Google announces 'Project Shield' help small sites ward off DDoS attacks

October 22 2013, by Bob Yirka

(Phys.org) —Google has [announced](#) a new initiative called *Project Shield* which the company describes as a program dedicated to helping smaller entities fend off Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks. In particular, the company says, it's looking to help promote freedom of expression by assisting at-risk sites from going down due to DDoS attacks.

DDoS attacks have become a common weapon, or tool, depending on viewpoint, for causing targeted websites from being accessible via the [web](#) at large—all it takes is a small network of dedicated computers attempting to access a [site](#), over and over, to flood a system preventing legitimate visitors access. Governments and large corporations have poured a lot of money into building systems that are capable of withstanding all but the largest attacks—smaller entities, on the other hand, have remained vulnerable. As part of this new initiative, Google is offering its services, free of charge (at least for now) to small sites at risk of attack. Some examples would be citizens inside closed societies, such as in North Korea, rebels seeking to overthrow their government in Syria, or citizen groups trying to monitor an election in Kenya.

Google's new project involves routing a sites' traffic though its own system which itself uses Page Speed Service (PPS) to help ward off attacks as well as what the [company](#) calls other DDoS mitigation technologies. Web sites that sign on would remain running in the event of an attack that is not able to overwhelm Google's system.

Google reps also outlined Project Shield at Google Ideas Summit this week, and in the process announced two other projects it's also working on. One is called a Digital Attack Map, which tracks DDoS attacks globally and shows them on a map—it was built in partnership with Arbor Networks. The other is a service called uProxy—it will allow sharing of web connections between online users to prevent tracking—it was created by a joint venture between the University of Washington and Brave New Software.

Google maintains that its goal with all three initiatives is purely altruistic and that they are being undertaken as a means to ensure that people the world over have equal access to freedom of speech via the Internet.