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In focus

Safeguard your NRI Account

In focus Article- Safeguard your NRI Account!

We know Internet is one of the most convenient media for online transactions. But as the end user of all such services, we ask this million-dollar question to ourselves- How safe is online banking?

The answer is simple- While online banking and e-commerce are very safe as a general rule, you should be able to identify common online frauds and protect yourself from them.

The following article provides information on Phishing and Nigerian 419 scams, along with some generic tips for protection against fraud.

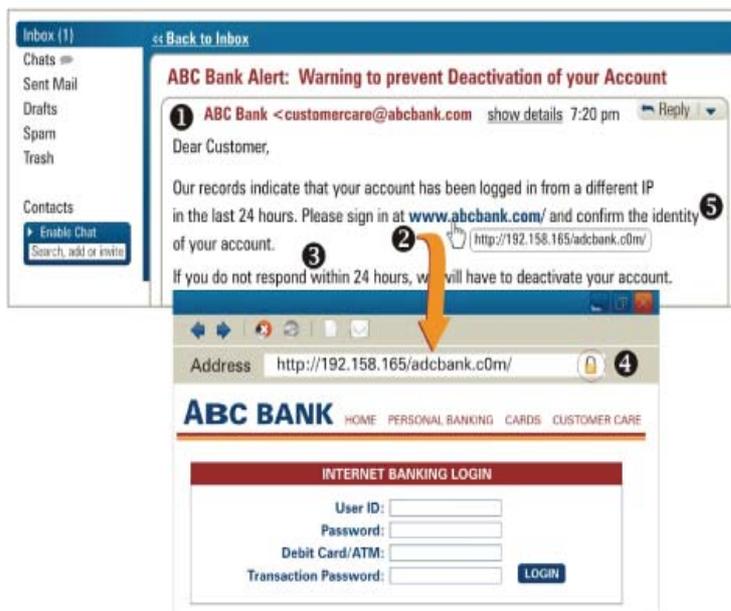
Phishing

Phishing is a fraudulent attempt usually through e-mails or SMS, or even on phone, to get your personal confidential information, which can be used to conduct fraudulent banking transactions over the Internet.

These emails may usually appear to come from a bank or a well-known organization asking for urgent update of banking information such as passwords, account or credit card number, grid values of your card, CVV number etc. If you reply to the e-mail, you might be 'phished' of your confidential banking/credit-card details and end up losing your hard-earned money.

The way to protect yourself against phishing is to identify a phishing e-mail.

How To Identify A Phishing E-Mail



- 1 The e-mail might appear to have come from your bank or a known website.
- 2 Some of the characters of the sender's URL might be missing or would closely resemble those of the genuine URL. The URL of the fake site will not match the URL of the legitimate site.
- 3 The e-mail may show urgency for action.
- 4 The padlock icon may be missing.
- 5 Any e-mail request for your personal and confidential details is almost certainly a phishing attempt.

Do not respond to such phishing e-mails
Remember, your bank will never ask you for your confidential banking details.

Nigerian 419 Scams

In the recent past, we have come across numerous incidents of fraud; perpetrated through Nigerian 419 scams. These e-mails carry tempting offers such as the ones below. Many of our customers and friends have been deceived by such messages into parting with their money.

To protect yourself, do not be tempted by these “too good to be true” options, ignore emails with unbelievable options, and never deposit money in an unknown person’s account

Tips for protection against online fraud

- **Make sure that the Online Merchants use Industry Security Standards**
The ‘lock and key’ mark at the bottom of your screen, for example, indicates that a merchant uses SSL (Secure Sockets Layer), which ensures that your communication is secured. Some merchants ask you to create a personal account that requires a password.
- **Password Protection**
 - An effective password is one that is memorable to you but not easy to guess by someone else.
 - Also, you should never write your Internet Banking user ID together with your password, to avoid easy access to this information.
- **Use a Secure Browser to Navigate the World Wide Web**
 - Use a secure browser
 - look for an “s” after the “http” in the web page address or URL.
 - Install firewall, pop-up blockers and spyware detectors to enhance your safety.
- **Internet Banking**
 - Make sure that you logout after using the Internet Banking.
 - If possible, use a virtual keyboard to key in your details.
 - Change your Internet Banking password regularly and do not disclose your password to anyone.
- **Public Computer Usage**
 - Ideally, you should not use a public computer for Internet Banking and for making transactions.
 - If you have to use one though, make sure that you do not access the fraudster’s favourite option “Remember me”, available on the website, through which one can easily access your account.
- **E-mails**
 - Configure your e-mail setting to filter out spam.
 - Do not open attachments from anyone, unless they are run through an anti-virus program.
 - Do not click on links from suspicious mails received from unknown people.
- **Protect Your Card**
 - Give your card details only when making purchases.
 - Do not provide card details for any other reason.
 - Never send payment information via e-mail. Information that travels over the Internet like e-mail, is not fully protected from being read by outside parties.

