

# “Work at Home” Scam Prevention Tips



## How to Avoid Getting Ripped Off by Work-at-Home Scams

With a deepening recession, many job seekers are looking for home-based careers in an effort to save on gas, clothing, childcare, transportation and other costs associated with traditional employment. “Scam artists follow market trends better than most corporations do,” contends Christine Durst, CEO of Staffcentrix. “When they see a strong movement toward a certain product, service, or desire, they move quickly to bilk unsuspecting consumers out of their hard-earned cash.”

When people understand that bad things happen and how scam artists victimize, they’re better prepared to deter crime. “While there are a lot of legitimate work-at-home jobs available, job seekers need to arm themselves with facts and common sense before entering the work-at-home trenches,” advises Durst.

To learn more about work-at-home opportunities and scams, visit [www.RatRaceRebellion.com](http://www.RatRaceRebellion.com).

### 8 Red Flags

In developing virtual-career training for the State Department and the Armed Forces, Staffcentrix realized that the public needed a source of screened home-based jobs and projects. Scammers were becoming increasingly sophisticated, the ratio of scams to legitimate jobs was surging, and the demand for home-based jobs was rising dramatically.

Staffcentrix’s researchers screen and post legitimate work-at-home jobs every day. To date, they have posted over 6,100 of these screened job leads ranging from customer service and administrative positions, to telephonic triage nursing openings, and online teaching jobs.

**1. “Work at Home” appears in the ad header.** Work-at-home is not a job title. If it appears in the ad header, there’s a good chance it’s a come-on. Scammers can rarely resist including it in the header – it’s the bait of their “hook” as they fish for desperate people to reel in.

**2. Claims that no experience is necessary and no resume is re-quested.** In the “real world” all jobs require you to do something, so it stands to reason that a legitimate ad will tell you what it is you need to be able to do. In the world of scams, a person’s gullibility is far more important than their experience or skills.

**3. You’re required to pay a fee for additional information.** Legitimate jobs do not charge you for an inquiry about the position.

**4. Unbelievable pay!** “Make \$5,000 a week working part time!” Exaggerated claims of income are a sure sign of a scam.

**5. The ad arrives as spam in your e-mail.** As if by a miracle, an ad for home-based work just landed in your e-mail inbox. How could this man from Romania have known you were looking for home-based work? “Miracles do happen, but not via spam,” says Durst. “If you receive unsolicited job offers in your e-mail, it’s probably the result of a scammer having ‘harvested’ your e-mail address from another location frequented by people who are seeking work.”

*TIP:* Move the e-mail to your trash file without using the “remove me from this list” link you’re likely to find at the bottom of the page. These links are often used to confirm that your e-mail address is active. Using them can result in even more spam.

**6. No job description.** What exactly is the ad for? Most scams give little or no description of the type of work you’re supposed to be performing – not even an allusion to such. Real job listings will always tell you what they expect you to do for them.

**7. Palm Trees, Mansions, Beaches & Bikinis.** If the ad you’re looking at features conspicuous or garish signs of wealth (e.g., palm trees, mansions, and expensive sports cars), it’s probably a scam. “Just as kidnappers do with candy bars, successful scammers often trap their victims by dangling irresistible rewards before their eyes – all of it theirs with the click of a mouse,” says Durst.

**8. “Limited number of openings”** in the subject line. We are seeking 11 people to work from home! Scammers use this tactic to build a sense of urgency in their prospective victims... “If I don’t act now, the opportunity may disappear.”

Christine Durst is the CEO of Staffcentrix, LLC which provides virtual-career training and resources to the US Department of State, the Armed Forces, community colleges and other clients. She appears often on CNN as an expert on home-based careers and scams, and has been featured in the Wall Street Journal, BusinessWeek, Consumers Digest, Forbes, and many more.

Durst is the co-author of “The 2-Second Commute”, which Fortune called “A must-read for anyone considering a home-based job.” She has been honored as an entrepreneur by Chase Bank and Working Woman Magazine, and her presentations include the United Nations and several Presidential committees.

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