How a typical scam works

Advert for an unbelievably bargain price 2009 Harley-Davidson XL1200C Sportster with 3000 miles for just £3000, fails to pass manual verification. Advert never makes it live to the site, but MCN poses as a potential seller to highlight the dynamics of a scam (and waste the b\*stard’s time).

From: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
To: everett.w@msn.com  
Subject: Harley on MCN  
Date: Mon, 6 Feb 2012 10:40:47 +0000

Hi there,  
   
Whereabouts are you based? Have cash waiting and can view today (and collect if agreed).  
   
Cheers,  
Paul.

Response comes back that evening, despite the scammer not realizing their ad was blocked from the site…

From: everett.w@msn.com  
To: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Mon, 6 Feb 2012 20:16:23 +0000

 Hi Paul,  
   
 Thank you for contact.The bike is still for sale, very well maintained, no damages and no mechanical problems, no leaks. The bike is in very good shape,has never been raced or abused, with everything working on it. I accept £3,000 if you buy it now. I have to sell this bike as fast as I can because in 10 days I will be in Iraq and I think I'll stay there for a while, that's why I'm selling it. Currently I'm in Naval Air Station Kingsville , TEXAS and the bike is here with me. If you agree to buy the bike now ,i will ship it for free to you,i will use military service. Delivery will take less than 5 days. I will appreciate if you will let me know what you decide as soon as possible.  
   
You'll love the bike, I can guarantee you that!  
   
Best Regards,  
   
William Everett  
Commanding Officer  
Naval Air Station Kingsville  
554 McCain Street  
Kingsville, TX 78363-5053  
DSN: 876-6333   
   
Photos:  
   
<http://cid-a26265586ff0252f.photos.live.com/browse.aspx/Harley-Davidson%20Sportster?uc=3>

As expected a scam. Apart from being £3000 - 4000 lower than market price, other real tell-tales when combined together include:

* Language used - This chap is allegedly a US Commanding Officer with poor command of the English language.
* Implied trust – Scammers often make out they’re senior / respected professionals (army officers, engineers, doctors, etc.)
* Compelling reason for an urgent sale
* Willingness to ship a bike for free (US to UK shipping costs would typically be in excess of £500+) although in this case with a little ingenuity (the military has nothing better to do than ship his bike to you for free.)
* A link, not to the advert, but to a random page showing more detailed pictures of the bike. This external link is presumably to allow the scammer to run the same ad on multiple sites, pointing all enquirers back to the pics.

So let’s play along further…

From: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
To: everett.w@msn.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Tue, 7 Feb 2012 09:24:04 +0000

Hi William,  
  
I didn't realize the bike wasn't in the UK, but it does look extremely clean in the pics.  
  
How does the military shipping service work? I am very interested as the price is very keen, so if we can sort the shipping/payment details, I think you have a deal!  
  
Many thanks,  
Paul.

And sure enough…

From: everett.w@msn.com  
To: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Tue, 7 Feb 2012 11:53:11 +0000

 Hi Paul,  
   
 The bike was bought from UK and it's registered in UK. The bike has V5, Road tax:  6 months remaining, MOT expiration date:  May 2012 so you don't have to pay no import duties or other taxes. All i can tell is that the bike is in excellent condition, with everything working on it. All consumables(oil, brakes) changed, tires in very good shape. The bike will be delivered through air cargo to UK and from there by a military truck at your home address. Delivery of the bike will takes 5 days. I will do this transaction through UKbike.com . All I need is your full name and  address so I can contact them and after that they will contact you regarding this purchase. They act as a third party and will protect both of us in this transaction.  
   
I am waiting your e-mail.  
   
Regards,  
   
William Everett  
Commanding Officer  
Naval Air Station Kingsville  
554 McCain Street  
Kingsville, TX 78363-5053  
DSN: 876-6333

This is the all-important email, which contains information about an intermediary. Almost all classified ad scams rely on a third-party, whether that third party is real or not, with the third-party providing a level of confidence that all is well. We haven’t come across any scammers so blatant as to request direct payment upfront on a trust basis.