Taking control of your finances

Use these tips to manage your finances

With a little knowledge and willingness to create and follow a financial plan, most people can adequately manage their own finances even with a few ups and downs on the way. While it is not possible to have a “one-size fits all” approach to this, here are a few basic steps to help you

- **Take stock of your current situation**
 - Determine your current financial situation with regard to assets i.e. your income, savings, expenses, and debts.
 - Preparing a list of current asset and debt balances and amounts spent for various items gives you a foundation for financial planning activities.
- **Setting Goals**

As with anything else in life, without financial goals and specific plans for meeting them, we drift along and leave our future to chance.

 - Write down your financial goals viz. Your child’s education, paying off debt, retirement etc.
 - Review your financial goals periodically to differentiate your needs from your wants
- **Identify means of achieving your goals**
 - Educate yourself! With a little effort you can learn enough to make educated decisions that will increase your net worth many times over.
 - Identify small, measurable steps you can take to achieve your goals, and put your action plan to work.
 - Develop alternate courses as well so that you can amend your plan according to your situation
- **Select your course of action**
 - You need to evaluate all courses of action before you come to a decision.
 - You should also be prepared to bear the consequences of your decision eg- investing in mutual funds may cost you that much-longed for vacation, deciding to pursue further education may mean losing out on your current pay-check etc.
- **Implement your plan**
 - Implementing your financial plan requires choosing ways to achieve your goals.
 - As you achieve your immediate or short-term goals, the goals next in priority will come into focus.
 - To implement your financial action plan, you may need assistance from others. For example, you may use the services of an insurance agent to purchase property insurance or the services of an investment broker to purchase stocks, bonds, or mutual funds.
- **Revise your plan**
 - When life events affect your financial needs, this financial planning process will provide a vehicle for adapting to those changes.
 - Regularly reviewing this decision-making process will help you make priority adjustments that will bring your financial goals and activities in line with your current life situation.

NRI Expert speak

NRI Expert speak - Mr. S. Shanbhag

The scope of taxation for NRIs is extremely vast, given the various facets that have to be taken into account. Mr. Sandeep Shanbhag, an eminent personality in the field of NRI Taxation guides you through the various aspects of taxation.

In this edition, Mr. Shanbhag answers queries on taxation on transfer of funds

"I am an NRI and working in US branch of one Indian company since last 11 months and will be here for next 10-11 months. I also have an NRE account in ICICI Bank, India and I am regularly transferring money to India through my NRE account. I have following questions regarding Tax.

- 1) If I send some gift money to my mother (housewife and doesn't have any income) in India and if she keeps it as a domestic fixed deposit and earn interest on it, then does it affect my taxation indirectly?
- 2) How much money I can give her as a gift, so that she does not have to pay tax on it?"

Please find below the responses to your queries:

1. Transfer by itself does not create any tax-liability. You are giving a gift and you are a relative of the donee, and therefore, there is no tax. To safeguard yourself though, it is advisable to follow proper gift procedure. All that is required is an offer by the donor and acceptance thereof by the donee in black and white. The donee should request the donor for a gift and then the donor should remit the amount to the donee. Alternatively, the donor can offer the gift. In either case, it is necessary for the donee to accept the gift in writing (maybe through a thank you note). Only then it would be considered as a gift in India. It is preferable to mention the relationship between the donor and the donee.
2. There is no limit on the amount of gift that you can give to your mother without attracting any tax.

We will meet you in the next edition with another NRI query. Until then, Happy Banking!

**What's new
@ ICICI Bank**

Adding a payee has just got simpler

With ICICI Bank's new process, you can add your payee instantly and transfer your funds

Here is a step-by-step guide on the procedure to add your payee online

Step 1) Log in to your Internet Banking account

Step 2) Under Funds Transfer section, select 'Add Payee'

Step 3) The URN (Unique Registration Number) for the Payee will be sent to your registered email address instantly

Step 4) Enter the URN when you access the 'Confirm Payee' link. Your request will be validated, allowing you to transfer funds

You are now ready to experience the power of ICICI Internet banking!