NAPLES COMPUTERS HOW-TO · SECURITY & SAFETY

Fake Tech-Support Websites and Search Ads: Go to the Source

Searching online for a tech support number can lead straight to a scam, before any pop-up ever shows up. This guide shows how the sponsored-ad version of the scam works, the warning signs once you're on the site or the phone, and what to do if you already gave remote access or paid.

How the scam works

A paid ad that looks official, leading to a call that isn't.

You search for a support number
For Microsoft, Apple, your printer, your router, anything.

A sponsored ad looks official
It's labeled "Ad," with a fake company name and a phone number.

They want access, or payment
Once you call, they ask to control your screen, or pay by gift card or wire.

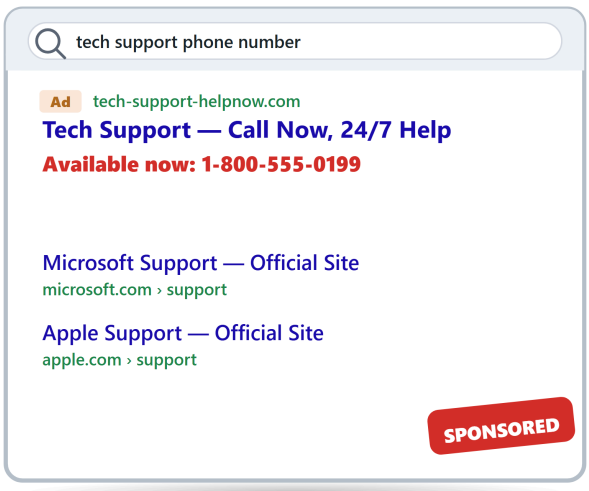
The warning signs of a fake tech-support site or ad

WARNING SIGN

1 Warning sign one: the sponsored ad up top

The very first result, labeled "Ad," isn't verified by the search engine. Anyone can pay for that spot.

WHAT TO DO
A sponsored result is an ad, not a recommendation. Scroll right past it.



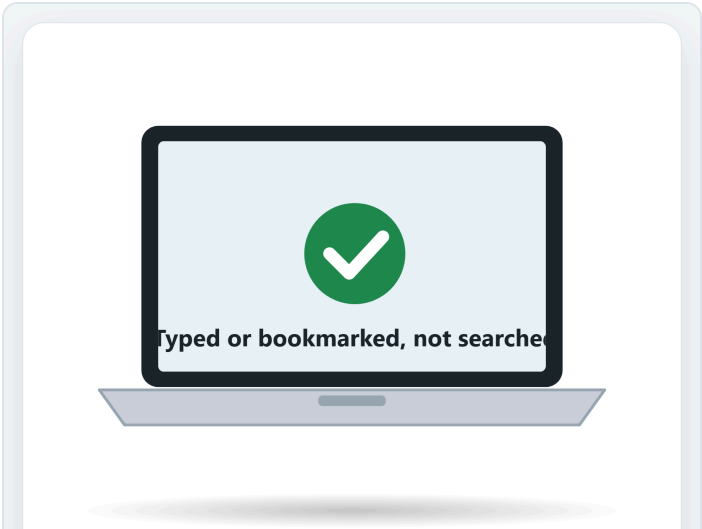
GO TO THE SOURCE

Go straight to the source instead

Use the company's official app, a number from your box or receipt, or a website you type in yourself.

WHAT TO DO

Never trust a number from a search ad or a pop-up. Look it up yourself, every time.



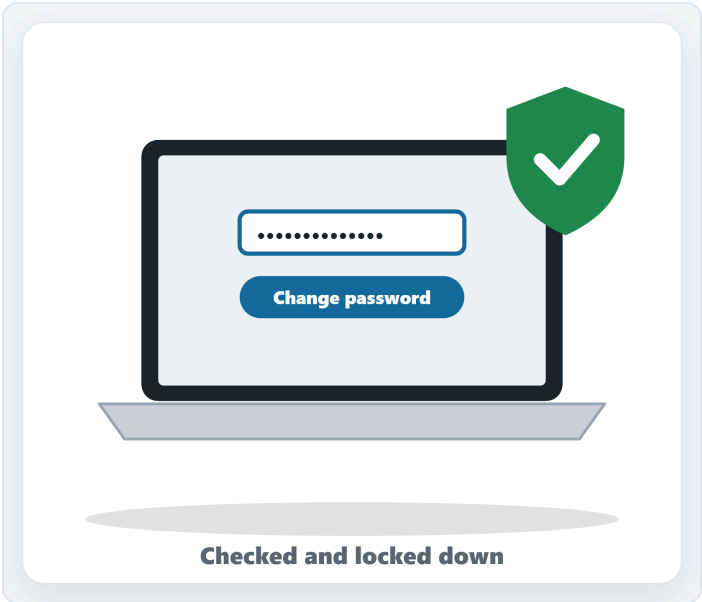
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Not sure if a site or call is real?

Call us first. We'll check it, or clean up a device that already let someone in.

WHAT TO DO

Already gave access or paid? Call 239-513-1960, we'll help you lock it down.



Warning sign 2: once you're on the line

- [ ] A page that won't let you leave
  Endless warnings, loud sounds, or a countdown timer
- [ ] Only a phone number, no real address
  No real company lists support as just a phone number
- [ ] A request for remote access
  To “fix” a problem they claim to have already found

3 rules to remember

- [ ] "Ad" means paid, not verified
  Scroll past sponsored results for support numbers
- [ ] Real companies don't cold-call
  Or demand you call back about a computer problem
- [ ] Never give remote access to a stranger
  Not to "fix" a problem you didn't report

Already called, or let someone in? Act fast.

- [ ] Gave remote access?
  Disconnect from the internet, then have the device professionally checked
- [ ] Gave a card number or paid?
  Call your card company or bank right away to dispute it
- [ ] Shared a password?
  Change it immediately, and anywhere else you reused it

Recap: fake tech-support sites and ads

- [ ] Searching for support? Scroll past the "Ad"
- [ ] A page that won't let you leave is a red flag
- [ ] Never give remote access to a stranger
- [ ] Use the official app, a number you know, or type the address yourself
- [ ] Already gave access or paid? Disconnect, dispute, and change passwords

A sponsored search result labeled "Ad" isn't verified by the search engine, anyone can pay for that spot. Go straight to the source instead: the company's official app, a number from your box or receipt, or a website you type in yourself.

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Not sure if a support site or call is real? We'll check it for you.

Call 239-513-1960

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