

AUTOMOBILE SALES

Shop Smart For The Best Car Deals Online

(NAPSI)—Savvy car shoppers know that now is the best time to buy a car with small-car prices expected to drop. More and more of these automotive shoppers buy online due to unmatched convenience, selection and value.

In an effort to protect online car shoppers' rights to a great deal, the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) recently issued a public service announcement urging consumers to watch out for fraudulent vehicle sales claims and only use trusted sites like eBay Motors.

IC3 is warning consumers about scams that hijack trustworthy brands and vehicle protection programs like those offered by eBay Motors. Consumer complaints increased 25 percent in 2010, costing auto shoppers roughly \$1,000 every hour, according to IC3.

For example, a seller on a site other than eBay may claim he offers eBay's Vehicle Protection Program to gain a shopper's trust and convince the shopper to wire him money for a vehicle he doesn't own. However, only cars bought and sold on eBayMotors.com can legitimately offer up to \$50,000 in vehicle protection. By exploiting the logo and name of reputable sites, fraudsters are luring consumers off of safe and secure e-commerce sites such as eBay.

The FBI's IC3 and eBay Motors want to provide tips to savvy online auto shoppers looking to score a deal. The following are three tips from these experts:

1. Research and inspect the car. Go beyond the information in the vehicle listing. Take advantage of vehicle history reports to be certain of mileage and vehicle condition. Review the title and hire an inspection service to look at the car prior to purchase.

2. Check the person's background. Examine the seller's feedback, ratings and comments. Communicate directly with the seller by phone or through secure channels like the My eBay message center to ensure correspondence is authentic.

3. Never send payments via wire services. Never use Western Union, MoneyGram or other wire services—bank to bank transfers are okay. If you plan to pay in cash, do so in person and obtain a receipt.

Consumers who suspect fraud when auto shopping online should file a complaint with the FBI's IC3 at www.ic3.gov and with eBay at car@ebay.com. Shoppers can visit ebay.com/tips for additional advice on safe shopping online.

Online auto shopping provides customers with the ability to find great deals on vehicles with the convenience of shopping on their schedule from an inventory far greater than what is found locally. By taking advantage of secure, trustworthy and reputable online marketplaces, consumers can help ensure they have safe and satisfying shopping experiences.

Vehicle Fires—Dangerous, Preventable?

(NAPSI)—According to the U.S. Fire Protection Agency, fire departments respond to over 250,000 vehicle fires per year. Each year, these fires cause an average of 408 deaths, 1,256 injuries and \$787 million in property damage. Fires caused by collisions and rollovers resulted in nearly 66 percent of these fatalities. These deadly fires can occur when the battery sends current through wires or to electrical components that have been damaged in a crash.

To minimize the potential of these dangerous vehicle fires, leading automotive companies like Audi, Mercedes and Porsche have incorporated a simple device that instantly and automatically cuts off current flow from the battery upon airbag deployment. Unlike a fuse, which allows current to flow, this new device automatically cuts off the current and eliminates the potential of an arc-initiated fire.

Unfortunately, this technology, though inexpensive (estimated under \$10), is currently available on only certain luxury models. It is expected, however, that these devices will become more standard equipment as other car companies elect to upgrade their vehicles to protect consumers from becoming burn victims or casualties of these deadly fires.

Selling Your Car

(NAPSI)—You can sell your car for more money if you follow a few steps:

- Clean it—Make sure the vehicle is presentable inside and out. You might want to get scratches painted and dents removed.
- Snap it—Take photos of your shiny, clean car.
- List it—Use the pictures when you list it online to get shoppers' attention.
- Sell it—Don't just describe the car. Try to relate to the buyer, show why it's to his or her advantage to buy your vehicle.
- Prove it—Use a Carfax Vehicle History Report to help show your vehicle is a good value, based on its history. This can support the price you're asking.

Learn More

Visit www.carfax.com to get a report and more car-selling advice and information.

Used-Car Dealers

(NAPSI)—When it comes to getting a good deal on a used car, it helps to know a good dealer. For example, when car shopping, seek out someone who:

- Has a good reputation. You probably want to work with someone local who received good reviews in online rating services or who was recommended by someone you know and trust. Use tools like Google Places to help find dealers near you.

- Is open and up front with customers and is knowledgeable about their cars.
- Provides vehicle history so you can buy with more confidence. Carfax Advantage Dealers are committed to providing Carfax Reports on every car sold.

Learn More

To get reports and further car-buying advice, you can visit www.carfax.com.

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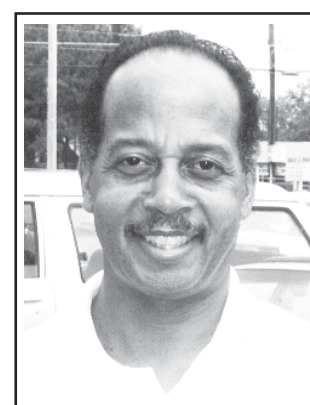
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