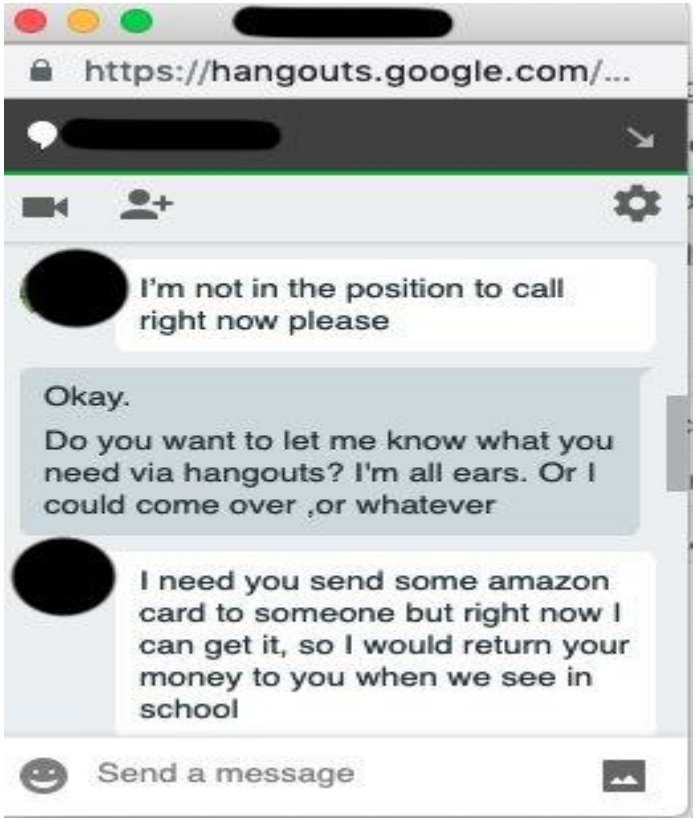
How do spam/phishing attacks really work?

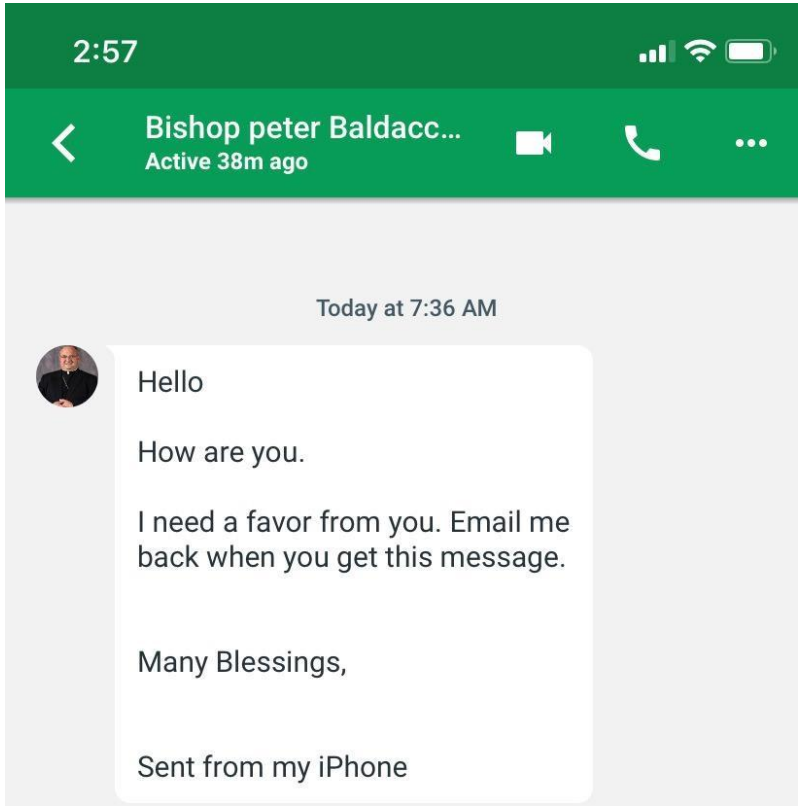
By: Isaac Chang

Purpose:

