

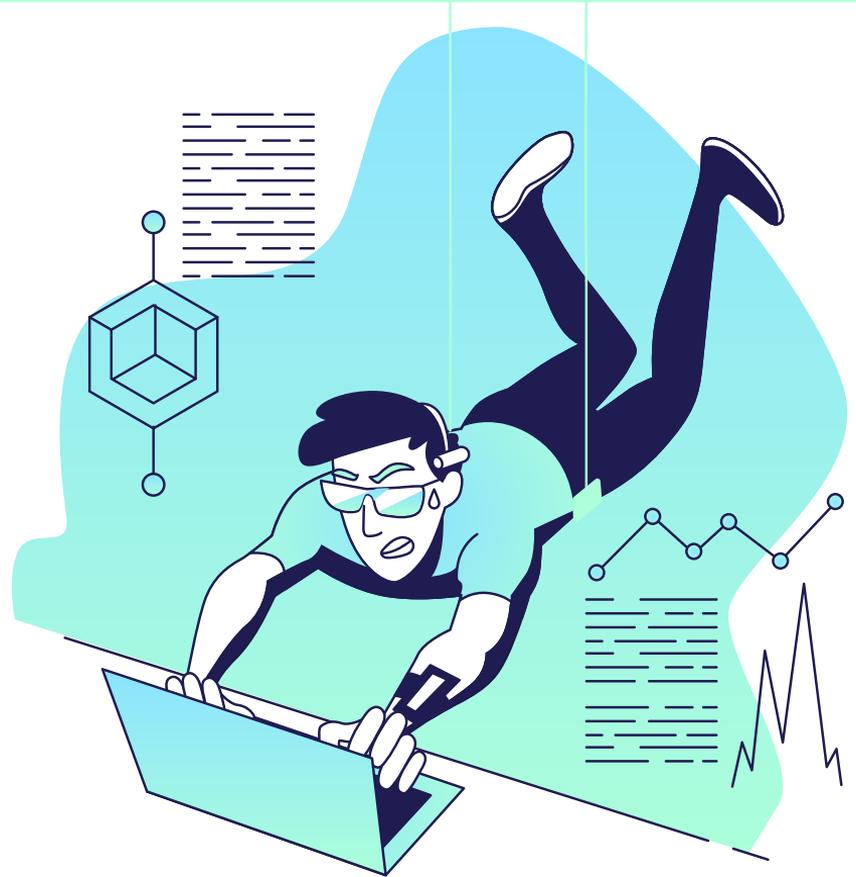


Rise in online banking scams

Felicia Chua

Introduction

With the rise in popularity of digital banking — scams related to online banking has skyrocketed, resulting in the loss of life savings among several individuals.



Introduction

Record number of scams in 2020 pushed overall crime rate in S'pore to highest in more than 10 years



SINGAPORE - The number of scams reported last year hit a record high, climbing 65.1 per cent from 2019, as scammers took more than \$201 million from their victims.

The 15,756 reported cases of scams pushed the overall crime rate to its highest since 2009, according to figures released by the police on Tuesday (Feb 9). If scams were excluded, the total number of crimes in 2020 would have decreased by 15.3 per cent to 21,653, from 25,570 in 2019.

E-commerce scams, the most commonly reported type of scam last year, saw a 19.1 per cent jump to 3,354 reported cases compared with 2019. The police said on Tuesday that this was partly due to the increase in online transactions amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

<https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/courts-crime/record-number-of-scams-in-2020-pushed-overall-crime-rate-in-spore-to-highest>

Nearly 470 people lose at least \$8.5m in phishing scams involving OCBC Bank



Anjali Raguraman

PUBLISHED 30 DEC 2021, 8:51 PM SGT



SINGAPORE - Since the start of December, at least 469 people have fallen prey to [phishing scams involving OCBC Bank](#), with reported losses totalling at least \$8.5 million.