In this case, a third-party “UK bike” is referred to, who will apparently act as an escrow or middleman ensuring safety for both buyer and seller, and only releasing bike/funds when both sides are happy. While genuine escrows do exist, no automotive classified sites run their own escrow services. Please note that UK bike is a real website and is not involved in this scam in anyway, they’ve just been named – more often than not, eBay Buyer Protection is referred to, and we’ve even seen “Approved Motorcyclenews.com Transactions” that are all completely fake.

*NB: In a reverse of this selling scam, fake buyers will propose to buy your bike and again use a third-party to process the transaction. The scam works by ‘overpaying’ you the purchase price of the bike and asking you to pay a shipper directly using this overpayment. You are then shown that the buyer has ‘paid’ either via a (very realistic looking but fake) email from the escrow confirming that they’ve received funds and you’re safe to pay the shipping fee, or you’re sent a physical cheque. The cheque scam again uses a genuine third-party, your bank, and relies on the bank displaying funds as cleared before they are. Unwary sellers, placing confidence in either the fake escrow email or their own bank account showing cleared funds, then transfer irretrievable funds to the buyer’s shipper. The buyer who is also the ‘shipper’ then collects the money never to be heard of again, while the poor seller contacts the named escrow about non arrival of the shipper only to find out that the escrow is fake, or is informed by their bank that the cheque is stolen or a forgery, and in either case is left hundreds or thousands out of pocket.*

Back to our friend Commanding Officer Everett, we play along some more, with a suitable fake address…

From: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
To: everett.w@msn.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Tue, 7 Feb 2012 13:21:29 +0000

Hi William,  
   
Wasn't expecting it to be a UK bike with tax and MOT! That's great news - I'm happy to go firm on the deal if you are?  
   
How do we sort financials? I'm happy to pay by cash, cheque or bank draft, presumably to the chap who delivers the bike?  
   
My full details are:  
   
Paul Harrington,   
17 Jack Mehoff Avenue,  
Rickmansworth,  
Herts,  
WD3 7DD  
   
Many thanks,  
Paul.

The deal apparently agreed, the Commander not wanting to be too hasty, signs off…

From: everett.w@msn.com  
To: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Tue, 7 Feb 2012 22:39:28 +0000

  Hi Paul,  
   
 Thank you for your prompt reply.  
   
I have received your eMail with the shipping details. Tomorrow morning I will proceed with the transaction.  
   
Thank you for your time and nice doing business with you.  
   
William Everett  
Commanding Officer  
Naval Air Station Kingsville  
554 McCain Street  
Kingsville, TX 78363-5053  
DSN: 876-6333

 It’s nice doing business with you too, Commander. We follow up the next day…

From: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
To: everett.w@msn.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Wed, 8 Feb 2012 09:48:58 +0000

Hi William,  
  
Great thanks for this. How are you proceeding? What's the next step? Am keen to purchase and get hold of this bike by the weekend of the 18th Feb - don't know if shipping will allow this?   
  
Many thanks,  
Paul.

3 hours later, directly from the named third-party comes the all-important confirmation...

Date: Wed, 8 Feb 2012 04:38:36 -0800  
From: invoice@ukbike-transaction.com  
Subject: #3288330 - 2009 Harley-Davidson Sportster 1200CC Nightster - A secure online transaction started!  
To: harringtonpw@hotmail.com



**Transaction 3288330 confirmed!  
Payment status : Pending...**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **The following ads are protected in this** [**UKBIKE.COM**](http://ukbike.com/) **transaction:** | |
|  | **2009 Harley-Davidson Sportster 1200CC Nightster  Ad number:** 3288330 **Miles:** 3,049 **Ad price:** £3000 **Amount insured:** £3000 **Payment:** **Pending...** **Shipping Fee:** Shipping is included in the price |
|  | |

