

# Online Auction Fraud

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red24's Crisis Response Management (CRM) Centre received a call from a concerned client following a fraud committed against him on an auction website. The client had purchased a vehicle and paid more than £10,000 into what he thought was the website's holding account. After the payment was made, however, the client was unable to contact the seller via email or telephone. He then realised that the sale of the vehicle was a scam and that he had potentially lost £10,000. The client experienced difficulties in reporting the fraudulent act to the police and therefore contacted red24's CRM Centre.

The client spoke to one of our security consultants who immediately recognised the need for swift action if the client were to regain his money: if the fraudulent act was reported instantly, the bank might be able to freeze the fraudster's account and the client's money would be saved.

The case was escalated to one of red24's fraud experts, who provided advice and guidance to the client on how to report the matter to the police and how to ensure they obtained the relevant data protection forms which had been sent to the bank involved. The client was advised to stay in

close contact with the police officer attending to the case to discuss progress and to ensure that any outstanding concerns were addressed.

It happened that the account used by the fraudster had been used in other scams, with several people buying the same item as the client. One victim had realised the fraud several days earlier and the account in question had therefore already been frozen. As a result, the client's money had not been withdrawn, and could easily be identified as his. Our client was fully reimbursed.

## What to look out for when shopping online

**Avoid impulse buying:** Research the item and its seller thoroughly before purchasing.

**Examine the feedback:** Take negative feedback or comments on the seller very seriously.

**Delivery:** Avoid any seller who is not able to deliver within 20 days of the sale.

**Did you know...** that scams are particularly common during holiday periods?