1. Education purposes only!
2. When you understand how something works, you understand it better

Examples of google hangout messages & calls





Recap of last time's lesson:

Top 3 things to remember:

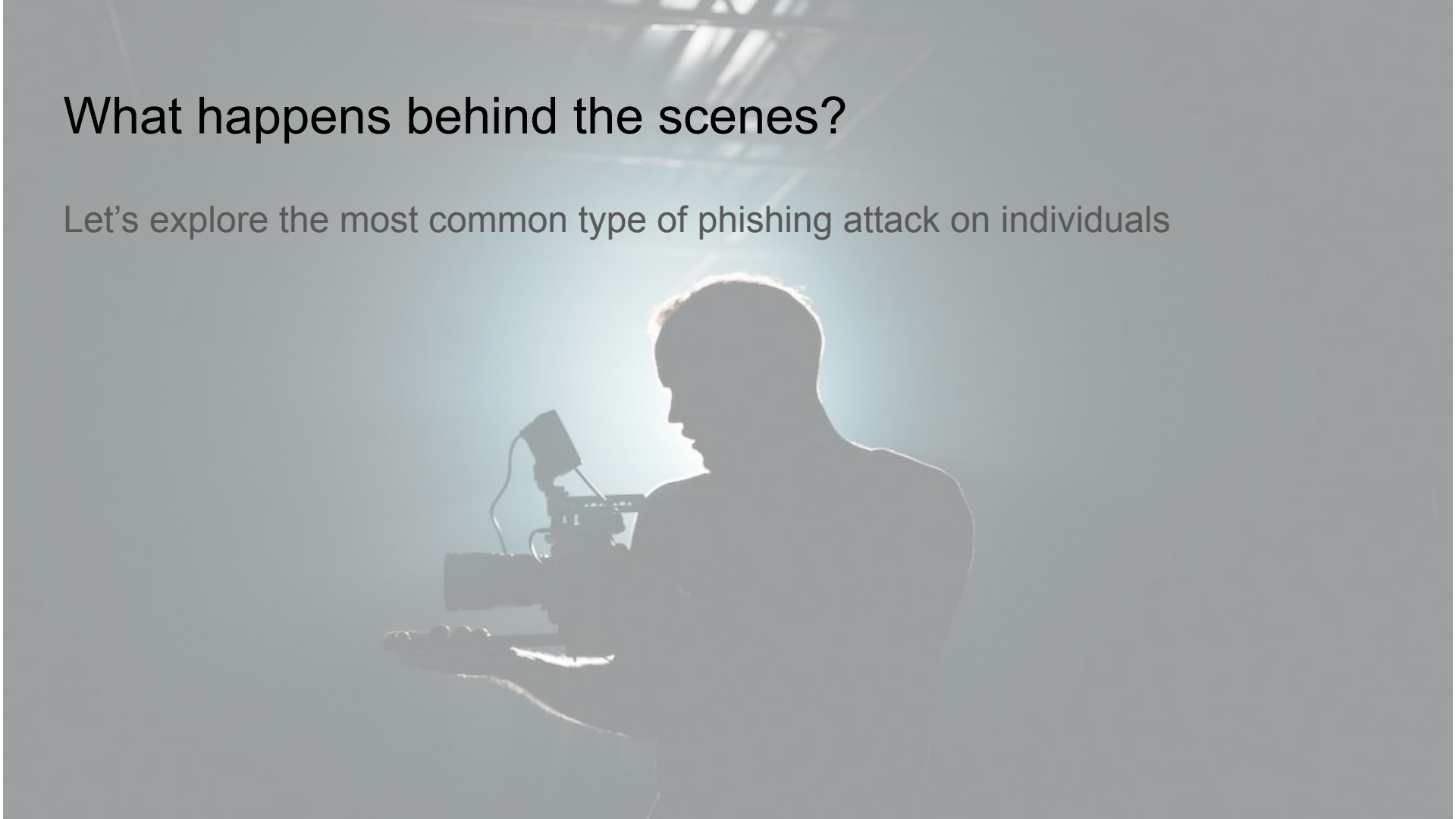
1. Look for threats or "too good to be true" feelings
2. Double check what the sender wants you to do
3. Stay calm no matter how threatening the conversation/message/email may be

