

Hackers Invade Net; Privacy in Question

Many large Internet sites shut down last week after hackers tapped into them and caused privacy leaks.

By LIZ STRITTMATTER
Staff Writer

Internet surfers might not be as safe as they think, even in the privacy of their own homes.

Last week, several prominent Internet companies, including Yahoo!, eBay and ETrade were paralyzed for hours by hackers who sent false traffic to the sites, causing the sites to think they had too many simultaneous hits.

The sites went into overload and wouldn't let anyone access them.

The event raised concerns about the ability of hackers to gain access to personal information via the Internet.

Robert Ellis Smith, publisher of Privacy Journal, a journal that examines privacy and technology, said a vast amount of information about people was available online.

"You can get Social Security numbers, grades and medical records," Smith said.

He said many Internet users were unaware that the World Wide Web was a potential open door for leaks. "A leaky site means that information or products find their way into search engines when they shouldn't be there," he said.

Smith said he blamed leaky sites on the poor design of Web sites, adding that a potential hacker did not need special software to access information.

In light of the recent hacker surge, companies might need to look into heightened security for their patrons' information, Smith said.

But he said companies would be reluctant to put in the extra effort.

"(Heightened security) would happen only if people make demands and boycott their service," he said.

Sherry Graham, acting director of the Response Center for Academic Technology & Networks at UNC, said UNC experienced denial-of-service attacks, in which people tried to shut down the system.

Graham said UNC had been "spammed," which means bombarded with junk mail. "It's not uncommon at any institution, and usually, it is deliberate," she said.

"Spamming can stagger or shut down e-mail," said Tim Cline, lead postmaster for ATN. "Spammers piggyback our system," he added, explaining that piggybacking was when hackers used UNC lists to send junk mail.

He said names were harvested by e-mail programs. For instance, if a person subscribed to a listserv, his or her name could be plucked from that list and sold,

the same way catalogs sell addresses.

To help end these problems, the UNC e-mail system underwent a facelift during the fall semester. The old system enabled customers to send e-mail messages from off campus

through smtp.unc.edu.

This system had been used by spammers to send millions of junk mail messages around the world. Because of this abuse, a number of sites worldwide refused to accept e-mail messages from unc.edu. UNC then moved from open mail relay to closed mail relay.

"In past open mail relay, we didn't question the person's identity," Cline said.

"Now we only allow people to send mail through us if the sender is at a valid UNC station or if the recipient is a valid UNC person."

The State & National Editor can be reached at stntdesk@unc.edu.

Council OKs UNC Wellness Center

By ERICA COLEMAN
Staff Writer

After an extensive question-and-answer session Monday night, the Chapel Hill Town Council approved a special use permit to give Meadowmont developers permission to begin construction.

Council member Kevin Foy said the 52,000-square-foot Wellness Center, an extension of UNC Hospitals, complied with the Master Land Use Plan for Meadowmont, a 435-acre multi-use development.

"The hearing is on whether the proposal for the Wellness Center coincides with the original plan with town ordinances and with resource and environmental protection," he said.

Foy also said Monday night's discus-

sion was a follow-up of a hearing on Jan. 19 in which council members expressed concerns over the special use permit.

"This is not the first time this issue has been heard," he said.

"At the last hearing, concerns such as whether certain trees should be cut down, or whether impervious pavement should be made more porous were discussed."

Council member Pat Evans said she worried about having only one access



Town Council member Flicka Bateman said she was concerned with costs.

way at the center for regular traffic. She said this issue could pose problems with such a big facility.

"I'm uncomfortable that in a project we are kind of creating from scratch that we would have only one entranceway for a facility that is 52,000 square feet with over 200 parking spaces," Evans said.

Council member Flicka Bateman also voiced concern over the cost of membership that might limit disabled citizens from reaping the benefits of the proposed amenities located at the center.

"I fear that membership prices may prevent many who need the therapeutic pool from being able to use it," she said.

"I propose a subsidy which will help those who need the pool, but can't afford it."

