

Twitter hunts Github user who posted source code online

March 27 2023, by Anne D'innocenzio



The Twitter splash page is seen on a digital device on April 25, 2022, in San Diego. Some parts of Twitter's source code, the fundamental computer code on which the social network operates, were leaked online, the social media company said in a legal filing on Sunday, March 26, 2023. Credit: AP Photo/Gregory Bull, File

Some parts of Twitter's source code—the fundamental computer code on which the social network runs—were leaked online, the social media company said in a legal filing that was first reported by The New York Times.

According to the [legal document](#), first filed with the U.S. District Court of the Northern District of California on Friday, Twitter had asked GitHub, an internet hosting service for software development, to take down the code where it was posted. The platform complied and said the content had been disabled, according to the filing.

Twitter, based in San Francisco, noted in the filing that the postings infringe on copyrights held by Twitter.

The company also asked the court to identify the alleged individual or group that posted the information without Twitter's authorization. It's seeking names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, social media profile data and IP addresses associated with the user account "FreeSpeechEnthusiast" which is suspected of being behind the leak. The name is an apparent reference to Twitter's billionaire owner, Elon Musk, who described himself as a free speech absolutist.

It is difficult to know if the leak poses an immediate cybersecurity risk for users, said Lukasz Olejnik, an independent cybersecurity researcher and consultant, but he did say that breach underscores internal turbulence at the company.

"While this is the internal [source code](#), including internal tools, the biggest immediate risk seems to be reputational," Olejnik said "It highlights the broader problem of Big Tech, which is insider risk," and could undermine trust between Twitter's employees or internal teams, he said.

Musk had promised earlier this month that Twitter would open source all the code used to recommend tweets on March 31, saying that people "will discover many silly things, but we'll patch issues as soon as they're found!" He added that being transparent about Twitter's code will be "incredibly embarrassing at first" but will result in "rapid improvement in recommendation quality."

The [leak](#) creates another challenge for Musk, who bought Twitter in [October](#) for \$44 billion and took the company private. Twitter has since been engulfed in chaos, with massive layoffs and an exodus of advertisers fearful of exposure on the platform to looser rules on potentially inflammatory posts.

Meanwhile, the [Federal Trade Commission](#) is probing Musk's mass layoffs at Twitter and trying to obtain his internal communications as part of ongoing oversight into the social media company's privacy and cybersecurity practices, according to documents described in a congressional report.

© 2023 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed without permission.

Citation: Twitter hunts Github user who posted source code online (2023, March 27) retrieved 17 April 2024 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2023-03-twitter-github-user-source-code.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--