

## How cyber criminals exploit our ‘lizard brains’ to steal our personal information

Nearly 800,000 people fell victim to cyberscams in 2020, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Internet Crime Complaint Center. That was an increase of around 69% over 2019, with reported losses of more than \$4 billion last year.

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Blame it on our brains. Criminals lure smart people into their traps by taking advantage of the unconscious, automatic processes that act as shortcuts to make our decision-making more efficient. These cognitive biases—arising from what’s often referred to as our “lizard brains”—can cause us to misinterpret information and make snap judgments that may be irrational or inaccurate.

“Cybercriminals will do anything they can to trigger the lizard brain,” says Kelly Shortridge, a senior principal at [Fastly](#), a cloud-computing-services provider. They will use corporate logos we’re familiar with, or tell us to act fast or our bank account will be shut down, or hijack personal information from social media to impersonate a friend or an executive—whatever it takes to get users to click on a link, open an attachment, wire money or send compromising information.”

[\*\*This is an excerpt. Read the original post here.\*\*](#)