

PLEASE PASS ON TO YOUR FRIENDS & FAMILY.

I received a call from a 'representative' of BT, informing me that he was dis-connecting me because of an unpaid bill. He demanded payment immediately of £31.00 or it would be £118.00 to re-connect at a later date.

The guy wasn't even fazed when I told him I was with Virgin Media, allegedly VM have to pay BT a percentage for line rental!

I asked the guy's name - he gave me the very 'English' John Peacock with a very 'African' accent - & phone number - 0800 0800 152.

Obviously the fellow realized I didn't believe his story, so offered to demonstrate that he was from BT. I asked how & he told me to hang up & try phoning someone - he would dis-connect my phone to prevent this. AND HE DID !!

My phone was dead - no engaged tone, nothing - until he phoned me again.

Very pleased with himself, he asked if that was enough proof that he was with BT. I asked how the payment was to be made and he said credit card, there and then.

I said that I didn't know how he'd done it, but I had absolutely no intention of paying him, I didn't believe his name or that he worked for BT.

He hung up.

I dialed 1471 - number withheld

I phoned his fictitious 0800 number - not recognized., so I phoned the police to let them know. I wasn't the first! It's only just started apparently, but it is escalating.

Their advice was to let as many people as possible know of this scam. The fact that the phone does go off would probably convince some people it's real, so please make as many friends & family aware of this.

How is it done?

This is good but not that clever.. He gave the wrong number - it should have been 0800 800 152 which takes you through to BT Business.

The cutting off of the line is very simple, he stays on the line with the mute button on and you can't dial out - but he can hear you trying (This is because the person who initiates a call is the one to terminate it). When you stop trying he cuts off and immediately calls back.

You could almost be convinced!

The sad thing is that it is so simple that it will certainly fool the elderly and vulnerable.

By the way this is not about getting the cash as this would not get past merchant services - it is all about getting the credit card details which include the security number so that it can be used for far larger purchases.

Andy ORPIN
Police Community Support Officer