How to minimize the risk of fraud

Security tips for forwarders
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TYPES OF FRAUD AND PARCL’S SECURITY SOLUTIONS

Fraud is an especially sensitive issue in the world of package forwarding. Here at Parcl we put a lot of effort into making parcl.com safe for everyone. Every day we strive to improve our service’s security by safety testing, finding new security enhancing tools and offering better request processing mechanisms. Even though we do our best to protect your interests and rights here at Parcl, there is a lot you can do to protect yourself from dishonest shoppers. We prepared this guide to help you identify possible fraudulent activities in advance and therefore avoid them.

First of all, let’s look at the most common types of fraud activities and at how Parcl helps prevent them:

1. **ID THEFT**

   **ID theft is when someone steals and uses another person’s identification and financial info.**

   **PARCL’S SOLUTION:** ID theft cannot happen on parcl.com, as sensitive personal data is never revealed to other users (as long as you don’t reveal it yourself in a private message or on your profile page). All transactions are securely processed via PayPal. Another data protection method is an SSL-certificate installed on parcl.com which is a powerful method aimed at keeping your private data secure (‘s’ in https://www.parcl.com stands for security and signifies that the website has advanced security). We also regularly test our website to detect potential security flaws and immediately fix them.

   If a shopper tries to use stolen credit cards for payment via PayPal, PayPal’s fraud prevention mechanisms will kick into play, and they are some of the best in the industry.

   Learn more about PayPal’s security policies here:

2. **PHISHING**

   Phishing is a scam where an e-mail user receives a legitimate-looking message and is tricked into revealing personal information.

   **EXAMPLES OF PHISHING MESSAGES**

   “We suspect an unauthorized transaction on your account. To ensure that your account is not compromised, please click the link below and confirm your identity.”

   “During our regular verification of accounts, we couldn’t verify your information. Please click here to update and verify your information.”

   The senders are phishing for your information so they can use it to commit fraud.

   **PARCL’S SOLUTION:** To avoid falling victim to a phishing scam, our users are strongly advised to communicate with other users via Parcl’s messaging system only. As long as you do not respond to requests for off-site communication or payments, you are safe on Parcl.
If for some reason you decided to communicate with other users off-site, please, do not reveal any sensitive financial or personal information - it will be much more complicated for Parcl moderators to help you solve a possible dispute.

Always remember that all payments need to be transferred on site through the PayPal mechanism. So if a shopper offers making payment using other payment methods or directly through PayPal, think twice, as the Parcl team will not be able to help you solve disputes in this case.

**TIP**

If you receive an email telling you that you need to restore your password, but you’ve never asked for password recovery, **NEVER** click on the link or enter your password - no matter how genuine the message looks. If it looks like a security concern, contact us at partners@parcl.com.

3 **CHARGEBACKS**

Chargebacks is a type of scam when the payer requests the bank to reverse their payment after service has been provided.

**PARCL’S SOLUTION:** Since all Parcl transactions are processed through PayPal, you get the protection PayPal offers from ungrounded chargebacks. Whenever a customer requests a chargeback, PayPal refunds the money, but opens a dispute, which lets you prove that you provided all services and get paid.

Learn more about how PayPal handles chargebacks here:

And here is some more information on the protection PayPal offers to sellers:
https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=xpt/cps/general/Protections-outside

These solutions help ensure secure transactions and minimize the risks of falling victim to fraud. However, there are some simple tips that will help you avoid having to use these solutions in the first place.
HOW TO IDENTIFY A SCAM REQUEST

Before making your offer, take a good look at the request page. You will see it when you open a private or public delivery request. Review order details carefully before reaching out with an offer. If something doesn't feel right, you may consider asking the shopper for additional identification. Pay particular attention to the following details:

- **URL of the items** (scammers use the latest technology to set up fake retailer websites that look like genuine online retail stores. They may use sophisticated designs and layouts, possibly stolen logos, and even a proper domain name. The most vivid sign that a retail website is a scam is the **method of payment**. Scammers will often ask customers to pay using a money order, pre-loaded money card, or wire transfer, but if the money is sent this way, it’s unlikely the payer will get it back or receive the purchased items);

- **seller’s contact details** (look for a physical address, telephone number, other contact methods), the store’s privacy policy, information on terms and conditions of use and return policy (scam websites will often have little or no information for users);

- **product requested** (here the warning sign is if a product is sold at an unbelievably low price, or advertised to have amazing benefits or features that sound too good to be true. Of course, this is the shopper’s choice, but if you notice any signs of fraud, be cautious and inform the shopper about it);

- **existing reviews and complaints** (google for reviews or complaints from shoppers, there might be useful information about the seller);

- **immediate and insistent shipping request** (shopper agreeing to any conditions or changes you suggest, insisting that you ship the package right away - there may be a legitimate reason for the rush, but sometimes it’s a bad sign. Nothing needs to be done immediately. If you’re being asked to hit a deadline, something dodgy might be going on);

- **shopper asking you to let them pay you off-site** using some different method, such as a wire transfer, a credit card or a Western Union transfer. This is almost always a sign of a scam, so be careful and do not respond to such requests.