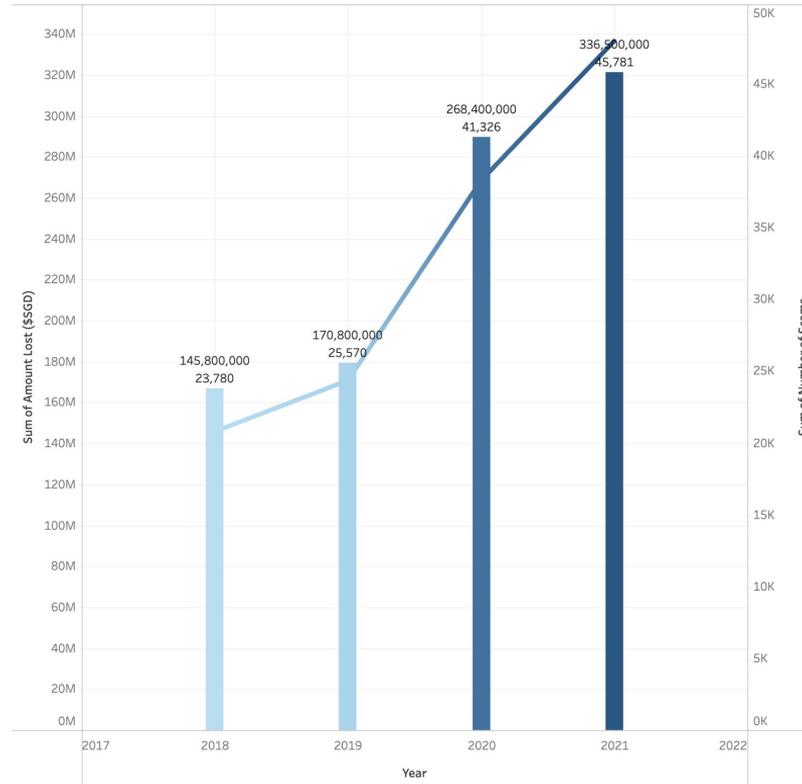
Most of the amount was lost over the past two weeks, said the police in a media release on Thursday evening (Dec 30).

Over the Christmas weekend alone, OCBC said 186 customers lost about \$2.7 million.

Victims received unsolicited SMSes purporting to be from the bank, claiming there were issues with their banking accounts and they had to click on a link given in the message to resolve the issue.

<https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/consumer/nearly-470-people-lose-at-least-85m-to-phishing-scam-involving-ocbc-bank>

Charting the rise in scams within Singapore



<https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/fc1996/viz/ScamsinSingapore/Story1?publish=yes>

Goal of this study



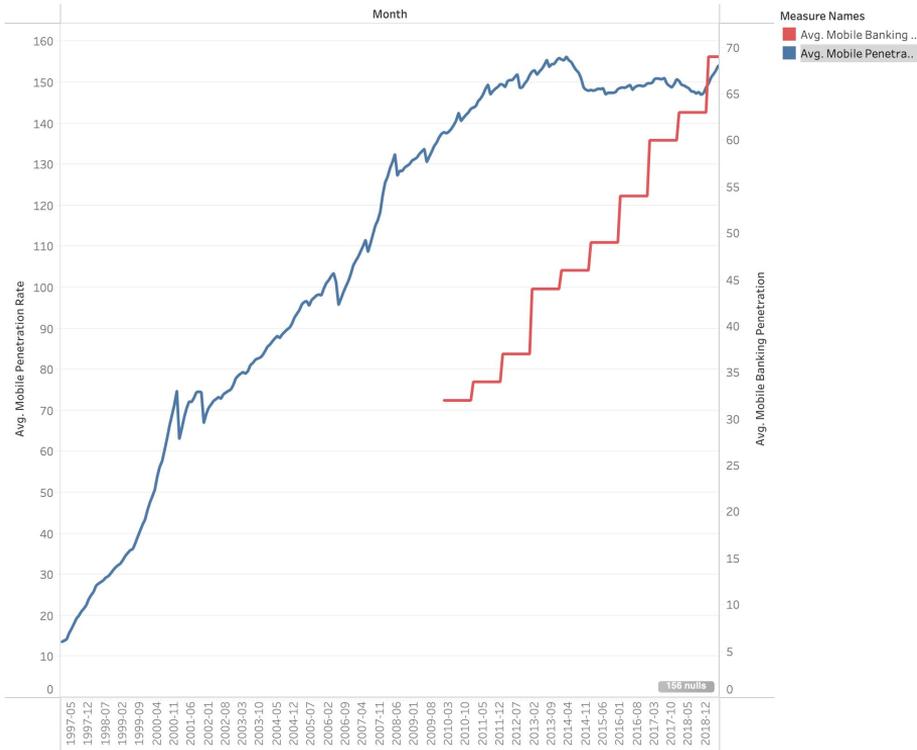
The goal of this study is to understand why this phenomenon is occurring, and potential solutions to address this issue.

