

Akamai Mitigates Politically Motivated Hacktivist Attack on Major US Media Organization



The Situation

A major media company was the target of hacktivists that felt the organization was being critical of the Occupy Wall St. movement in the United States. Bent on extracting revenge and embarrassing the company, the hacktivist group sought to halt the company's web operations. With this goal in mind, it launched a large-scale web-based attack using multiple attack strategies including the Low Orbit Ion Cannon attack tool, SQL Injections, and other attack vectors across approximately 20 of the media company's digital properties. These attack methods have become common practices for those seeking to take part in a botnet attack, and are often associated with one of the world's largest, most feared computer hacking groups, Anonymous.

The Challenge

Media and entertainment companies have become a key target with the rise of the hacktivist movement in 2011. Seeking to make political statements, the hacktivists zero in on high-traffic media sites. Since these types of sites have just recently found themselves a part of this growing trend, they are often caught off guard to defend themselves against such attacks.

The Goal

The media company needed to meet two requirements to support its objectives:

- **Prevent DDoS attacks** – The media company wanted the ability to detect and mitigate threats against its website as early as possible.
- **Ensure uninterrupted business** – Because the company's multiple digital properties are a key channel for reaching its audience, it was critical to ensure 24x7 site uptime.

Why Akamai

Stopping Attacks at the Edge

Given the organization's long-standing relationship with Akamai, and the fact that their web infrastructure is highly dependent on the Akamai Intelligent Platform™, they contacted Akamai's team of security experts. Akamai was able to quickly deploy the necessary security solutions to match the specific attacks that were expected. Later the team identified the threat as a coordinated, large-scale DDoS (Distributed Denial of Service).

Akamai deployed its Web Application Firewall (WAF) service in multiple locations, cloaking the attack traffic, and configured custom rules designed to match the specific attacks that were expected. By detecting and mitigating potential attacks in HTTP and SSL traffic, WAF addresses such attacks within the Akamai Platform™ to ensure they never reach the customer's origin data centers.

During the 24 hours of the attack Akamai examined 394 million requests, stopping over 4 million malicious requests. As a result, business continued uninterrupted at the media company, with no disruptions across 19 of its digital properties.

INDUSTRY

Media & Entertainment

SECURITY SOLUTIONS

- Akamai Web Application Firewall
- SiteShield

KEY IMPACTS

- Stopped over 4 million malicious requests in 24 hours
- Ensured uptime across 19 digital properties
- Prevents attack traffic from reaching the origin server

Akamai Mitigates Attack



Akamai® is the leading provider of cloud services for delivering, optimizing and securing online content and business applications. At the core of the company's solutions is the Akamai Intelligent Platform™ providing extensive reach, coupled with unmatched reliability, security, visibility and expertise. Akamai removes the complexities of connecting the increasingly mobile world, supporting 24/7 consumer demand, and enabling enterprises to securely leverage the cloud. To learn more about how Akamai is accelerating the pace of innovation in a hyperconnected world, please visit www.akamai.com and follow @Akamai on Twitter.

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