Another concern discussed at both

hearings was the number of parking spaces at the center.

However, the council voted unanimously to decrease parking lot spaces from 215 to 208.

Despite these concerns, Bateman said the facility would benefit residents.

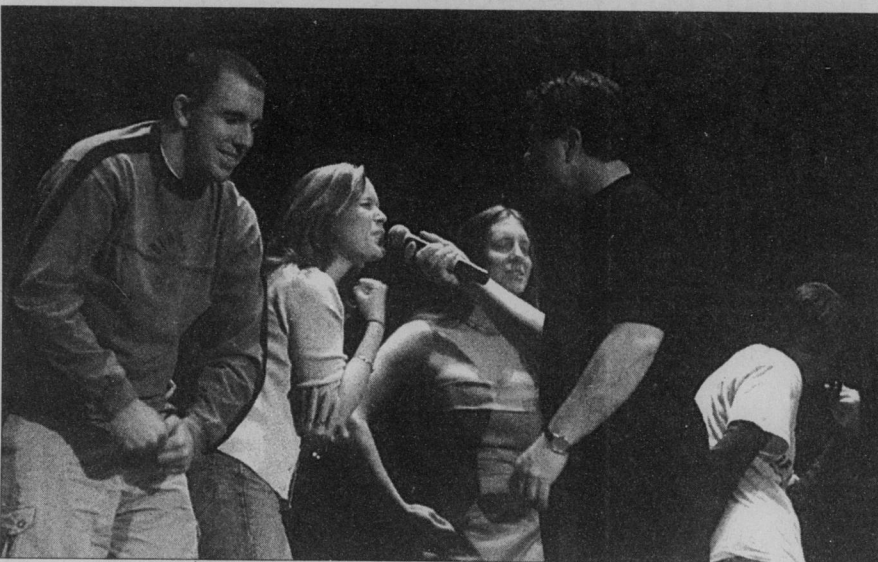
"I think it's a great idea. It will better serve the Meadowmont and the Chapel Hill community."

The proposed center will contain a gym with a pool, an indoor track, aerobics classes, a primary care clinic, a rehabilitation center and a physical education facility.

Center memberships will be open to all residents, not just those who live in Meadowmont.

The City Editor can be reached at citydesk@unc.edu.

UNDER HIS SPELL



DTH/CHRISTINE NGUYEN

Hypnotist Tom deLuca transforms UNC students into weightlifters and Ricky Martin impersonators in Memorial Hall on Monday night. DeLuca feels it is important to "bring a little amazement" into people's lives. Many of the students were shocked to find out what they had done while under hypnosis.

Campus Calendar

Today

5 p.m. — Lab! Theatre presents Steve Martin's "Picasso at the Lapin Agile" at the Elizabeth Price Kenan Theatre, located in the Center for Dramatic Art. The show is free.

7 p.m. — The Carolina Photography Association will hold a general body meeting in 103 Bingham Hall.

7 p.m. — Chris Rice, a Christian musician, will hold a concert in the Great Hall. Tickets are \$3 and are on sale in the Pit.

Wednesday

4 p.m. — There will be an International Festival planning meeting in Union 210.

The meeting will be an information session for all students interested in helping with an international celebration of food and entertainment that will take place March 6.

Items of Interest

■ The Carolina Outreach Theatre, UNC's new public service children's theatre, will hold auditions for "Rapunzel."

Visit the Union Desk for more information and to sign up.

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ATTENTION: NEW FACULTY

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Tar Heel Bus Tour
May 22-26, 2000

The Tar Heel Bus Tour is a five-day trip across North Carolina that gives new faculty members a head start on learning about the state they serve. The tour will hit the road again from Monday, May 22, to Friday, May 26, 2000 — the week after commencement.

If you're a full-time faculty member who has come to the University in the last three years, we hope you will join us on our journey across North Carolina.

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durham: on 9th street and perry street (across from brueggers). 286-1875.

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—Faculty Unplugged—

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3:30pm

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Professor of Law

will discuss his new book
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The Soul of South African Law.

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