01

Increasing Mobile Adoption



Charting the increase in Mobile Penetration Rates in Singapore

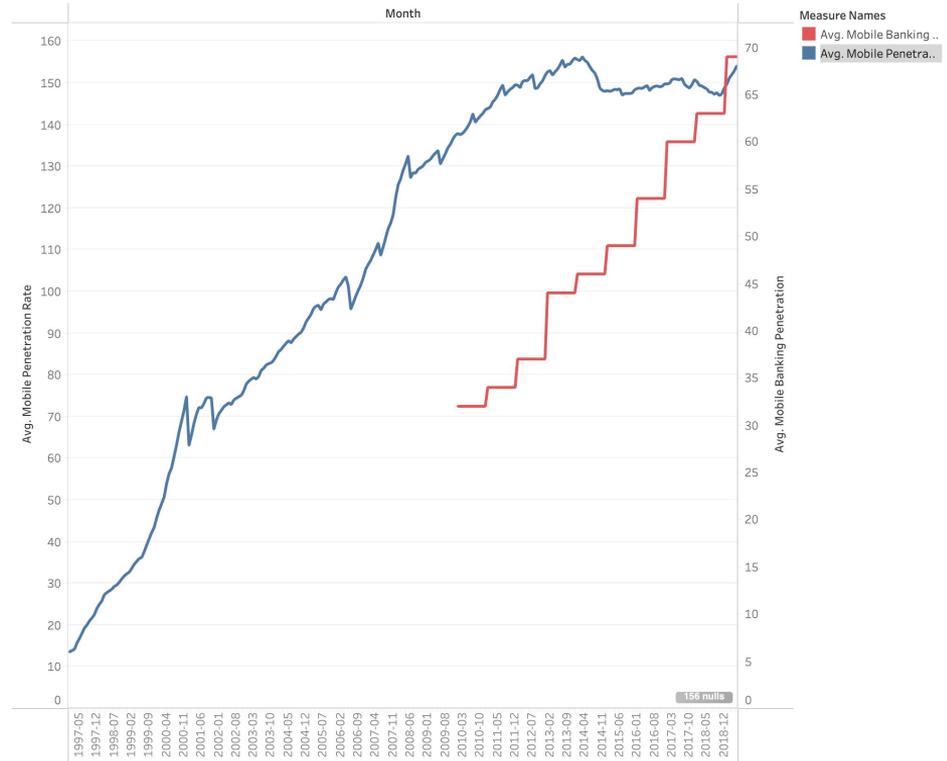
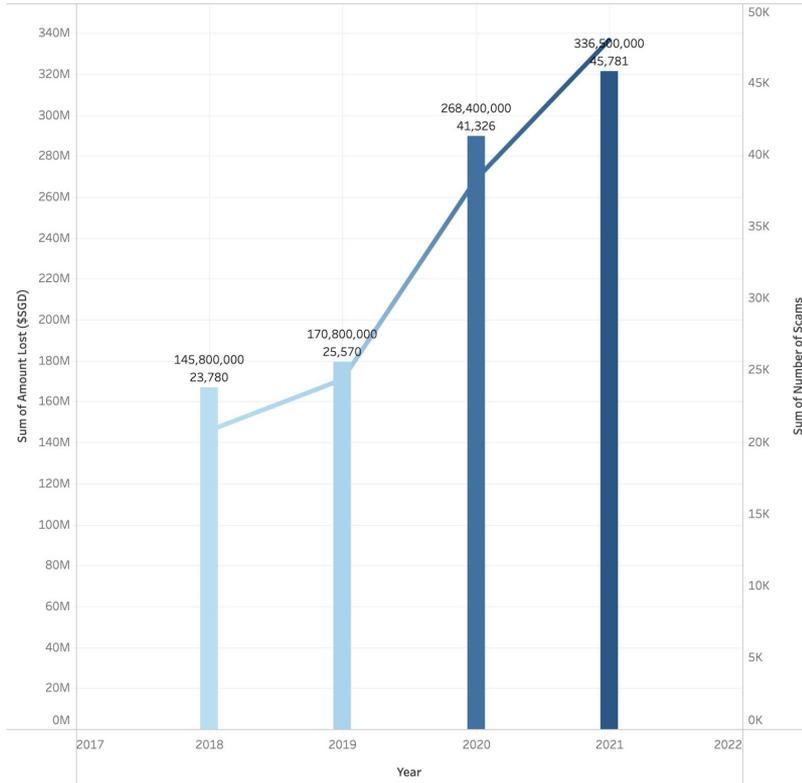


In this chart, you can see the exponential increase in **Mobile penetration rates** within Singapore from 1997 – 2019 (Blue).

