

# Security Awareness Newsletter



Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives

*What is every hacker's weekend getaway? They go phishing. — Punny Leone*

## How to Spot a Fake Conference

There is an increase in occurrences of hackers stealing money by advertising fake conferences. The bad guys impersonate an official organization and run a fake professional conference. The idea is to use the name and information of a high profile speaker to entice professionals into signing up and paying a registration fee. This issue of the Security Awareness Newsletter is to show you how to ID a fake conference and make sure that you are not scammed.

An overly grandiose title can be an indication of a fake conference. This may include words like “International” or “Universal.” **Tip #1: Be sure to check the URL for a generic name including the word**



If the conference website has **grammar and spelling errors**, this is an indication that something is wrong. After all, it takes a lot of time and effort to organize a conference, and it seems rather careless to find grammar and spelling mistakes on a legitimate conference's website.

A conference description that is broad and does not go into specific detail about a certain topic may be another sign of a fake conference. **Tip #2: Be cautious of conferences that do not specialize in anything.**

Source: Ex Ordo, Speaker Hub

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A red flag for a fake conference is that the contact details are difficult to find or completely missing. For example, if there is only one person's contact information and no mention of a physical address, there is something suspicious. **Tip #3: Set-up time to call someone that is organizing the conference. If it is not possible to talk to an actual person, it is a fake conference.**

When in doubt, check the sponsorship page. The chance of a large, well-known corporation sponsoring a small, unknown conference is unlikely. **Tip #4: Be sure to ask a colleague whether they have heard of the conference. This might help in identifying a fake conference.**



Do a quick Google search of the conference name. Is there another conference with a similar or exact the same name? This is a sign that the conference may be fake.

Is the price of the conference higher than usual? **Tip #5: Ask colleagues how much they have paid for a conference in a similar filed. The reason for this is because a fake conference will want to make sure to maximize profits, so they overcharge.**

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