

From: [REDACTED] </O=ITHAKA/OU=FIRST ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, October 11, 2010 7:32 PM
To: [REDACTED]@ithaka.org>
Cc: [REDACTED]@ithaka.org>; [REDACTED]
<[REDACTED]@ithaka.org>; [REDACTED]@ithaka.org>;
[REDACTED]@Ithaka.org>; [REDACTED]
<[REDACTED]@ithaka.org>; [REDACTED]
<[REDACTED]@ithaka.org>; [REDACTED]
<[REDACTED]@ithaka.org>
Subject: RE: Update: JSTOR & MIT

Good Evening,

By way of an update, we have one email and one Facebook post referencing the outage at MIT, both are from end users and are of the wondering what's up and giving us an FYI variety. Having not heard from MIT officially today, I am suggesting we respond to both users with the following...

Thanks for alerting us to the issue with JSTOR access and MIT. Over this past weekend, robotic activity was noticed at JSTOR that is in violation with our Terms & Conditions of Use. The scope of this activity required us to deny access to JSTOR for all of MIT until it can be resolved.

We are in communications with the library and technical staff at MIT and expect resolution shortly. Please accept our apology for any inconvenience this may have caused. We are working to restore JSTOR access to MIT as quickly as possible and anticipate a resolution shortly.

... but welcoming suggestions. We can also refer them to their librarian, but note that this can be seen as a passive aggressive step from their end, though it would provide additional pressure on them, and is usually reserved for the completely non-responsive official contacts.

No doubt, the correspondence thus far from them would seem to be direct and agreeable, but no word from them today. From the incident on 9/25 and 9/26, they confirmed resolution on the 29th, so it might be expected to take a day or two, but that was only denying a small subset of their range and this is much, much larger.

I will reach out again, directly, first thing tomorrow morning, just to make sure they are in receipt on their end and action is being taken. Without additional word directly from MIT or anyone on this email chain, I will respond to the two users others going forward as stated above by 10pm EST.

Best,

[REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, October 11, 2010 2:05 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Update: JSTOR & MIT

Thanks, [REDACTED]

Does sound quite probable that this is an open proxy issue. I suggest we also ask MIT to scan for other open proxies, given that we had a situation with them a couple of weeks ago as well. If it's not an open proxy (that is, if the infringer is on-site or locatable/identifiable), I'd like -- as you already note -- confirmation of deletion of harvested content. I'd like to understand with some specificity how they go about obtaining this confirmation and ascertaining its veracity. And, how do they "deal with" these situations, beyond requesting confirmation of deletion? Are they able to tie the activity to a former "visiting scholar" or other individual? If so, are they willing to work with us to pursue more stringent law enforcement efforts (I'm not saying that we would in this circumstance, but I'm not necessarily satisfied with letting things go simply because the activity "stopped"; again, this is industrial theft and it's happening on a large scale or organizations all over). Also, open proxy is one risk and we should consider what if any follow up is possible re tracking down the content stolen from locations far away, but I also have real concerns about our content being downloaded more locally to hard drives or exported elsewhere. So, there may be different follow up depending on the type of infringement occurring.

In any event, this is one of the reasons for wanting to implement discrete watermarking or identifiers, should we in time find our content re-purposed by other sites.

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, October 11, 2010 12:47 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Update: JSTOR & MIT

Afternoon Update,

Still no word from MIT, but I suspect it will come shortly. That said, and wanting to be prepared, if there are any details or contingencies for reinstatement, we should be developing those now. They will likely come back and say it's taken care of again. They may or may not offer a reason. An immediate recurrence is highly unlikely, whether they have truly taken care of it or not, so it will be hard to solicit proof.

If I were forced to guess, I think they will report back that they identified a compromised User Name and Password and a bunch of referring access from IPs around the globe (typically some combination of China, Russia, and a smattering of Eastern European, Asian and South American origins). Some schools think that blocking those referring IPs is sufficient, which it is not, but isn't a bad addition. Hackers generally use Open Proxies to fake their actual location and can find an alternate Open Proxy to use quite readily. Only changing the password or disabling the offending Username and Password is an acceptable solution.

> Sent: Sunday, October 10, 2010 9:43 PM
> To: [REDACTED]
> Subject: Fw: Extreme robotic activity of JSTOR at MIT

> Fyi

> ----- Original Message -----

> From: [REDACTED] [mailto:[REDACTED]@MIT.EDU]

> Sent: Sunday, October 10, 2010 08:15 PM

> To: [REDACTED]

> Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@mit.edu>; [REDACTED]@mit.edu>

> Subject: RE: Extreme robotic activity of JSTOR at MIT

> Thank you, [REDACTED] Your action was entirely appropriate, and I appreciate your courtesy in letting me know. It is infuriating that MIT's security appears unable to stop this pattern. We will redouble our efforts to solve the problem. [REDACTED]

> _____
> From: [REDACTED]@ithaka.org]

> Sent: Saturday, October 09, 2010 11:15 PM

> To: [REDACTED]

> Subject: Extreme robotic activity of JSTOR at MIT

> Dear [REDACTED]

> I wanted to let you know about an extreme step we have taken this evening. Our staff have blocked access to JSTOR from MIT. This is a highly unusual step and one we do not take lightly. We have had to do so because someone is systematically attempting to download large parts of the JSTOR database from within MIT's IP range. They use robots to open a session, download a PDF, open a new session, download another PDF, and keep repeating at a high rate. Not only is this a problem because it is beyond the terms of the license, but the downloading is so extensive that it impacts other users and has even brought some of our servers down. We worked through a similar incident at MIT three weeks ago and thought that the activity was being done by a visiting scholar who had left. But it has started again at an even faster rate. I am not writing you to complain about the activity; I just wanted you to be aware of the extreme step we have taken and why.

> Our staff have communicated with your staff and will be working to get MIT access back up just as soon as possible.

> I'll keep you posted as I hear more.

> Best regards,

> [REDACTED]