

Judge orders LinkedIn to stop blocking data-scraping firm

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In this Thursday, Sept. 22, 2016, file photo, the LinkedIn logo is displayed during a product announcement in San Francisco. On Monday, Aug. 14, 2017, a federal judge ordered LinkedIn to stop blocking startup firm hiQ Labs, Inc. from scraping LinkedIn personal profiles for data. (AP Photo/Eric Risberg, File)

A federal judge in San Francisco has ordered LinkedIn to stop blocking a startup company from scraping LinkedIn personal profiles for data.

U.S. District Judge Edward Chen has sided with hiQ Labs, a San Francisco company that analyzes workforce data scraped from public profiles.

LinkedIn invoked a federal anti-hacking law in telling hiQ to stop. LinkedIn also installed technical blocks to prevent hiQ from accessing otherwise publicly available information on LinkedIn users. Chen's [preliminary injunction](#) Monday gives LinkedIn a day to remove those blocks.

LinkedIn, which is a part of Microsoft, says it may challenge the ruling.

LinkedIn spokeswoman Nicole Leverich says "we will continue to fight to protect our members' ability to control the information they make available on LinkedIn."

Many companies also oppose data scrapping in favor of licensing data for a fee.

In a statement, hiQ said the company "believes that public data must remain public" and that big companies shouldn't stifle innovation by hoarding public data.

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