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| --- |
| **Complete your** [**UKBIKE.COM**](http://ukbike.com/) **transaction in 5 easy steps:** |
| * Buyer and seller agree on the transaction terms and a selling price. * Seller contacts [UKBIKE.COM](http://ukbike.com/) with the transaction details, [UKBIKE.COM](http://ukbike.com/) accepts the transaction and offers purchase protection to the buyer (if the transaction is declined, no further action is required from either the buyer or the seller). * The buyer sends payment and the seller receives it. After the payment was received, the seller must notify [UKBIKE.COM](http://ukbike.com/) * Buyer will send the payment details directly to the seller email address. The seller has three business days to send the buyer and [UKBIKE.COM](http://ukbike.com/) the tracking number of the shipment. If no tracking number is provided, a full refund is immediately sent to the buyer. * Buyer receives the vehicle and has five days to inspect it. If it is complete and as described, the buyer should accept the vehicle. If he refuses the vehicle, the buyer must ship the vehicle back to the seller within three business days.  After the inspection period is over, the buyer must contact [UKBIKE.COM](http://ukbike.com/) with the result of the inspection. If the buyer refuses the vehicle, the refund will be sent to the buyer after the tracking number for the returned shipment is verified. |

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| **Next step to be taken:** |
| * **The buyer must send the payment to the seller verified name and address:**  |  | | --- | | **Seller verified name:     William Everett (Son name: Steven Everett)** | | **Seller verified address: Dierdorfer 122, Neuwied, 56564, Germany** |  * **To submit the payment with Western Union Money Transfer, you have 2 options:** * Pay for the transfer with cash at a local Western Union agent. [Click here](http://www.westernunion.com/WUCOMWEB/staticMid.do?pagename=agentLocator&method=load) to locate the agents in your area . Go to one of them and send the payment to the verified name of  the seller. Western Union Money Transfer is the only service that has ultimate authentication of the identity of the receiver of funds. Several IDs and utility bills  are required before the funds are paid. Therefore, no one else but your seller can pick up the money. Your payments cannot be lost in the mail, like money orders or checks. |

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| **Once the payment was sent, email the seller** [**everett.w@msn.com**](mailto:everett.w@msn.com)**the following information:** |
| * First 10 digit MTCN number and amount sent: * Second 10 digit MTCN number and amount sent: * Exact sender's name on file with Western Union: * Your street address on file with Western Union: * City and country where you sent the money from: |

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| **Delivery of the vehicle :** |
| * Then wait for the confirmation the payment was received. Within 3 business days the seller is obligated to arrange the shipping. The seller will ship the vehicle to the buyer's verified name and address:  |  | | --- | | **Buyer verified name     : Paul Harrington** | | **Buyer verified address : 17 Jack Mehoff Avenue, Rickmansworth, Herts, WD3 7DD, United Kingdom** |  * You will receive the tracking number for your vehicle and the shipping will be insured by: |

|  |
| --- |
| **Purchase protection and Refund:** |
| * **Currently, this seller has a £3,990.00 deposit in an** [**UKBIKE.COM**](http://ukbike.com/) **managed purchase protection account.** Transactions with this [UKBIKE.COM](http://ukbike.com/) seller are covered by purchase protection against fraud and description errors. For your safety, this account was locked today, for 90 days time period. The seller is unable to withdraw any money from it, within this period. Should you need a refund for this transaction, the insured amount will be taken from the seller's purchase protection account and sent to you. The refund is sent to your bank account, or by check or money order. The way you are refunded is at your choice. You have 90 days from the above verification date to request a refund. Refund requests are processed within 3 days. This transaction is supervised by [UKBIKE.COM](http://ukbike.com/) team. |

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| **Conditions to be met before you may ask for a refund:** |
| * If the vehicle doesn't arrive and/or the seller stops communications after the payment was received; * If the vehicle you receive has different specifications than the ones you agreed on; * If your vehicle arrives in a much longer period than the one you agreed on (more than 10 days from the payment clearance day); For cases 2. and 3. you have to send back the vehicle to the seller prior to ask for your  refund.  If you did not pay the seller by payment method required by us, your refund request will be declined. |

