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Fraudsters are abusing small ad portals

Auction portals and small ad platforms are very popular. But there are criminals lurking there, too. Don't let yourself be led up the garden path!

It is not just after the bank holidays that those bargain offers on advertising and auction platforms are booming. That's something fraudsters take advantage of, too: No or fake goods, no payment or hidden rip-off fees are the eternal perennials amongst complaints.

Options such as "buyer protection" provided by platform and payment service providers unfortunately only offer inadequate safeguards. If you want to play it 100% safe, you shouldn't just apply a healthy dose of suspicion, but also follow these tips:

- If it looks too good to be true, it probably is: Don't go for unrealistic offers.
- You should limit yourself to items from your own region. That way, many fraudulent offers (which can reach a wide catchment area) are not displayed in the first place.
- Check reviews of potential business partners before you enter into any deal.
- Carefully read the offer description before you buy. In case of doubt, ask.
- Whenever possible, you should only sell your items collection-only and against cash payment.
- Don't pay any insurance, handling or shipping fees in advance.
- Don't agree any payment methods unfamiliar to you.
- Cut off all contact with a buyer or seller if they try and put you under pressure.

Further information can be found here: www.skppsc.ch/online-betrug (<http://www.skppsc.ch/online-betrug>)