While the **Mobile Banking Penetration rate** is shown to have strong growth from 2010 – 2019 (Red).

This signifies a rising adoption rate of Mobile banking in Singapore due to the increasing acceptance of mobile devices. However, this leaves adopters prone to online scams.

Positive Co-relation with mobile banking adoption and rise in scams in Singapore



Making sense of the data



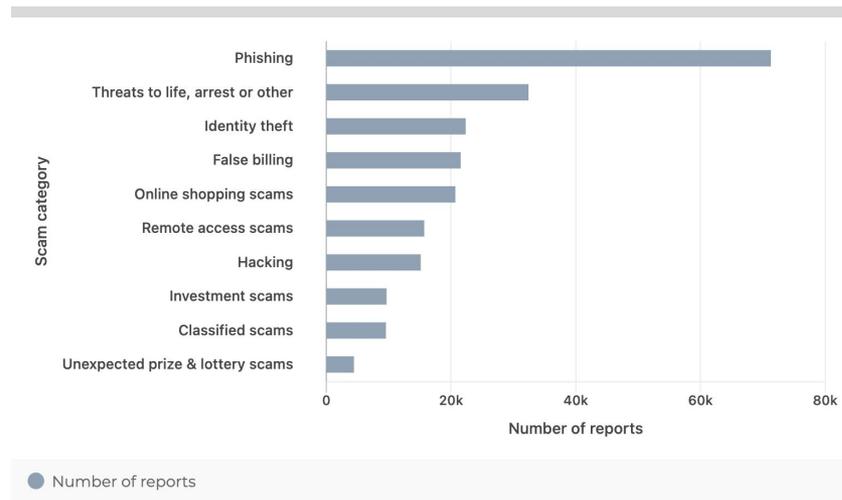
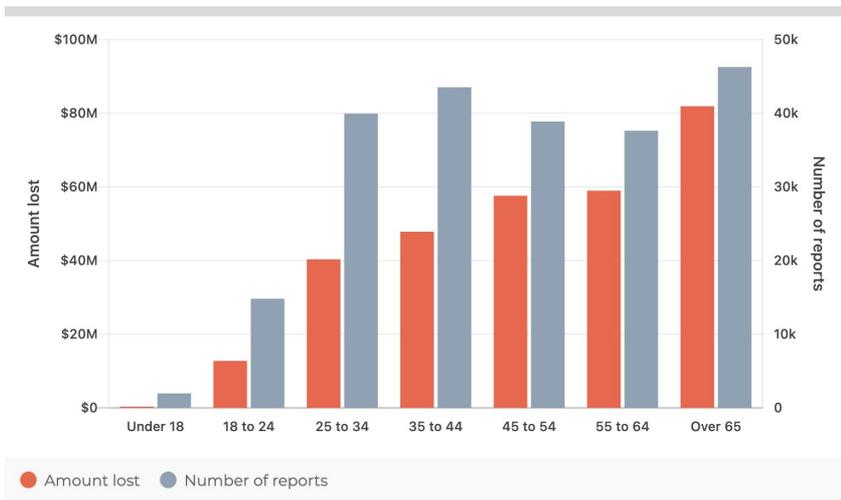
Now that we have understood why scams are on the rise — let us look for possible ways we can address this issue, starting with the people most vulnerable.

02

Identifying most vulnerable individuals



Understanding victims



<https://www.scamwatch.gov.au/scam-statistics>

This is a statistic from the Government of Australia, highlighting the people most affected by scams in 2021.

We can see that people over the age of 65 have lost the most money as well as made the most number of reports on scams, and are most prone to phishing related scams.

03

What can be done to help these people?



Possible solutions



Increased Security

Digital banking platforms must enforce greater security measures to minimise the possibility of large amounts of money being withdrawn, as well as increase detection when suspicious activity is detected.



Greater Awareness

Users have to be responsible and aware of the nature of scams. This can be done through more awareness campaigns and education. However, with an ever changing digital landscape, it can be difficult for these older users to keep up.



Increased punishment for Scammers

Scammers should be penalised heavier, should they be caught. This acts as a deterrence before anyone chooses to partake in such activities.