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| **Important Usage Guidelines:** |
| * The contact information should only be used for resolving matters related to [UKBIKE.COM](http://ukbike.com/). Any other use is strictly prohibited. * This transaction is protected by [UKBIKE.COM](http://ukbike.com/) services such as insurance and dispute resolution. * You may buy and sell with confidence in all transactions with this [UKBIKE.COM](http://ukbike.com/) member. * Should you need to dispute this transaction, keep the transaction number at hand when contacting [UKBIKE.COM](http://ukbike.com/). Any complaints must be filed within 90 days from the verification date. * This e-mail message was sent to you from [UKBIKE.com](http://ukbike.com/) team. The seller was informed about this transaction being started and is awaiting your payment.  It is recommended to send the payment as soon as possible, because your purchase protection is valid for 30 days only. |

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| **Refund request:** |
| * When contacting our support team, use the reply feature so that all previous correspondences are included in your email. Otherwise, we will not be able to process your request. To ask for a refund, simply reply to this notification and enter in the subject line: **Refund request for** [UKBIKE.COM](http://ukbike.com/) **Transaction# 3288330** |

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| **Account Protection:** |
| Protect your [UKBIKE.COM](http://ukbike.com/) account - [UKBIKE.COM](http://ukbike.com/) will not ask you for sensitive personal information (such as your password, credit card, bank account numbers, etc.) in an email.    Thank you for using UKBIKE.COM! <http://www.ukbike.com/> |

As predicted we have a named third-party, on this occasion UK Bike, who will shortly send us confirmation that we can safely transfer funds to the Commander who despite being a complete stranger and asking us to transfer funds via Western Union (irretrievable and untraceable) is in fact completely legitimate and has deposited nearly £4000 with them in case of problems!

This form, and thousands like it have been used in scams for years. The branding (in this case UK bike) is totally interchangeable with any other (eBay Buyer Protection, PayPal protection, Pistonhead’s Vehicle Insurance, MSN automotive Protection, etc.) – the name doesn’t matter, it’s there to try and make you believe the email has come from an independent, reputable source – not simply copied and pasted by the scammer.

Ways to spot fake ‘escrow confirmation’ emails such as the above include:

1. We’re not aware of any real vehicle purchase escrows, so essentially if you receive one it’s 99.9% likely to be a scam!
2. Google the name of the escrow being proposed. In this case googling ‘UK Bike buyer protection’ leads you to forums of net users discussing these scam artists.
3. Check the email address. While all of the links in the fake email will generally point back to the site the email is purporting to have come from, in order to add authenticity, the email address is generally a spoof site. In this case the address is [invoice@ukbike-transaction.com](mailto:invoice@ukbike-transaction.com) which is not the address of www.ukbike.com but a totally different lookalike address owned and operated by the scammer, so that they can respond to any queries sent to it (another confidence trick).

A few minutes after receiving this fake escrow email, back comes the Commander to assure us that everything will be kosher…

From: everett.w@msn.com  
To: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Wed, 8 Feb 2012 12:43:11 +0000

 Hi Paul,  
   
 You will receive the confirmation from ukbike.com regarding our deal, you will know all details to complete this transaction in safe mode through ukbike.com only. Let me know when you will receive the transaction invoice. I told ukbike.com to put on the invoice my son name (Steven Everett) and address because I'm giving him the money from the bike, because his at high school in Germany and he need to pay the tax there. If I get the money here and after that I will send them to him I will have to pay the fee for the transfer 2 times. The shipping will be done from Kingsville, TX in max 24 hours after the payment is clear.  
   
Thank you and I hope you understand me.  
  
William Everett  
Commanding Officer  
Naval Air Station Kingsville  
554 McCain Street  
Kingsville, TX 78363-5053  
DSN: 876-6333

The Commander cunningly lets us know that a message will shortly be arriving, as even though he knows we’ve got it (as he’s just sent it to us prior to this email), if it WAS a real third-party email he wouldn’t know when it would arrive…

He’s obviously getting excited about the prospect of a payout as his English and grammar is getting worse. He’s also asked that I transfer the money to a different individual.

Then another email arrives…

From: everett.w@msn.com  
To: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Wed, 8 Feb 2012 12:48:07 +0000

 Hi again,  
   
 If Western Union agent is asking the reason of the transfer, please don't tell it's for a sale, otherwise the fees will be different, and my son will also be charged in Germany for internet commerce, and I want to avoid all these, don't want to end up paying their stupid taxes so let them know you are sending to a relative.  
   
