



## Phone Scam Alert: Can you hear me?

Avoiding scams is becoming harder every day. Phone scams, email scams, ransomware, cyber criminals continue to invent new ways to attempt to steal from you and your business every day. The FCC just published (March 27, 2017) an alert about the latest scam known as the “Can you hear me” scam.

### How it works:

You receive a call from an unknown number, you answer it and they say “can you hear me” when you respond “yes” the caller then records that “yes” response and thus obtains a voice signature. This signature is then used by the scammers to pretend to be the consumer and authorize fraudulent charges via telephone.

Another phone scam that is apparently recirculating is the “One Ring” scam.

### How it works:

In this scam the caller hangs up after one ring. If you call the number back, you may be connected to an international hotline that can charge a fee just for connecting, and typically is followed with significant per-minute fees. The goal is to keep you on the phone for a long time. Sometimes when you call back you are immediately placed on hold, again the longer you stay connected to this call the more charges will apply. These charges may show up on your bill as premium services.

As scams become more prevalent, we all need to be more diligent in recognizing them so they can be avoided.

### Tips for avoiding scams:

- On your personal phone, don’t answer calls from unknown numbers. Because this can’t be done with business phones, if you don’t recognize the number, consider letting them go to voicemail.
- Do a google search on any unfamiliar area codes before returning calls to them to identify if it is a domestic or international call.
- Be aware that many 3-digit area codes (mostly in the Caribbean) connect callers to international telephone numbers.
- If you answer and the caller (often a recording) asks you to hit a button to stop receiving calls, just hang up. Scammers often use these tricks to identify, and then target, live respondents.
- Consider registering all of your telephone numbers in the National Do Not Call Registry.
- If you do not need to make international calls, ask your local or wireless phone company to block outgoing international calls on your line.
- You can also visit the FCC’s website for information and resources on available robocall blocking tools to help reduce unwanted calls.
- If you receive a scam call, write down the number and file a complaint with the FCC so we can help identify and take appropriate action to help consumers targeted by illegal callers.