

Mozilla resists request to remove Firefox tool

May 6 2011



Mozilla, the non-profit developer of the Firefox Web browser, is holding off on complying with a government request to remove a software tool meant to circumvent federal efforts at curbing Internet piracy.

The [Department of Homeland Security](#) has been seizing the [Internet addresses](#) of sites accused of piracy, so that visitors can't reach them by typing in those [domain names](#). The sites, however, still exist under other addresses.

The MafiaaFire tool for Firefox, developed by an outside party but available through Mozilla, seeks to automatically match seized names with the alternate addresses, similar to a mail-forwarding service, so that visitors can reach the sites.

Mozilla General Counsel Harvey Anderson said the DHS asked Mozilla to remove MafiaaFire from a site where Firefox users can add functions to the browser.

Anderson said the group is awaiting more information from the government before taking action. It wants to know whether the tool is illegal, and whether it is legally obligated to take it down.

Anderson said Mozilla complies with legal mandates, but hasn't received any court order, and the DHS hasn't responded to Mozilla's questions. The order raises questions about when companies should agree to government censorship requests, Anderson said in a blog post Thursday.

Anderson said that the government is alleging that the MafiaaFire tool circumvents a court order to disable sites that distribute copyright-protected content, including live sporting and pay-per-view events.

The DHS did not respond to calls for comment.

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Citation: Mozilla resists request to remove Firefox tool (2011, May 6) retrieved 9 August 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-05-mozilla-resists-firefox-tool.html>

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