Many thanks,  
   
William Everett  
Commanding Officer  
Naval Air Station Kingsville  
554 McCain Street  
Kingsville, TX 78363-5053  
DSN: 876-6333  
   
P.S. - The bike will arrive at your home address on 14th - Tuesday / Feb.

This isn’t an attempt to make sure he doesn’t lose a penny of his ill-gotten gains in tax, as fees are fixed and non-taxable with Western Union – instead he doesn’t want us to inform a Western Union agent that we’re sending the money to a seller, because they are likely to warn us against sending money in this way, and highlight we’re probably being scammed. Western Union does not advocate sending money to unknown individuals, primarily it’s a way of transferring money worldwide to friends or relatives.

By now, the average buyer (or seller) will have long ago sussed this scam for what it is and stopped corresponding. But in this case we’re going to raise his hopes of a successful scam and waste his time as much as possible, initially by sending back our faked version of a Western Union successful transfer form…

(Please note any negative comments made about Western Union are purely fictitious and done so to dupe the scammer. In reality Western Union goes to great levels to inform customers about scams).

From: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
To: everett.w@msn.com  
Subject: FW: Harley on MCN  
Date: Wed, 8 Feb 2012 14:18:12 +0000

Hi William,  
   
The email from UK Bike came through as promised - many thanks.  
   
I've transferred money via Western Union online as below, rather than use a shop. I've given the pick-up name as Steven Everett as requested, and the unique number is shown below. However it only lets me transfer £2500 in any one transaction. I can send a second for the remaining £500, but I didn't realise how expensive it is (£86!) to spend money this way. Can you either absorb the next costs (£36, so that I send you £464) or do you have a bank accounts I can BACS the money too?  
   
Really looking forward to getting the bike - thanks for making this a painless process!  
   
All the best,  
Paul.  
 

From: westernunionresponse@westernunion.com  
To: HARRINGTONPW@HOTMAIL.COM  
Subject: Western Union: Confirmed money transfer  
Date: Wed, 8 Feb 2012 08:57:07 -0500

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| --- | --- |
|  |  |
| Dear PAUL HARRINGTON,    Thank you for using the Western Union Money TransferSM  service.  Your money transfer has been authorized, and is now available for pick up by the receiver.   Following is a summary of your transaction.  **After your second online transaction,** you must have your identity verified so you can continue to use our online service (as required by international banking laws). Please visit [www.westernunion.co.uk](http://www.westernunion.co.uk/) and access your profile to make sure it's up-to-date and to initiate the Identification Process.      TRANSACTION DETAILS:    **Your Money Transfer Control Number [MTCN] is : 1098754417**   * Use this number if you have questions or to check the status online. * Please remember to give the MTCN to your receiver as it is required to be able to pick up the money.      |  |  | | --- | --- | | Date of Order: | 02/08/2011 | | Amount Sent: | £2500.00 | | Money Transfer Charge: | £86.00 | | Total Amount: | £2586.00 |      |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | Exchange rate\*  1 GBP | = | 1.146247 EUR | |  |  |  | | Local currency pay out | = | 2866.56  EUR |   ***\*Currency Exchange:*** Money transfers will normally be paid in the currency of the destination country. In some countries, payment is available in U.S. dollars or other alternate currency. In addition to the transfer fees applicable to each transaction, Western Union will apply a currency exchange rate to convert your funds into foreign currency. Any difference between the currency exchange rate given offered to customers and the currency exchange rate received by Western Union will be kept by Western Union (and, in some instances, its agents) in addition to the transfer fee. SENDING TO COUNTRIES THAT PROVIDE PAYMENT IN MULTIPLE CURRENCIES: Some Western Union Agents may offer Receivers the choice to receive funds in a currency different from the one that you selected. In such instances, Western Union (or its Agents) may make additional money when your funds are converted into the currency selected by the receiver. However, your recipient may, in some countries, elect to receive another currency, in which case the currency exchange rate that Western Union applies to your transaction may differ from the one applicable to a transaction paid in the currency you selected.  The total amount will appear on your credit or debit card statement.    Selected Additional Service (s):   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | No Additional Services selected. |  | |  |  |      |  | | --- | | Send a video eCard to your loved ones along with your funds! Create an eCard now! http://wuvideogram.com |     For Customer Service: **0808 2 34 9168** or **+32-(0)2639 7103**  Check if the receiver has [picked up the money transfer](http://www.westernunion.co.uk/WUCOMWEB/transferStatusAction.do?method=load&pagename=&countryCode=GB&languageCode=en).  If you have any questions, please visit our Web site at [www.westernunion.co.uk](http://www.westernunion.co.uk/).  Thank you for using Western Union!  DO NOT REPLY TO THIS EMAIL. IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS PLEASE [CONTACT](http://www.westernunion.co.uk/WUCOMWEB/staticMid.do?method=load&pagename=helpContactUs&countryCode=GB&languageCode=en) |