Tell tales of scams:

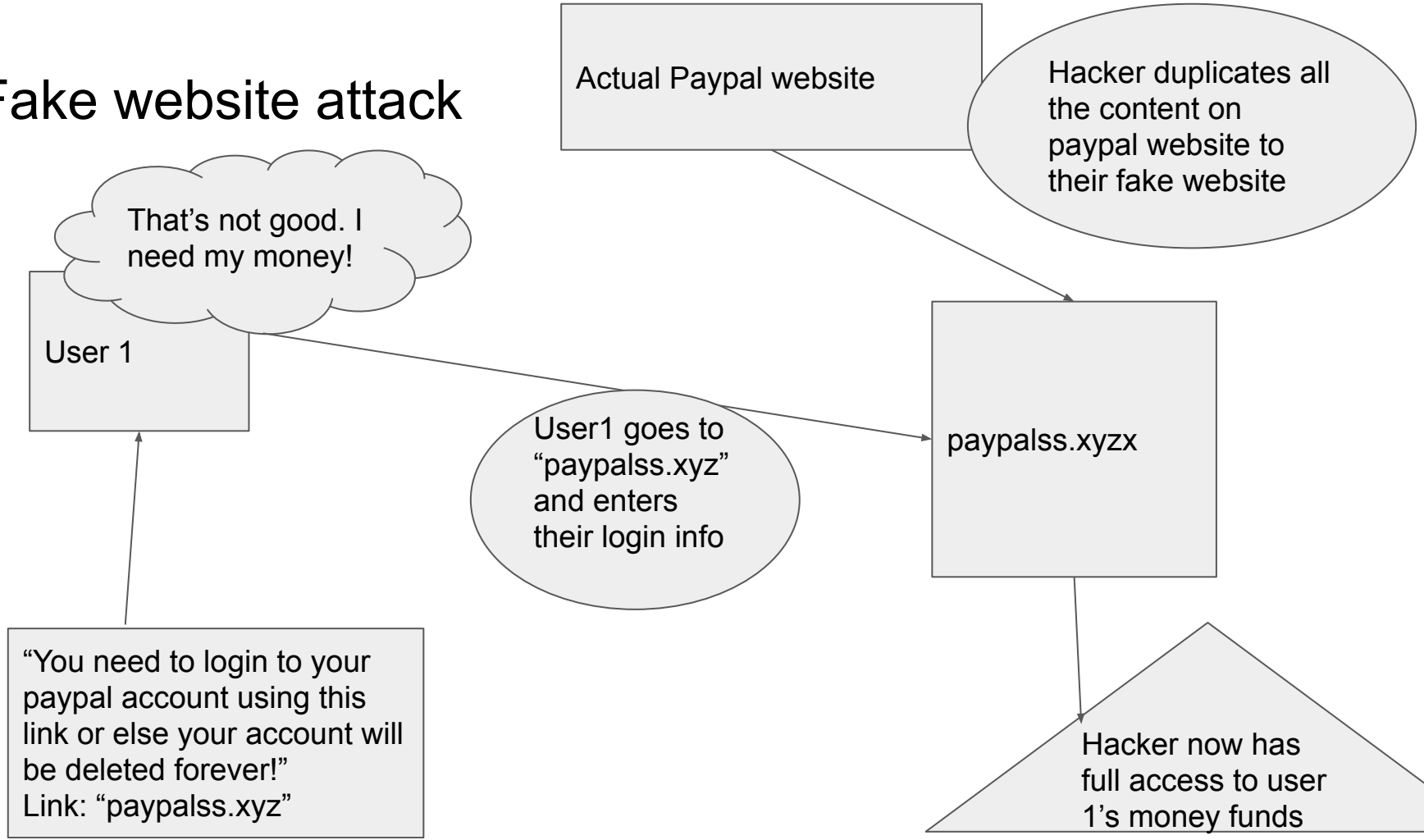
- Urgency
- Threatening
- Crazy incentives

What happens behind the scenes?

