

26 November 2018

HSBC UK STAGES THEFT OF TV PERSONALITY RACHEL RILEY'S IDENTITY TO WARN OF THE DANGERS OF DIGITAL FRAUD DURING THE FESTIVE SEASON

- **The bank's latest social media campaign uses clever technology to show how sophisticated digital fraud is becoming**

HSBC UK has urged consumers to be especially aware of the increased dangers of cyber fraud in the run up to Christmas¹ through a campaign that initially left a number of Twitter followers scratching their heads over the weekend. Partnering with TV presenter Rachel Riley, the bank has set out to show the UK that some things online may not be as they seem.

The *Countdown* presenter and 'maths whizz' kicked off the awareness drive over the weekend with a surprising [confession](#) that she is actually 'bad at maths' and gets 'fed the answers in my earpiece', sending her followers into a frenzy of speculation.

HSBC UK has today revealed that it is behind the shock admission. In a [video](#) shared by the bank, viewers can see how, through digital technology and a vocal impressionist, it was able to steal Rachel Riley's identity online. Video manipulation technology was used to put new words into Rachel's mouth - the aim being to make consumers aware of how sophisticated online fraud is becoming and encourage people to think twice about what financial information they're sharing online.

Tracie Pearce, Head of Banking and Propositions, Retail Banking and Wealth Management, HSBC UK said: "Digital fraudsters are unfortunately likely to pull out new tricks and traps in the run up to Christmas. Fraudulent techniques are becoming even more advanced, making it harder for consumers to know if someone really is who they say they are online. We want to make sure our campaign is the only thing that catches you out this season."

5 top tips for avoiding digital fraud:

- **Confirm the website connection is genuine** by looking for a padlock in the address bar before entering personal and payment details. The padlock does not guarantee the site is genuine, just that the connection is secure
- **Check the website is genuine** through Trustpilot, a website which publishes reviews for online businesses
- **Never click on links or attachments in e-mails** unless you are sure they are genuine. Fraudsters can send fake e-mails taking you to copycat websites to steal your personal and payment information
- **Install the built-in security measures and anti-virus software** most browsers and many banks offer. These can help protect you whether the criminals are trying to dupe you with fake pop-ups in your online banking window, sending you 'scam alert' messages hiding malware, or faking retailer websites to make you input your financial details
- **Never pay by bank transfer if you don't know the seller.** Always use a credit card, debit card or PayPal – or a payment option that offers some protection against fraud.

ends/more

Media enquiries to:

Aurora Bonin
Senior Manager, Media Relations
HSBC UK
Tel: 07438 850 833
Email: aurora.f.bonin@hsbc.com

Twitter: @HSBC_UK

For the latest news and updates, visit the HSBC UK newsroom:

<https://www.about.hsbc.co.uk/news-and-media>

Notes to editors:

1. Based on 2017 data that showed an increase of victims reporting online fraudulent attempts.

HSBC UK

HSBC UK serves around 14.5 million customers in the UK supported by 32,000 employees. HSBC UK offers a complete range of personal, premier and private banking services including bank accounts and mortgages. It also provides commercial banking for small to medium businesses and large corporates. HSBC UK Bank plc is a wholly owned subsidiary of HSBC Holdings plc.

HSBC Holdings plc

HSBC Holdings plc, the parent company of the HSBC Group, is headquartered in London. The Group serves customers worldwide from around 3,800 offices in 66 countries and territories in Europe, Asia, North and Latin America, and the Middle East and North Africa. With assets of US\$2,603bn at 30 September 2018, HSBC is one of the world's largest banking and financial services organisations.

ends/all