Western Union does indeed impose a £2500 single transaction limit, so we’ve asked him to contribute their fees for the second transaction to make him think this is the real deal…

From: everett.w@msn.com  
To: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Wed, 8 Feb 2012 14:35:53 +0000

 Hi Paul,  
   
I have received your eMail with the payment details.  
   
Please deduct the transfer fees from the remaining £500 and proceed with the payment.  
   
Nice doing business with you.  
   
Regards,  
   
William Everett  
Commanding Officer  
Naval Air Station Kingsville  
554 McCain Street  
Kingsville, TX 78363-5053  
DSN: 876-6333

Ever the obliging type, the Commander is happy to absorb the fees, and asks for the remainder of the money to be sent. And we apparently oblige.

From: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
To: everett.w@msn.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Wed, 8 Feb 2012 14:52:41 +0000

Hi William,  
   
Thanks for this - have just send the final £464 over. The number **1098754991**   
  
Please include all history, receipts etc. with the bike, even if you think they're worthless. Also please, please include the spare key! (easy to forget)  
   
Please let me know when you have a confirmed shipping date for the bike - getting really excited now!  
   
Cheers,  
Paul.

Not hearing back from the Commander after passing him the fake details to pick up non-existent transfers, we stay in contact to continue the illusion…

From: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
To: everett.w@msn.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Thu, 9 Feb 2012 09:11:10 +0000

Hi William,  
  
I've checked Western Union and your son hasn't picked funds up yet. Assuming this is normal - just don't want this to delay delivery of my bike.  
  
Many thanks,  
Paul.

The Commander stays in contact while he tries to pick up the non-existent funds.

From: everett.w@msn.com  
To: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Thu, 9 Feb 2012 10:27:22 +0000

 Hi Paul,  
   
Today my son will go and verify the status availability of the money transfer.  
   
The next air cargo will leave US to UK tomorrow morning and I will send you the bike, after that I will eMail you with further details.  
   
Regards,  
   
William Everett  
Commanding Officer  
Naval Air Station Kingsville  
554 McCain Street  
Kingsville, TX 78363-5053  
DSN: 876-6333

We keep things sweet…

From: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
To: everett.w@msn.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Thu, 9 Feb 2012 10:28:46 +0000

Hi Willam,  
  
Thanks for the update.  
  
All the best, Paul.

And add to the Commander’s belief that we’ve totally bought his scam by eagerly emailing the fake escrow about our forthcoming delivery

From: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
To: invoice@ukbike-transaction.com  
Subject: RE: #3288330 - 2009 Harley-Davidson Sportster 1200CC Nightster - A secure online transaction started!  
Date: Thu, 9 Feb 2012 10:27:36 +0000

Hello,  
  
I've now safely transferred funds to the seller - just wanted to check he's informed you so that the bike shipping can start.  
  
Many thanks,  
Paul.

Oops, there appears to be a problem with our non-existent transfer, however the Commander isn’t to be dissuaded just yet…

From: everett.w@msn.com  
To: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Thu, 9 Feb 2012 12:43:48 +0000

 Hi Paul,  
   
We have a problem. My son was at Western Union Office to verify the status availability of the money transfer and the Western Union Agent said that the money are not available for pick up. Please call at Western Union and confirm the transfers. Maybe they must need to verify your details in order to activate the transfers.  
   
Waiting your prompt reply.  
   
