

Hackers force message on websites via US firm (Update)

November 27 2014, by Alex Veiga

A U.S. firm that helps connect more than 700 companies with customers through social media says a Syrian group hacked the company's web address to upload a message to other websites.

Gigya CEO Patrick Salyer outlined what happened in a blog published Thursday.

At around 6:45 a.m. Eastern Time, the company discovered "sporadic failures with access to our service," Salyer wrote.

The executive said hackers had rerouted Internet traffic from Gigya's website to an outside computer server. That server generated a message to visitors that their site had been hacked by the Syrian Electronic Army.

Published reports noted the message appeared on websites for several UK newspapers, CNBC and the National Hockey League.

The message also showed up briefly on some retail sites just as they prepared for the biggest shopping day of the year on Friday. The National Retail Federation did not immediately comment Thursday.

Still, the issue appeared to be resolved quickly.

The hackers rerouted Gigya's web traffic by tweaking the company's web address on Internet registry Whois.com so that it would point visitors to the outside server. The registry entry on Whois.com was fixed

about an hour after the company detected the breach, Salyer said.

Even so, the executive sought to reassure the company's clients.

"To be absolutely clear: Neither Gigya's platform itself nor any user, administrator or operational data has been compromised and was never at risk of being compromised," he wrote.

The Syrian Electronic Army aligns itself with Syrian President Bashar Assad. It has previously taken credit for hacking media sites like E! Online and the BBC.

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