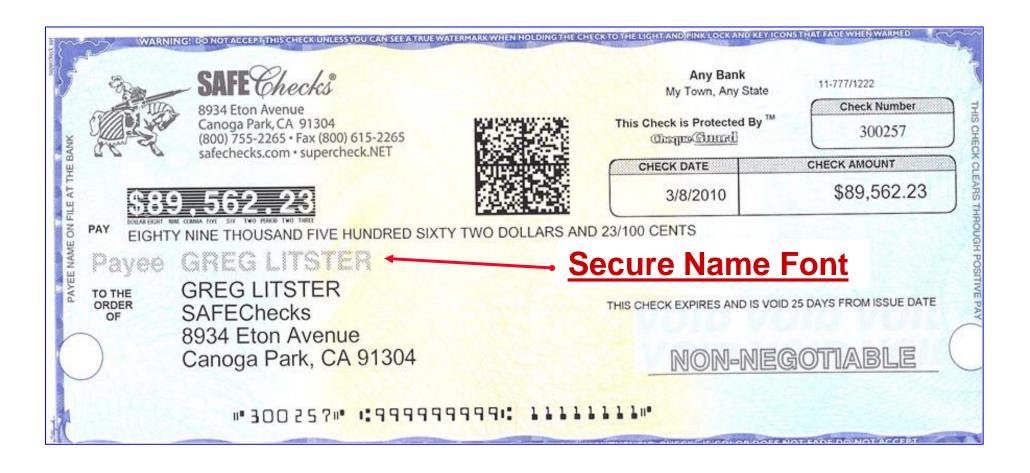
### Typical Check Layout







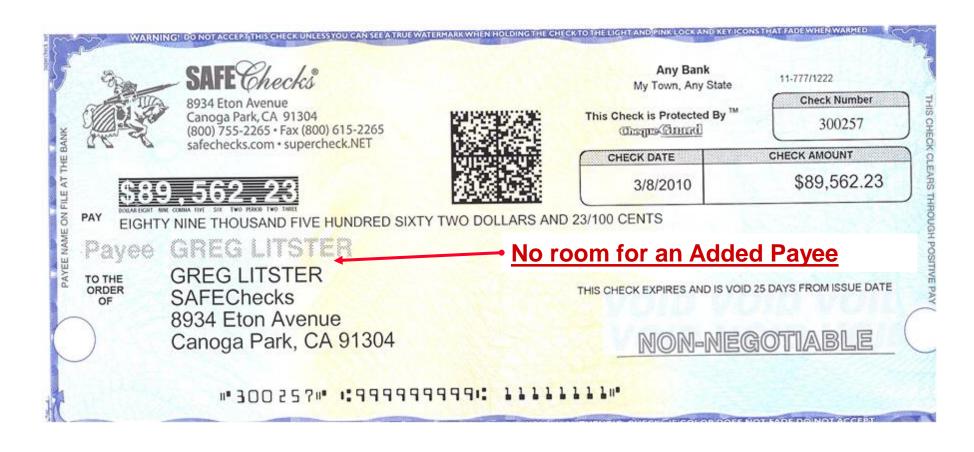
### This is the <u>IDENTICAL</u> check-issue data output after passing through the special software that creates the SECURE NAME FONT







### Leaves No Room to Add a Bogus Payee













Timothy B. Noone
CTP
Executive Vice President
Citizens Business Bank
626.568.2070
626.543.4292 cell
tbnoone@cbank.com

David Sandomenico
Senior Director, Capital
Markets & Analysis
IQVIA
(973) 394-2981
(201) 323-4738 cell
dsandomenico@us.imsheal
th.com

Greg Litster
President
SAFEChecks
(800) 755-2265
(818) 383-5996 cell
greg@safechecks.com

