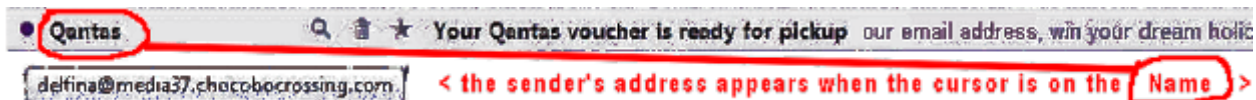




Spam or SCAM?

Check the sender's address BEFORE opening an email

Every time you check your emails you are likely to have a few that are spam. Your email service should generally tag them as such, leaving you the choice of whether to open them or not. Although most are after your money, they are not all swindlers. There will probably be a few from companies you have bought products from in the past, usually follow-ups advertising the latest updates and so on. The ones to be careful of are those purporting to be who they are not, especially any offering something for free; and particularly when you are claimed to be a lucky winner, or have come into an inheritance. The example below is one we were not surprised to receive as a private email because we do fly Qantas on occasions. When the mouse cursor was moved over the sender, the full address was peculiar.

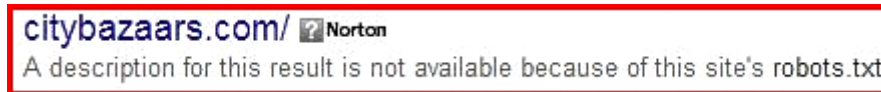


There was another further down the spam list, apparently the same sender's iconic name, but from a different source. Take it from me, NEITHER WERE FROM QANTAS!

Although your service provider sifts out the spam, it does not usually give any indication of authenticity or risk factor. This is the job of your security manager. A simple check will tell you if the actual sender is trustworthy. Ignore the first part that includes the @ symbol – this is a standard email address. Just make a note of the following website(s). In this example they are: citybazaars.com and deaconsswift.com.



We Googled the first and looked for the security assessment. In this case, Norton gave it a “?” meaning that it is currently regarded as questionable. Please take that to be SUSPICIOUS!



The fact that search engines have been blocked from entering the site for further information (robots.txt is a coding that prevents this) is an added worry and begs the question: what are they trying to hide? Should you decide to open a suspect email (I would prefer that you don't), please refrain from clicking on a link that could take you anywhere. You will certainly regret your curiosity if it results in a virus or bug invading your system. As for the type of scams that are waiting out there for you, have a read of: Focus F10 –“The Cyber Minefield”; and “Don't be Fooled by Scammers” – Money MM28.

Just remember – the Internet is a wonderful tool, but it has a double-edge that is very sharp!

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