

# Sony Pictures reassures staff after hackers vow 'Xmas gift'

December 16 2014, by Michael Thurston

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The entryway to Sony Pictures Entertainment is seen in Los Angeles, California on December 4, 2014

Sony Pictures vows it will not be destroyed by a massive cyber attack, a day after hackers promised a big "Christmas gift" for the Hollywood studio.

Staff were called together in Los Angeles to hear how the company is responding to the November 24 hacking attack, which has produced a

string of damaging and highly embarrassing leaks.

"This will not take us down," Sony Pictures chief Michael Lynton told employees, cited by a Sony source, adding: "You should not be worried about the future of this studio."

Staff, who applauded their bosses at 20 minute meetings according to the source, declined to comment to AFP as they emerged from company headquarters.

The meetings were also addressed by the company's co-chairwoman, Amy Pascal, who apologized again for some of her leaked email comments, according to entertainment industry news website Deadline Hollywood.

In those emails Pascal notably made racially insensitive remarks about President Barack Obama. She had already apologized publicly.

She paid tribute to the company's staff Monday.

"You all are the backbone of this company. And it is your incredible efforts and perseverance that will get us through this," she said.

Monday's meeting came after the so-called Guardians of Peace (GOP) hacking group promised: "We are preparing for you a Christmas gift.



Sony Pictures Entertainment chiefs Michael Lynton (November 18, 2014 in Tokyo) and Amy Pascal (March 6, 2007 in Beverly Hills, California)

"The gift will be larger quantities of data. And it will be more interesting. The gift will surely give you much more pleasure and put Sony Pictures into the worst state," added the statement, posted on [pastebin.com](http://pastebin.com).

The group has demanded that Sony stop the release due on December 25—Christmas Day—of the comedy "The Interview," depicting a fictional CIA plot to kill North Korea's leader.

## **FBI probes leaks**

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), which is probing the hack, met Sony staff last week, a spokesman said.

The latest GOP vow came after a series of damaging leaks about Sony salaries, employee health records, unpublished scripts and email exchanges about movie stars and filmmakers, published by websites including gawker.com.

Sony has been thrown into damage control mode by the unflattering leaks—including a producer labeling Angelina Jolie a "minimally talented spoiled brat."

They included an email exchange in which Pascal asked film producer Scott Rudin what she should ask Obama at a "stupid" fundraising breakfast.



Sony Pictures has been thrown into damage control mode by the unflattering leaks

"Would he like to finance some movies?" joked Rudin, to which Pascal replied: "I doubt it. Should I ask him if he liked DJANGO?"—a reference to Quentin Tarantino slave movie "Django Unchained."

Rudin shot back: "'12 Years"—harrowing historical drama "12 Years a Slave." Pascal retorted: "Or the Butler"—Lee Daniels' "The Butler," about a black butler who serves generations of presidents at the White House.

Pascal apologized for her remarks last Thursday, saying: "The content of my emails were insensitive and inappropriate but are not an accurate reflection of who I am.

On Sunday, Sony pressed media outlets not to use data hackers may have leaked about the studio.

In the letter sent to groups including The New York Times and The Hollywood Reporter, lawyer David Boies said the "stolen information" must be destroyed and should not make it to publication.

North Korea has denied involvement in the brazen [cyber attack](#), but praised it as a "righteous deed" potentially orchestrated by supporters furious over the movie.

Monday's Sony meeting was initially scheduled for Friday, but was delayed after a huge storm brought traffic chaos to southern California.

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