Let’s explore the most common type of phishing attack on individuals



Fake website attack



How does the hacker get your email?

On the dark web and other places, hackers can buy huge lists of emails

When you sign up for websites and other things, your email is registered. Sometimes, your email falls into the hands of people who sell them

I.e. have you ever signed up for one subscription and then received invitations to join similar subscriptions that you've never heard of?

How do hackers replicate websites?

1. **Using iframes**

Iframes are used to copy one webpage and display it on another webpage

This poses a risk because hackers can use websites with iframes and essentially copy everything about it into their own website

2. **Using hacking packages developed by others**

There are many libraries out there that can help anyone replicate a website. For example, *httrack* allows anyone to download a website onto their local computer.

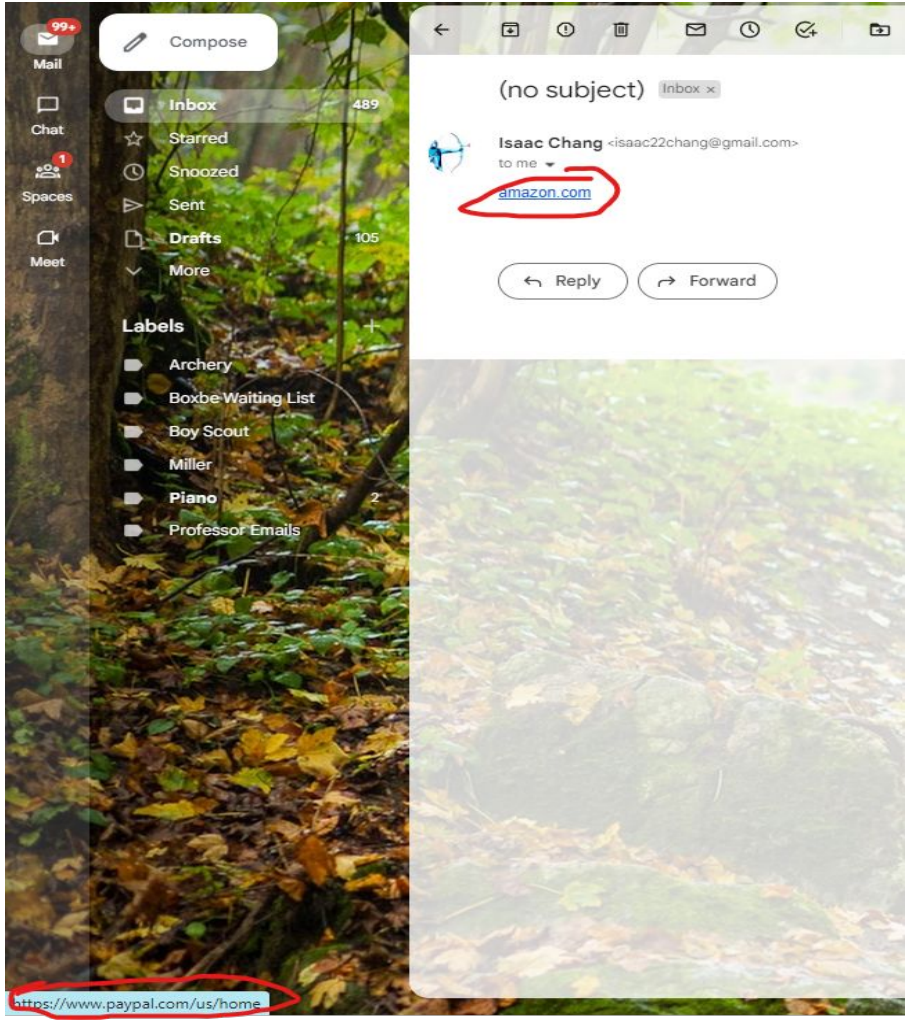
Ways to avoid fake website scams

These phishing attacks are actually quite easy to spot. If the link doesn’t match up with the organization sending the email, it is a scam.

Here are a few quick tips to help:

1. Check the official website of the said organization on a separate tab
2. Hover over the link to look at where it actually leads you to
3. Depending on what application you are using, you may have to click once

Gmail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Thanks for listening!