

## How Preferred IT Group Saved Christmas

### THE SNOW FILLED THE MAGICAL NIGHT...



'Twas the night before Christmas and all were asleep, except for the elves in Santa's workshop who are Preferred Care Elite. The elves were busy stuffing the sleigh, when Santa shouted out a loud, "Mayday!" Out in the toy shop there arose such a clatter! The elves sprang into action to see what was the matter.

"My server is down" he said with a frown, "I must call Preferred IT Group to get my list found." The tech on call was well on his way, fixing Santa's server so he could take off in his sleigh. "Santa, no need to fear your naughty and nice list is in the cloud from this year." Santa thanked the tech greatly and was filled with cheer, "the kids will be excited for all their presents this year!"

Santa jumped in his sleigh with his reindeer in rows ready to follow that big red nose. Now! Dasher, now! Dancer, now! Prancer, and Vixen. On Comet, on! Cupid, On! Donder and Blitzen! Now dash away, dash away! Dash away all!

The snow filled the magical night as Santa shouted out, "Merry Christmas to all and to all a good night!"

This is the story of how Preferred IT Group saved Christmas, give us a call if we can be of assistance! 260.440.7377.

Happy Holidays from the staff of Preferred IT Group!



# Top Holiday Scams To Watch Out For This Holiday Season



The Better Business Bureau (BBB) has released a “Naughty List” with the top 12 scams of Christmas that are most likely to catch consumers and donors off guard during this holiday season.

Many of the scams on this list are facilitated through emails and social media platforms, however the latter is where most people are vulnerable, the BBB said. Exercise caution when coming across social media ads about discounted items, event promotions, job opportunities and donation requests, as well as direct messages from strangers. If you are asked to make a payment or donation by wire or e-transfer, through third parties, by prepaid debit or gift cards, treat this as a red flag.

Be mindful of these scams that could cut into your holiday cheer and our tips to avoid them:

1. **Misleading Social Media Ads:** As you scroll through your social media feed, you often see items for sale from a small business. Sometimes the business even claims to support a charity to try to get you to order, or they offer a free trial. BBB Scam Tracker receives reports of people paying for items that they never receive, getting charged monthly for a free trial they never signed up for, or receiving an item that is counterfeit or much different from the one advertised.
2. **Social Media Gift Exchanges:** Each holiday season this scheme pops back up, and this year is no different. A newer version of this scam revolves around exchanging bottles of wine; another suggests purchasing \$10 gifts online. Another twist asks you to submit your email into a list where participants get to pick a name and send money to strangers to “pay it forward.” There is even a twist about “Secret Santa Dog” where you buy a \$10 gift for your “secret dog.” In all of these versions, participants unwittingly share their personal information, along with those of their family members and friends, and are further tricked into buying and shipping gifts or money to unknown individuals. And-- it’s an illegal pyramid scheme.
3. **Holiday Apps:** Apple’s App Store and Google Play list dozens of holiday-themed apps where children can video chat live with Santa, light the menorah, watch Santa feed live reindeer, track his sleigh on Christmas Eve, or relay their holiday wish lists. This holiday season, like last year when COVID-19 caused children to skip the traditional in-person visit with Santa, apps may play a more important role than ever. Review privacy policies to see what information will be collected. Be wary of free apps, as they can sometimes contain more advertising than apps that require a nominal fee. Free apps can also contain malware.
4. **Alerts About Compromised Accounts:** BBB has been receiving reports on Scam Tracker about a con claiming your Amazon, Paypal, Netflix or bank account has been compromised. Victims receive an email, call, or text message which explains that there has been suspicious activity on one of their accounts, and it further urges them to take immediate action to prevent the account from being compromised. Be extra cautious about unsolicited calls, emails, and texts.
5. **Free Gift Cards:** Nothing brings good cheer like the word ‘FREE’. Scammers have been known to take advantage of this weakness by sending bulk phishing emails requesting personal information to receive free gift cards. In some of these emails, scammers impersonate legitimate companies like Starbucks and promise gift cards to loyal customers that have been supporting their business throughout the pandemic. They may also use pop-up ads or send text messages with links saying you were randomly selected as the winner for a prize. If you have received an unsolicited email with gift card offers, do not open it. Instead, mark it as Spam or Junk. However, if you opened the email, do not click on any links.
6. **Look-Alike Websites:** The holiday season brings endless emails offering deals, sales and bargains. Be wary of emails with links enclosed. Some may lead to look-alike websites created by scammers to trick people into downloading malware, making dead-end purchases and sharing private information. If you are uncertain about the email, do not click any of the links. Instead, hover over them to see where they reroute.
7. **Fake Charities:** Typically, 40% of all charitable donations are received during the last few weeks of the year. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many organizations had to cancel their usual fundraising events and awareness campaigns and are now inviting donors to support online. Donors are advised to lookout for fraudulent charities and scammers pretending to be individuals in need. Avoid impromptu donation decisions to unfamiliar organizations. Responsible organizations will welcome a gift tomorrow as much as they do today. Verify a charity at BBB’s [give.org](https://www.bbb.org/give) or on the Canada Revenue Agency website. Where possible, donate to the charity through their website and use a credit card.
8. **Fake Shipping Notifications:** More consumers are making purchases online, there is also an increase in the number of notifications about shipping details from retailers and carriers. Scammers are using this new surge to send phishing emails with links enclosed that may allow unwanted access to your private information or download malware onto your device. They may also try to trick people into paying new shipping fees.

# Holly is Back!

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December 2021

Our elf Holly has made it back to our office for this holiday season and she wasted no time getting into some mischief!



## WE LOVE OUR INTERNS!



Preferred IT Group has a pretty solid track record of having the **BEST** interns around and Dakota is no exception! For the last few months, we've enjoyed having Dakota in our office for a few hours every day in between his classes at Leo High School.

Dakota is a senior and plans to attend Trine University to major in mechanical engineering with a minor in electrical engineering.

We wish you all the best and we will miss having you around!





# Meet Garrett!

Meet our new employee Garrett!

Garrett started with us back in August. He is married and has a two year old daughter. In his free time, he spends time with his family and enjoys his wife's baking (we enjoy her baking too!). He also enjoys fishing when he can find the time!

Welcome to the PITG team!

## FUN FACT!

Twitter's  
bird is  
called  
Larry!

preferred  
group 

preferred   
group

## CONTACT US



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