

## **Don't Run The Risk Of Identity Fraud**

### **Prevent Prying Eyes with Bennett Arron's Top Tips**

To mark **Fellowes'** annual security campaign this October, the security experts, have partnered with [Bennett Arron](#) – award-winning writer, stand-up-comedian and one of the first major victims of identity theft in the UK – in a pursuit to protect consumers from the serious threat of online and paper-based identity fraud.



Identity theft was the reason for Bennett Arron owing serious amounts of money to phone companies, banks and department stores which left him penniless and homeless, leading him to produce a TV documentary called; *'How To Steal An Identity'*, and a book entitled; *'Heard The One About Identity Theft?'* as well as a stream of comedy programmes.

The good news is there are a number of simple steps to guard us and our families against identity theft. From regularly checking bank statements to destroying personal documents and avoiding cold calls, Bennett Arron has a series of top tips and advice to prevent prying eyes this autumn.

#### **1. Who's Calling?**

Cold calling scams are on the rise. Whether it's a 'computer company' informing you that your system is running too slowly or 'your bank' telling you your cards have been cloned. To check the validity, call the person back but not from the same phone as they called you. They can keep that line open and put someone else on pretending they are from the bank/company. Call from a different number. Or, better still, just ignore it, it's probably a scam.

#### **2. Don't Bother Me ATM**

Be aware that when you take money from an ATM you are saying to everyone; "Look at me, I have money!" So, when using the machine remember three things:

- Firstly, make sure that the machine itself is genuine and that nothing has been added to it, such as cameras, false slots etc.
- Secondly, be sure no one is looking over your shoulder at your PIN.



- Thirdly, don't be distracted. We all like to be polite, so when someone calls our attention we tend to look towards that person. That moment of politeness can cost you the money you have just withdrawn. Sometimes it's okay to be rude!

### **3. Check It's In The Post**

If a bank statement or credit card statement hasn't arrived a few days after the due date, check with your bank. There is a chance someone has hacked your account and either stopped you receiving statements or had them redirected. When you do receive statements, check everything to make sure there are no odd transactions, however small. The smaller ones can sometimes be a test to see if you notice, before moving on to bigger ones. If everything is okay, then don't just throw your statements away, shred them – ideally with a Fellowes cross-shredder. You should also shred any unwanted application forms or junk mail you receive through the post. Speaking of post, if you move home, make sure you have all your post redirected, before someone else does it for you.

### **4. Calling The Register**

Make sure you are registered on the electoral roll at your address. Apart from the legal requirements to do so, if you don't do it then someone could register you at another address and therefore receive all your post. Also remember to deregister when you move.

### **5. Credit Where It's Due**

Check your credit report regularly. There are a number of companies which offer a free credit check. Do it. Then you can see if, as happened to me, accounts have been opened in your name. You can also sign up for credit alerts, which will notify you if, amongst other things, any new accounts are opened or if there is any strange behaviour on your existing accounts.

Commenting on his experience, Bennett Arron concludes: "As a victim of identity theft – in fact the first major victim of the crime in the UK – I have experienced first-hand the devastating impact of losing everything to fraudsters. I also now know how easy the crime is to carry out and understand the importance of protecting families against it. Hopefully these tips to go some way to help increase people's vigilance whilst going about their daily routines."



Fellowes offers a range of specialist products designed for keeping personal information confidential, secure and away from prying eyes. From a choice of cross-cut shredders to discreet PrivaScreen™ privacy filters for desktop, laptops, tablets and mobiles; Fellowes provides security solutions you can trust.

Darryl Brunt, UK & Ireland Sales and Marketing Director at Fellowes, comments: “Our identity and personal information is invaluable. It’s important that consumers take the necessary steps towards protecting potential loss to themselves and their families.”

“Bennett Arron’s personal experience of identity fraud is a clear reminder that people should be more vigilant of identity fraud. Protecting ourselves by following his top tips and advice and investing in Fellowes’ range of specialist security products will ensure consumers feel safer and more secure this autumn.”

Consumers wanting to know more about Fellowes’ product solutions which protect themselves and their families from prying eyes can visit [www.fellowes.com](http://www.fellowes.com).

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#### **About Fellowes**

- [Fellowes](http://www.fellowes.com), Inc. offers an extensive range of home and office products including paper shredders and privacy screens.
- Founded in 1917 by Harry Fellowes and headquartered in Itasca, Illinois, Fellowes, Inc. employs more than 1,200 people throughout the world and has operations in 15 countries.
- Visit [fellowes.com](http://www.fellowes.com) for more information.