

May 27, 2014

Travel Monitor

First News of the Day

**AXIS TRAVEL NOTATION** : Our clients Phone , Emails and Addresses are not given to any 3<sup>rd</sup> party without express permissions and we do not use such marketing tactics. Placing your data via websites or via other databanks can lead into this drama. It gets worse when the company who scams you is not traceable or protected under Australian laws. This is FYI.

**Members of the public are receiving unsolicited phone calls claiming to be from Virgin Australia and offering a prize.** The calls, which are not really from Virgin Australia, are automated, so as soon as recipients pick up the phone, a voice starts delivering a pre-recorded spiel. The calls are apparently part of a scam. Sometimes they say that your most recent Virgin flight has won you a prize – perhaps convincing a few people who have recently flown Virgin. A similar scam, using Qantas as ‘bait’ occurred last month.

Virgin Australia has now issued a warning about the scam, saying the so-called ‘prize’ the automated scam message refers to requires recipients of the calls to divulge their credit card information.

“We strongly advise customers to hang up immediately if you suspect you have received a scam phone call,” the airline warns. “If you have provided your details, please contact your financial institution immediately. A number of Australian businesses have been targeted in this scam including banks and other airlines.”

Just last month, the federal Government’s SCAMwatch team warned people about automated calls from scammers posing as Qantas staff claiming that they’ve won a credit towards their next holiday.

The SCAMwatch alert said: “Reports have been received from both consumers and businesses about these scam calls, where the recipient picks up the phone and hears a recorded message that claims to be from Qantas. The message will claim that because the person has recently booked a flight with Qantas, they have won a ‘travel prize’ or ‘credit points’ – typically AUD 999 – towards their next holiday.

The scammer may ask whether the person is aged over 30, whether they have a valid credit card, and finally ask for their credit card details so that the prize can be processed.

“If you hand over your credit card details, you will find that money has been taken rather than deposited from your bank account. “These scammers appear to be persistent, with some consumers and businesses reporting that they have received several of these calls in one day. Unfortunately scammers pay no heed to private phone numbers or numbers listed on the Do Not Call Register, so if you have a number like this, you can still expect to receive this call.” Qantas and SCAMwatch also warned that the scammers often pose as well-known and reputable businesses to try and convince people that they’re the real deal. Just hang up.

### [Now scammers get busy faking Jetstar Facebook pages](#)

Not for the first time, a fake Jetstar page has been tricking Facebook users. People thought they were entering a competition to win a trip to Sydney – but it was a phoney competition on an imitation of Jetstar’s Facebook page. The pages are now being taken down, but it takes time to report them to Facebook.

Moreover, the scammers have struck at the same time that the real Jetstar is offering a real competition on its genuine Facebook page. As Jetstar (the real one) put it yesterday:

- *Hi Everyone, Since Friday we’ve reported 14 fake Jetstar Australia pages and profiles to Facebook.*
- *Facebook is in the process of taking those scams down but, in the meantime, **please be careful online.***
- *If you see an offer or promotion that claims to be from us, click-through to the page it’s coming from. Scammers can steal our logo but they can’t get over 320,000 likes on their pages before Facebook takes them down If the number highlighted below isn’t at least that high, then you’re looking at a scam.*
- *If you have mistakenly given these scammers your account or credit card details, please contact your bank or financial institution immediately.*