



FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION
PROTECTING AMERICA'S CONSUMERS

For Release

New FTC Data Show People Have Lost Billions to Social Media Scams

Social media was the costliest fraud contact method in 2025 and reported losses increased eightfold since 2020

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New data from the Federal Trade Commission show that, in 2025, nearly 30% of people who reported losing money to a scam said that it started on social media, with reported losses reaching a staggering \$2.1 billion.

Social media scams produced far more in losses—an eightfold increase since 2020—than any other contact method used by scammers to reach consumers, according to the new data.

The [Data Spotlight](#) notes that social media creates easy access to billions of people from anywhere in the world, making a scammer's job easier at very little cost. Scammers may hack a user's account, exploit what a user posts to figure out how to target them, or buy ads and use the same tools used by real businesses to target people by age, interests or shopping habits.

Reports show that in 2025, people reported losing more money to scams that started on Facebook than on any other social media platform. WhatsApp and Instagram were a distant second and third. In 2025, people reported losing far more money to scams on Facebook alone than they reported losing to text or email scams.

The data also show that all age groups, with the exception of those 80 and over, reported losing more money to scams that started on social media than any other contact method. And social media ranked second after phone calls for those 80 and over.

According to FTC data, social media scams come in different forms, including:

- **Investment scams:** People reported losing the most amount of money last year to investment scams that originated on social media, with losses of \$1.1 billion, more than half of the total amount lost to social media scams, according to FTC data. These scams often started with an ad or post offering a program to teach you how to invest. Other scammers posed as friendly advisers or created WhatsApp groups full of “successful investors” sharing fake testimonials.
- **Shopping scams:** Shopping scams were the most reported type of social media scam last year, with more than 40% of people who lost money to a scam on social media reporting that they ordered something they saw in a social media ad—everything from clothes and makeup to car parts and even puppies. Many of these ads led to unfamiliar websites, while others sent people to sites impersonating well-known brands that claimed to offer big discounts.
- **Romance scams:** Reports show romance scams also thrive on social media—nearly 60% of people who reported losing money to a romance scam in 2025 said it started on a social media platform. According to reports, scammers often tailored their pitch based on people’s profiles, later inventing a crisis requiring money or casually offering investment advice to draw them onto a fake investment platform.

To help steer clear of scams on social media the FTC advises consumers to:

- Limit who can see your posts and contacts on social media. Visit your [privacy settings](#) to set some restrictions so scammers have less to work with.
- Never let someone you have met only on social media direct your investment decisions. Instead, learn more about spotting [investment scams](#).
- Before you buy, [check out the company](#). Search online for its name plus “scam” or “complaint.”

To learn more about how to spot, avoid, and report scams—and how to recover money if you’ve paid a scammer—visit [ftc.gov/scams](#). If you spot a scam, report it to the FTC at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](#).

The Federal Trade Commission works to promote competition and [protect and educate consumers](#). The FTC will never demand money, make threats, tell you to transfer money, or promise you a prize. Learn more about consumer topics at [consumer.ftc.gov](#), or report fraud, scams, and bad business practices at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](#). Follow the [FTC on social media](#), read [consumer alerts](#) and the [business blog](#), and [sign up to get the latest FTC news and alerts](#).

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