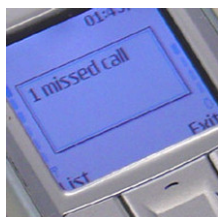


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## **The Missed Call Scam**

*Scammers aim to make money out of users' curiosity*

Many phone users are currently being subjected to a new money making scam involving mobile phones. The scam, known as the "Missed Call" scam is extremely simple and effective, relying on one single thing: the curiosity of mobile phone users. It is also very easy to explain how it works. A computer will pick up numbers from a list and automatically initiate a call. After the phone rings once, the computer will hang up, thus ensuring that the handset will indicate that a call has been missed. Scammers will then rely on the owner of the mobile phone returning the call. And if you stop to think about it, there are few people who will not return the call when they see an unknown number in the missed call list. When the person returns the call to find out the origin and purpose of it, he/she will be redirected to a premium rate telephone service without his/her knowledge. One of the scammers will attempt to keep the person on the line for as long as possible by entering a lengthy conversation, talking about some bogus prize or competition, because more talk time means more money for them. Most people realize that they have been subjected to a "Missed Call" scam and charged excessive rates for the premium rate service only after they have received the monthly statement. At the moment, it looks like little can be done about this type of scam, but there are several ways to avoid it. It is best to return calls only to numbers that you recognize. Someone who needs to get in contact with you will almost always call back, so there's really no need to call; the best solution in this case is to wait until the person calls again.