

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@MIT.EDU>
Sent: Thursday, October 14, 2010 12:44 PM
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ithaka.org>; [REDACTED]
<[REDACTED]@ithaka.org>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@mit.edu>
Subject: RE: 10:00 am Update: JSTOR Abuse at MIT: All IPs Blocked

Hello [REDACTED] and [REDACTED],

Our investigations here point to the same guest that was involved in the 9/27 incident. We don't have enough information to follow the trail completely, but the signs suggest that the same guest user was responsible for this latest activity. To pursue this further, our IS&T group would need more information. Specifically, they are wondering if you are seeing any robotic activity from MIT currently and if so, whether you have any information about the IP addresses involved.

Given that it appears all of this excessive use was caused by a guest visitor at MIT, we have been considering next steps, and would like to suggest that we move to a new access model that will eliminate use by guests. We have recently developed an additional authorization layer that we can apply to particular products to prevent access by guests/walkins. We've tried this approach with one or two publishers where we had seen repeated excessive use, and it has stemmed the problem in those cases.

We would orchestrate this change by changing the proxy configuration on this end, and then we'd ask you to change the list of acceptable MIT IPs to only our proxy server's address -- a single IP.

If this sounds like an acceptable approach, let's discuss the next steps. To carry out the change, I'd have JSTOR work with [REDACTED], copied here.

Best,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
MIT Libraries

P [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@mit.edu

<http://libraries.mit.edu/scholarly>

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

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

Sent: Tuesday, October 12, 2010 10:09 AM

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

I am writing you this afternoon to let you know that we have been forced to block access to JSTOR from MIT. Yesterday, around 6pm, we began to see hundreds of PDF downloads per minute occurring from multiple sessions at 18.55.6.215. As these requests began to affect performance of the public site, we were forced to deny access to this IP. Requests continued to pour in from this IP for some time, but were denied access. This clearly indicates robotic harvesting of PDFs which violates our Terms & Conditions of Use.

This morning, at around 8am, this activity started again from IP 18.55.6.216, forcing us to restrict access to the entire range of MIT IP addresses. We rarely take this level of response to abusive activity, but felt it necessary to maintain the stability of the web site for other institutions and users.

Once you have identified the responsible party and can assure us that this activity will not continue, we will be happy to restore access as soon as possible. That said, please note that the block had to be executed at the firewall level to prevent performance degradation (even after denying the PDF downloads, the requests themselves were so frequent it continued to be problematic) and thus will require coordination of our systems administrators to restore, which may take some time.

Please do let me know if I can be of additional assistance or if I can provide additional information. Having worked in this area for some time, I am well aware that this activity is normally a compromised username and password or a student/researcher unaware of the impact of their activities or that this method of gathering PDFs is in violation of our Terms and Conditions of Use. We routinely work with researchers through our dfr.jstor.org site or by providing data exports to accomplish the intended research aim and would be happy to do so in this case as well if that turns out to be the motivation.

Best,

██████████
████████████████████

JSTOR

██████████@<<mailto:██████████@ithaka.org>>ithaka.org

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that helps the academic community use digital technologies to preserve the scholarly record and to advance research and teaching in sustainable ways.