Subject: Comp. info: MS attack on Netscape
Date: Mon, 04 Nov 1996 14:00:32 -0800
From: Laura Buddine <laura@iacta.com>
    To: jimb@netscape.com
    CC: jim@netscape.com

Dear Jim,

We're Netscape users and fans, and couldn't find any other place on your Web
site to send you some important competitive info. I hope you'll make good
use of it.

We just upgraded to NT4.0 Server, and installed the IIS 2.0 server that came
with it (replacing our IIS 1.0). The immediate result was that any user
surfing to our site with a Netscape browser was challenged to enter a user
name and password, and then was given an "Access Denied" message. (It also
denied access, even if the user had a valid name and password with full
admin privileges.)

However, anyone using MSIE 3.0 (didn't test with 2.0) could surf with no
problem -- and no name/password challenge.

This "feature" isn't documented. After an hour crawling around the Microsoft
web site in search of some kind of help, I found a document that mentioned
this -- and said that the reason is that "Netscape browsers cannot properly
handle an NT challenge/response."

This "feature" is the default, even when "allow anonymous users" is checked.
In fact, the only workaround that we could find was to give read-only
permission to everyone to the entire \wwwroot directory -- obviously not a
preferred choice of any system admin.

As you are no doubt aware, Microsoft does not provide support for its NT
products unless you purchase a support package. Our choice -- and that of
any NT4.0/IIS2.0 user -- is to either set the directory as read access to
all, or pay Microsoft $150 (!) for a tech support call.

Jim, it is my strong suspicion that this was set as a deliberate attempt to
cause problems for Netscape. It's very tempting to use the IIS2.0 because
it comes free with NT4.0 Server. It's especially tempting for small to
medium companies with Intranets, because it saves them money and sets up
automatically with NT4.0. If some users in the company are using MSIE to
browse with no problem and others using Netscape are locked out, the easiest
way for a busy admin or support person (especially that can't spend $150 for
a 900-number call and doesn't have an hour to paw around the Microsoft site)
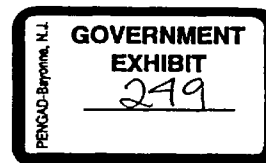is to tell his users to use MSIE.

This is outrageous, and even more so when they try to blame the problem on
Netscape. I hope you will kick Microsoft's butt with this.

If I can answer any questions of this, I'll be happy to. I can be reached
as laura@iacta.com or by phone at (310) 869-3031.

Regards,
Laura Buddine

Laura Buddine
IACTA Interactive Design and Development
reply to: laura@iacta.com

NSC001665