**TIP**

Another idea to help limit your risks is to set a cap on the order amount you are willing to process. You can specify the maximum order amount in your Parcl profile (‘**Description for shoppers**’ section), so shoppers know how much stuff they can ship with you when they consider you as a shipper.
HOW TO SPOT A SCAMMER

Besides looking at the order page and request itself, check the shopper’s profile for more clues as to whether they can be trusted. Here is a summary of things you should check and reasons to ask for additional identification:

1. **Poor rating.** A low rating is not necessarily an indicator of bad performance. Our rating system is based on a number of factors: level of profile completion, number of successful deals, feedback from counterparts, etc. New users have a low rating because they haven't completed their profile and don't have any delivery history yet. However, poor rating can also be the real rating by other users, in which case it is a sign that the user may engage in illegal or otherwise undesirable activities.

2. **Strange user nickname.** Some users create accounts using a bizarre combination of symbols (for example, jk929374). There may be a reason for this - a memorable combination of numbers or an acronym, but it might be that a scammer wants to hide their real name.

   **TIP**

   If you decide to communicate with a shopper who has a strange nickname, ask for their real name so you can use it when messaging them - it could be thought of as simply polite, but can also help you identify a scammer.

3. **No user picture.** User did not upload a profile picture, which indicates that they didn't take the time to complete their profile - a sign that this account might be used for a scam.

4. **Unverified user profile.** Make sure that the profile is verified: it is a simple email confirmation, so if the user didn't even go through with that, it should raise some suspicions.

5. **Recent registration date.** While everybody places a first order, particularly large ones on the first or second day of registration may be a potential sign of an attempt to fool the forwarder. Registration date can be found on the shopper’s profile page. Pay particular attention to the recently registered users requesting purchase assistance for expensive goods (worth over $1000) - normally recently registered shoppers tend to order inexpensive goods.

6. **A lot of delivery requests created the same day and processed at the same time.** Sure, some of us may just be taking advantage of sales and special offers, but if you see a lot of orders placed by one shopper on the same day, especially if they have different delivery destinations specified – that should raise a question. To check for that, go to the shopper’s profile and see how many orders in progress they have at the moment.

7. **No shipments delivered yet.** When a user is new to Parcl, they will have no shipments delivered and no business done on Parcl yet and forwarders are recommended to exercise caution with such customers.

8. **No reviews left for or by the shopper.** Look at the reviews left by the shopper for other forwarders and by other forwarders for this shopper: if there have been no reviews, you may want to ask the shopper for additional confirmation just to be safe.

9. **Expensive order with delivery cost of over $1000.** Since there is always a chance a dishonest customer may request a chargeback on a completed order, it’s best to play it safe and ask for additional ID on orders that involve large sums of money. Chances are you will be able to prove that the order was completed as agreed to by the customer, and the bank will return the money to your account, but it’s always better to prevent such issues.
10 Shipping that doesn't really make sense, like having a boat shipped from the USA to Finland, where shipping costs could be about half the price of the boat while the same type of boat doesn't cost that much locally in Finland.

TIP

If you do ask for identification, keep in mind that some scammers may photoshop ID copies. Such images are usually of poor quality, often with mismatched names or countries of residence. Keep an eye out for these signs.
HOW TO AVOID FRAUD COMMITTED AFTER DELIVERY

Sometimes fraud can happen at the final stage of the delivery process. Imagine a situation when a shopper agrees to pay, you receive the package, check it and send it to the shopper. But when the package arrives to its final destination, shopper either denies receiving it or says that package contents were different from what they were expecting to receive or some of the contents had been stolen. As a result, the shopper requests a refund. Of course this may in fact happen, as no one is 100% guaranteed against theft at the post office or packages being damaged. But sometimes it’s a dishonest shopper wanting to get both the package and a refund. To avoid this sophisticated type of fraud and improve your chances of winning the dispute, we recommend following these simple, but very efficient rules:

1. **ALWAYS keep package tracking numbers** and provide them on Parcl when purchasing items (if required) and when shipping the package.

2. **Choose an experienced and reputable shipping carrier.** Make sure that they are equipped to meet your requirements, have a support service, offer parcel tracking and standard insurance against parcel damage.

3. **ALWAYS keep a copy of any documents provided by the shipping service.**

4. **Fill out the Customs declaration carefully** providing details of the items shipped (add item description - color, material, other distinctive features).

5. **Make a copy (scan or photo) of the Customs declaration** - this will help prove that you shipped the package.

Remember that security is the number one priority at Parcl. The more information you keep and provide, the more likely we are to be able to help you resolve any potential dispute.

The Parcl.com community is meant to be a benchmark of trust and community value. We are constantly improving the processes at Parcl to ensure a secure shopping and forwarding experience for all users. Nevertheless, **exercising caution in any transaction is always a good idea.** Paying good attention to order details and the shopper’s profile as well as being thorough and careful when processing the request help you better understand your customer and ensure safe interaction with them.

If you do suspect fraud, **take immediate action.** Report your suspicions to Parcl and contact PayPal right away if a payment has already been processed. PayPal provides excellent support for merchants and will be able to offer advice or block the transaction.

**PRO TIP**

Using a **PayPal Pro** account lets you take advantage of extended support from PayPal: with proof that you shipped the customer’s package you can get your money no matter what.

Learn more about PayPal Pro and/or get it for your account here: [https://www.paypal.com/webapps/mpp/paypal-payments-pro](https://www.paypal.com/webapps/mpp/paypal-payments-pro)
CONCLUSION

This material is intended to keep our forwarders safe and will be updated with new tips as they come. Know a good anti-fraud technique we missed? Send it to partners@parcl.com and we'll add it in here!

READY TO START SHIPPING GOODS? GREAT!

Just go to Request search and make offers to requests you are able to fulfil.

If you have any questions or ideas, let us know at partners@parcl.com, or via our Twitter account or Facebook page.