

Nigerian Scam And Online Dating

As I've stated in various other articles, the internet really is a large place. Online dating is no exception, and it's important to keep your personal banking information as secure as your personal identification. You need to use the utmost caution in protecting your security.

I was surfing online and I ran into a really interesting story written by Jessica Langdon in the Wichita Times Record News titled "Cheated Love: Woman Feels She Was Victim of Nigerian 'Sweetheart Scam'."

Before I go too much further, I have one quick confession I would like to make. I really do feel for the people of Nigeria. It's a proud country with a storied history and rich cultural heritage. It is ranked as the 8th most populous nation in the world with over 140 million citizens. Yet when most internet users think of Nigeria, negative images immediately come to mind.

Think about your own email inbox and how many times you've come across a variation of the great Nigerian Scam. I know if I had \$1 for each of them I've received, I would literally have thousands of \$\$\$'s sitting in my back account.

Each variation of the scam involves the victim wiring funds from their bank account in exchange for the promise of bigger riches in the future. Sadly, these riches never materialize. This scam has morphed itself in many forms; in this instance it involves a budding long distance relationship and innocent requests for money.

I think this article is a must read for anyone getting started in online dating. It gives a real life example of what you need to be cautious of when getting to know people in the cyber world. The article goes into great detail about a woman named Carrie Thompson, who fortunately did not suffer financial hardship but she goes to great lengths to show how it would be possible to get taken for a ride.

Some of the best bits of advice to take from the article:

- Do not let the relationship move too quickly.

Although you may feel a real connection developing with another person, be cautious of someone who is inclined to say how much they "love" you or can't imagine being without you before an actual face-to-face encounter.

- If you meet through a dating site, be very cautious about moving all correspondence from the site's email/chat system over to a private system.

In this story, Ms. Thompson met her acquaintance at Match.com, but her friend quickly convinced her to move all of their correspondence over to a personal Yahoo account. Think about it, if a person has nothing to hide, why would they be inclined to move the discussion elsewhere?

- Be wary of a match who constantly brings up money.

Remember, dating online is not much different than meeting someone in a traditional method. Finances are not something that people readily share with one another. Money should never enter into a dating conversation until the relationship is very well established. If someone goes out of their way to mention how tight their finances are, use caution. Chances are they have an ulterior motive.

As with everything else with online dating, if it sounds too good to be true, it usually is. If your instincts are telling you that something doesn't seem quite right, the smart thing to do is to err on the side of caution and follow your gut.

About the Author

Jim McMenamin is the webmaster and creator of MacsdatingSite.com, a blog dedicated to the various issues of online dating. For a limited time, Jim is giving away two free eBooks, 10 Tips To Writing Your Online Dating Profile as well as 101 Steps To A Happy Relationship, when you sign up for his [newsletter](#).

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