Regards,  
   
William Everett  
Commanding Officer  
Naval Air Station Kingsville  
554 McCain Street  
Kingsville, TX 78363-5053  
DSN: 876-6333

Let’s add some confusion…

From: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
To: everett.w@msn.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Thu, 9 Feb 2012 13:11:08 +0000

Hi William,  
   
Apologies for any inconvenience - this is very odd. I can see that Western Union have already charged my partner's credit card the full amount, so funds have definitely cleared. Will speak to them now and update you.  
   
Thanks,  
Paul.

And some more…

From: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
To: everett.w@msn.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Thu, 9 Feb 2012 13:38:33 +0000

Hi William,  
   
Just finished speaking with Western Union. As it was the first time I used this service they automatically hold transactions over £1000. This has now been removed - seems stupid not to inform me about this. Please apologise to your son, and let him know this is available to collect now.  
   
Many thanks,  
Paul.  
   
NB - You were right, they seemed very keen to know if this money was for a business transaction or a relative. Don't worry I told them it was for a relative, but out of interest how much would they have charged your son if I said it was a transaction? Can't believe they charge me a fairly heft fee and then want one from you too!

The Commander can almost taste his money, surely it won’t be long now…

From: everett.w@msn.com  
To: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Thu, 9 Feb 2012 13:55:19 +0000

 Hi Paul,  
   
Thank you for your prompt reply.  
   
Do you have a middle name? Please reply me your full sender name :  
  
Waiting your prompt reply.  
   
Regards,  
   
William Everett  
Commanding Officer  
Naval Air Station Kingsville  
554 McCain Street  
Kingsville, TX 78363-5053  
DSN: 876-6333  
   
P.S. - I don't know how much are the transfer fees for a business transaction but are very expensive.

Why isn’t Western Union working properly?

From: everett.w@msn.com  
To: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Thu, 9 Feb 2012 14:01:50 +0000

 Hi againe,  
   
Did they say how long it takes to activate the transfers? I tried to verify the status availability on their web site and it show me an error.  
   
Waiting your prompt reply.  
   
Regards,  
   
William Everett  
Commanding Officer  
Naval Air Station Kingsville  
554 McCain Street  
Kingsville, TX 78363-5053  
DSN: 876-6333

We express as much frustration with the problems as the Commander is obviously feeling…

From: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
To: everett.w@msn.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Thu, 9 Feb 2012 14:30:41 +0000

Hi William,  
   
I'm also now getting the same error on the website, although they've confirmed the transaction is fine and they're having website problems today.  
   
I'm kind of getting sick of Western Union now, so can you:  
  
a) See if your son would kindly visit a Western Union shop to try again in person. My full name is Paul Wendel Harrington   
b) let me know your bank details? I'll then transfer funds - assuming I can get a full refund of Western Union fees.  
   
Please let me know, I don't think I can stand their phone hold music any longer...  
   
Thanks,  
Paul.

The Commander very politely obliges…

From: everett.w@msn.com  
To: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Thu, 9 Feb 2012 14:37:30 +0000

 Hi Paul,  
   
I will send my son to a Western Union Office right now.  
   
I regret any inconvenience caused.  
   
Regards,  
   
William Everett  
Commanding Officer  
Naval Air Station Kingsville  
554 McCain Street  
Kingsville, TX 78363-5053  
DSN: 876-6333

And so do we…

From: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
To: everett.w@msn.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Thu, 9 Feb 2012 14:56:58 +0000

No need to apologise, it's not your fault. Please let me know when safely recovered.

The imaginary transfers still haven’t arrived however…

From: everett.w@msn.com  
To: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Thu, 9 Feb 2012 15:08:24 +0000

 Hi Paul,  
   
I had spoken with my son and the Western Union Agent told him : Unfortunately we do not show any money transfers available with the information you provided.

Please call once againe at Western Union to clarify this situation.

