

ASK FRANK

Former Master Forger Frank Abagnale Jr. Answers Questions About Personal Security

by Frank Abagnale

(NAPSA)—**Q: What is your number one piece of advice to consumers who want to avoid becoming victims of identity theft?**

A: Monitoring your credit history is a consumer's best plan for protecting their identity. I use PrivacyGuard (www.privacyguard.com or 1-866-GUARDME—1-866-482-7363) to protect my identity. Through PrivacyGuard, twice a year I obtain my credit report on a form that combines data from three of



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the major credit reporting agencies: Equifax, Experian and TransUnion. I also receive my credit score based on the data from one agency. During the rest of the year, PrivacyGuard helps me protect my credit by telling me whenever my credit is being reviewed. Receiving a prompt alert of credit inquiries and regularly reviewing your credit history are a consumer's best defense against identity theft.

Q: Does the Internet age make identity theft easier?

A: The Internet age makes identity theft much easier. Even what I did 35 years ago is 2,000 times easier today than when I did it. Technology breeds crime; it always has and it always will. There will always be people who are willing to use technology in a self-serving way. Luckily, technology also breeds solutions like Digital ProtectionPlus (www.digitalprotectionplus.com or 800-826-1329). Digital ProtectionPlus helps protect your identity online by providing both up-to-date anti-virus and firewall protection. This service also offers assistance should you become a victim of



identity thieves.

Q: I'm getting ready for a big trip—what should I do before I begin traveling?

A: Traveling with extra checks in your wallet, credit cards you don't need, or a list of all your bank account numbers is almost an invitation for identity theft. Too often, identity thieves start their work with a stolen wallet or purse. The more information in your wallet or purse, the easier it is for them to steal your identity. To protect yourself leave the credit cards you don't need at home. You should also join a service like IdentitySecure (1-866-263-8258) to help you cancel and replace your credit and ATM cards if they are lost or stolen. If your identity is stolen, IdentitySecure will both guide you through the process of recovery and protect you from loss.

Frank Abagnale is a retired master forger whose early life was the basis for the movie "Catch Me If You Can." He now is a spokesman for PG, DPP and ID Secure and assists companies in preventing fraud. To have your questions considered for this column, please send it to askfrank@privacy.trilegiant.com. Frank can only answer questions selected for this column.

A three-month trial membership in PrivacyGuard, Digital ProtectionPlus or IdentitySecure can be enjoyed for only \$1. The trial membership can be canceled at any time during the three-month trial period by calling toll free and the member will owe nothing further. Unless the member calls to cancel, the membership will be extended automatically for an entire year at the \$89.99 annual fee for PrivacyGuard or the \$99.99 annual fee for IdentitySecure or Digital ProtectionPlus. The membership will be automatically renewed annually upon expiration at the then-current annual fee, billed to a credit card account, without the member having to do anything further. Additionally, members may call toll free to cancel at any time and receive a pro-rata refund.