

Three of tech's top CEOs to skip Obama cybersecurity summit

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The top executives of Google Inc., Yahoo! Inc. and Facebook Inc. won't attend President Barack Obama's cybersecurity summit on Friday, at a time when relations between the White House and Silicon Valley have frayed over privacy issues.

Facebook Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Mark Zuckerberg, Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer, and Google's Larry Page and Eric Schmidt were all invited but won't attend the public conference at Stanford University, according to the companies. Apple Inc. CEO Tim Cook is planning to show to the event, where Obama is scheduled to give the keynote speech and have a private lunch with a select group of attendees.

The technology industry had been a vital source of political support, campaign contributions and assistance in developing cutting-edge tech tactics for Obama when he won the presidency in 2008 and re-election in 2012. Relations have soured since, as the companies have clashed with the Obama administration over government spying and protecting the privacy rights of their users and customers.

Yahoo, Facebook, Google and Microsoft Corp. said they decided to send their top information security executives to the summit instead.

A White House spokesman, Mark Strohm, had no immediate comment.

The summit is part of a renewed push to combat hackers. Panels will focus on boosting collaboration between companies and agencies,

improving cybersecurity to protect consumers and better securing payment processing systems.

"It's going to bring everybody together - industry, tech companies, law enforcement, consumer and privacy advocates, law professors who are specialists in the field," Obama said last month when he announced the summit.

The themes back up the administration's efforts to improve information sharing about hacking threats and establishing a national standard for companies to report data breaches.

However, Yahoo, Facebook and Google are still reeling from revelations about the extent of National Security Agency spying exposed by former U.S. contractor Edward Snowden in 2013. The companies are trying to assure their users or customers that their products are secure and that they don't willingly turn over data to the government.

Apple and Google have started offering smartphones that encrypt data by default, essentially shielding photos, documents and contact lists from the prying eyes of government or hackers. Law enforcement agencies have been trying to convince the companies to make the data available for legitimate investigations.

The White House didn't put any of those issues on the agenda for the summit.

The Yahoo, Facebook, Google and Microsoft representatives will participate on a break-out panel at the end of the event on lessons learned from fighting hackers.

The panel will include Scott Charney, Microsoft's corporate vice president for trustworthy computing; Eric Grosse, Google's vice

president for security engineering; Alex Stamos, Yahoo's chief [information security](#) officer; and Joe Sullivan, Facebook's chief [information security officer](#).

Other Obama administration officials who will attend the conference include Homeland Security Department Secretary Jeh Johnson, Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker and Michael Daniel, the White House's cybersecurity coordinator.

Along with Apple's Cook, others who will attend the conference are Ajay Banga, president and CEO of MasterCard Inc.; Brian Moynihan, chairman and CEO of Bank of America Corp.; and Michael Brown, CEO of Symantec Corp.

Obama also will announce an executive action aimed at encouraging companies to share information across industry sectors. The executive action will create a process for coming up with [cybersecurity](#) practices that the organizations should voluntarily follow.

It also will authorize the Homeland Security Department to enter into agreements with the organizations to share data about hacking threats.

Microsoft employees donated \$854,717 to Obama in the 2008 election cycle, and Google workers contributed \$817,855 - ranking them fourth and sixth among all employers - according to the Center for Responsive Politics, a Washington non-profit that tracks political spending.

Yahoo's Mayer gave Obama \$2,300 in September 2007, when she was at Google and he was trying to emerge from the shadow of then-Democratic presidential front-runner Hillary Clinton. Mayer followed up with \$60,800 for the Democratic National Committee in 2010, \$5,000 to Obama's re-election campaign in 2011 and a maximum contribution of \$35,800 to Obama's "victory fund" that same year.

Microsoft and Google employees became the second- and third-ranking sources of campaign cash for Obama in the 2012 election, ranking only behind the University of California, according to the Center for Responsive Politics. Microsoft employees gave his campaign \$814,645 in 2012, and Google employees contributed \$801,770.

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