Thank you for understanding,  
   
William Everett  
Commanding Officer  
Naval Air Station Kingsville  
554 McCain Street  
Kingsville, TX 78363-5053  
DSN: 876-6333

So we provide Western Union’s genuine phone number along with more dummy info…

From: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
To: everett.w@msn.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Thu, 9 Feb 2012 15:29:56 +0000

Hi William,  
   
They're insisting it's there. Can you please get your son to call them on: +32(0)2 639 7103   
  
They've given the telelphone reference of:  
   
TR#007599 for MTCN 1098754417   
 &  
TR#007600 for MTCN 1098754991  
   
This should allow him to verbally release the funds.  
   
Thanks,  
Paul.

You’d think by this stage the Commander would give up, but instead this prompts a burst of more effort, and he manages to find local offices to Jack Mehoff Avenue…

From: everett.w@msn.com  
To: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Thu, 9 Feb 2012 18:22:07 +0000

 Hi Paul,  
   
I'm sorry to let you know but there are no transfers with the MTCN's that you've given to me. Also my son called at the number that you give me and the WU Agent said no money transfers available.  
   
You can call againe at Western Union to speak with them what is the problem and if they don't resolve the problem please cancel the transaction. I would be grateful if you could go tomorrow morning at your near Western Union Office and send the money from their office. I have find you 2 Western Union Office near your address:  
   
BLACKS NEWSAGENT  
120 High Street  
Rickmansworth, WD3 1AB  
---  
HARDWARE DIY  
11 Tudor Parade  
Rickmansworth, WD3 4DF  
   
After that please reply me with the western union scanned receipt.  
   
Thank you for your time and understanding,  
   
William Everett  
Commanding Officer  
Naval Air Station Kingsville  
554 McCain Street  
Kingsville, TX 78363-5053  
DSN: 876-6333

Having not received a same-day response, the Commander pushes again…

From: everett.w@msn.com  
To: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Fri, 10 Feb 2012 10:56:48 +0000

 Hi Paul,  
   
 The bike was sent one hour ago and will arrive in UK today. Tomorrow will leave the military base to your home address. Also I have signed the section 8 on V5 and send all the document along with the bike. You will receive as a gift my hamlet size L.  
   
Againe I'm very sorry for any inconvenience caused.  
   
Waiting your prompt reply with the payment details and the scanned receipt from WU.  
   
Regards,  
   
William Everett  
Commanding Officer  
Naval Air Station Kingsville  
554 McCain Street  
Kingsville, TX 78363-5053  
DSN: 876-6333

With the amount of time invested in the scam to date, the Commander is obviously unwilling to quit just yet, so we decide to string him along that little bit longer…

From: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
To: everett.w@msn.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Fri, 10 Feb 2012 11:31:26 +0000

Hi William,  
   
This is great news - well the shipping part. I'm still arguing with Western Union about getting the funds back, they're now claiming that they've been picked up? It shouldn't be a major problem as I'll get my credit card to refute the charges if this goes on much longer.  
   
It's currently snowing in the UK, but I should be able to get out a Western Union office later today. However is there any other way to sort payment? I'm kind of sick of Wester Union!  
   
Thanks for the cigars - appreciated!  
   
Speak to you later,  
Paul.

If he wasn’t a thieving, scheming, manipulative conman, you’d almost admire the Commanders dogged determination..

From: everett.w@msn.com  
To: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Fri, 10 Feb 2012 13:33:43 +0000

 Hi Paul,  
   
 Thank you for your prompt reply.  
   
 As I told you my son did't pick up no money because the transfer wasn't available. We can't change the payment method because the ukbike.com will not guarantee for this transaction and I want to finish this transaction in a safe, easy and fast way, with no problems.  
   
Waiting your prompt reply.  
   
Regards,  
   
William Everett  
Commanding Officer  
Naval Air Station Kingsville  
554 McCain Street  
Kingsville, TX 78363-5053  
DSN: 876-6333

But now we’ve exposed all elements of the scam it’s time to draw it to a close…

From: harringtonpw@hotmail.com  
To: everett.w@msn.com  
Subject: RE: Harley on MCN  
Date: Fri, 10 Feb 2012 13:45:33 +0000

Hi William,  
   
D'oh! I've just realised why you had problems with the transfers.  
   
The reason you couldn't pick up the funds are because the transfers were as real as the bike you're selling.  
   
Kindest regards,  
Paul.