

AI Celebrity Impersonation Scams



These days scammers are getting craftier, and they've upped their game by using AI when it comes to celebrity impersonation scams. According to the Better Business Bureau, numerous reports have been submitted involving products that are supposedly endorsed by well-known and trusted celebrities. With the rise in deepfake scams and ever-improving AI technology, phony endorsements are more convincing than ever. Another popular use of AI involves impersonating celebrities to trick you into providing personal or financial information on social media. Here's a breakdown of their tactics and some tips on how you can defend yourself:

- **Deepfake Technology:** These scammers use AI to alter real photos and videos they find online to create new ones that they'll use to take advantage of you. Deepfake technology can create extremely realistic and difficult to identify videos and photos - but they aren't perfect. Pay attention to unusual skin tones, stains, strange lighting, and oddly positioned shadows that could be indicators you're dealing with a deepfake. Remember, if a situation seems too good to be true, it usually is. Be cautious and always verify information with trusted, reputable sources before taking any action.
- **AI – Generated Conversations:** Scammers use AI to mimic speech patterns and writing styles to trick you into believing you're speaking with someone you aren't. One of the most popular scams using AI-generated conversation and deepfake technology includes creating bogus ads where scammers attempt to trick you into ordering a product based on a bogus celebrity backing. These scams are often associated with misleading purchase prices, compromised payment information, or even malware being installed on your device. In another popular use, scammers impersonate celebrities to contact you directly, often using social media. In our experience with these situations, they attempt to romance you before asking for personal or financial information. Keep in mind, if you get a direct message from a celebrity, chances are it's a scam. Real celebrities will **NEVER** reach out to you for money or ask for personal information.
- **Urgency:** As we've mentioned in several of our articles, fraudsters love to create fake emergencies urging you to send money or act quickly. They might say that there's been an accident, fake a serious illness, or even claim to be in legal or financial trouble and need your help. Creating bogus emergencies and using deepfake technology to solidify the claim can make it very difficult to slow things down or say no, and fraudsters exploit this every single day without a second thought. Remember to **ALWAYS** slow down before taking any action. Reach out to someone you trust like a family member, close friend, or even your financial advisor for another opinion on the situation.
- **Protecting Your Personal Information:** The ultimate goal of a fraudster is to trick you into sharing personal and financial information or sending money. Any time you receive unsolicited communication, be cautious. Even in what might seem to be innocent conversation, fraudsters can coax you into unintentionally providing information you might use for security questions. Be mindful of what you share and understand how important it is to keep your personal information safe. Remember, not everyone has your best interest in mind. A healthy dose of skepticism will go a long way in protecting your personal information and finances.