

**From:** ██████████ </O=ITHAKA/OU=FIRST ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=██████████>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 12, 2010 8:57 AM  
**To:** ██████████ <██████████@ithaka.org>  
**Subject:** RE: Extreme robotic activity of JSTOR at MIT

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Thanks ██████████, I reached out again and apologized for the crossed paths. I also informed them that we will provide the IPs and timestamps to assist ASAP and updated the JIRA ticket to urgent, adding their request. It is currently assigned to ██████████. I also asked ██████████ about their comfort level with restoring some of their range. ██████████ has updated the ticket to say that we blocked one IP and the user quickly switched twice to other IPs to resume, which required the wider block.

That said, ██████████ is also saying that they were causing 50MB/s of traffic on their own, a monstrous amount. This makes me wonder about MIT's capacity here. That is, this activity should be easy to locate in anyone's logs.

██████████  
-----Original Message-----

**From:** ██████████  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 12, 2010 8:21 AM  
**To:** '██████████@MIT.EDU'  
**Cc:** ██████████  
**Subject:** Re: Extreme robotic activity of JSTOR at MIT

Hi ██████████

Thanks for your note. I have copied ██████████, who is our lead on these efforts and who has tried to be in touch with you and your colleagues over the last couple of days. I am surprised that you have not heard from us other than from me. This is very strange since I know we have been trying to contact you. I wonder if some messages are getting trapped in a spam filter or something. ██████████ will be able to answer your questions and work with you to restore service.

We understand that this is an extreme step -- we never take it either. The only reason we did so in this case was because of the scale of the problem and its impact on other users beyond MIT. I suggest that you and ██████████ speak as soon as possible so that we can get a plan in place to address this. We also want access restored as soon as possible.

Best

██████████  
----- Original Message -----

**From:** ██████████ [mailto:██████████@MIT.EDU]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 12, 2010 06:32 AM  
**To:** ██████████  
**Subject:** FW: Extreme robotic activity of JSTOR at MIT

Hello [REDACTED],

Could you supply the IP address(es) and dates/times of this activity so we can investigate? I do not see any other message to me from JSTOR about this.

Is it possible to restore access to MIT aside from the appropriate class C range, or even class B range? That would stop the activity without excluding thousands of innocent users who are not misusing the system. While we understand your reasoning below, it's also true that we simply do not see campus-wide shutdowns from our providers these days. That method was unfortunately not uncommon in the 90's but is not a current practice for our providers because it has not been shown to be necessary to stem excessive use and has such negative service impacts.

Thank you, and I look forward to hearing back from you.

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

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

> To: [REDACTED]

> Subject: Extreme robotic activity of JSTOR at MIT

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> 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.

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> 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]