

USPS Informed Delivery Service Could Set You Up For Identity Theft

November 15, 2018 - When it was introduced by the US Post Office, Informed Delivery Service (IDS) got rave reviews. It is a service that was supposed to let you know what mail you should expect to receive daily by photographing your mail and sending the pictures to your email address. Expecting a new credit card in the mail? You'd know that the morning of the delivery. That means if it doesn't show up, you have the ability to call your credit card company and let them know right away. Identity theft prevented! Well, maybe not.

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s.type = 'text/javascript';
s.src = 'http://widgets.digg.com/buttons.js';
s1.parentNode.insertBefore(s, s1);
})();
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(function() {
var po = document.createElement('script'); po.type = 'text/javascript'; po.async = true;
po.src = 'https://apis.google.com/js/plusone.js';
var s = document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(po, s);
})();
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The tables have been turned on users of IDS. Identity thieves are now using the service to target victims.

When users sign up for IDS, they are asked to provide their name, address and email along with answers to four challenge questions. Unfortunately, there is now so much information about all of us online that the answers to the challenge questions can often be purchased inexpensively through data brokers. This allows criminals to change the email address that information is being delivered to. From there, they can easily monitor your mail and intercept any shipment they think may be valuable. And it gets worse.

The number of people currently using IDS is relatively small. This means that if you don't use IDS, there is no need for a criminal to hack into your account and make changes. All they need to do is sign up through the post office for a new IDS account in your name. From there, they can start monitoring your mail and you'll have no knowledge of it.

This isn't something that could be happening. According to the US Secret Service, it is already going on. They released a memo to their law enforcement partner agencies about this on November 6th.

These crimes fall under the purview of the US Postal Inspector which is a law enforcement agency. As someone who became an identity theft victim due to mail theft myself, I can tell you that the Postal Inspector's office is horrible to deal with. In my case, there were videos of the criminals behind my identity theft cashing checks all over southern New Jersey and northern Pennsylvania. My wife and I had merchants telling us this and that they would gladly hand them over to law enforcement. But we couldn't even get the postal inspector to send someone out to get them.

Unfortunately, there doesn't seem to be an easy solution to this particular issue. For the time being, the best solution

would probably be to have the Post Office put a halt to IDS but we suspect that isn't likely to happen anytime soon.

by Jim Malmberg

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