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Net attack crushes SCO Web site

By [Stephen Shankland](#)

Staff Writer, CNET News.com

May 2, 2003, 4:13 PM PT

An avalanche of data blocked access to the SCO Group's Web site for several hours Friday, said the company, which has come under fire from Linux fans for an ongoing lawsuit against IBM.

At 10:45 a.m., the Unix and Linux seller was hit by a distributed denial-of-service attack (DDoS) that hampered its Internet operations, said SCO spokesman Blake Stowell. In a DDoS attack, numerous computers simultaneously send so much data across a network that the targeted system slows to a crawl trying to keep up with the traffic it's receiving.

Stowell said SCO had no indication who was behind the attack or why it was launched, but the Utah-based company has incurred the wrath of many Linux enthusiasts infuriated with its lawsuit against IBM. [SCO seeks more than \\$1 billion in the suit](#), which accuses Big Blue of taking Unix intellectual property to which SCO owns rights, and moving it into open-source Linux. On Thursday, SCO Chief Executive Darl McBride said [Unix source code had been copied line-by-line into Linux](#).

Unofficial open-source spokesmen such as Bruce Perens and Eric Raymond have condemned the lawsuit as an act of desperation, and others in the Linux community have been less gentle in their scorn.

A DDoS attack is hitting below the belt, though, Stowell said. "It's one thing to have a complaint with SCO's lawsuit or with our position in terms of code being found in Linux. It's another thing to deal with that in an unprofessional way," he said.

But if the attack is indeed a payback move, it wouldn't be the first time. Attackers [took down the Web site of the Recording Industry Association of America](#), unpopular for its crackdown on music swapping.

While the Iraq war was at its height, Arabic news site Al Jazeera was cut off from most of its audience because of a deluge of data. And two years ago, Internet attackers [buried the White House's Web site](#) in so much traffic that it, too, was inaccessible.

Such attacks are quite common, but frequently go unreported. A two-year-old study of Internet traffic found that every week, [some 4,000 attacks lasting more than 10 minutes each are launched](#).

SCO's Internet service provider, [ViaWest](#), told SCO that about 100 high-speed [T1](#) data-transmission lines of network capacity--about 90 percent of its total bandwidth--was being

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consumed in the attack. "It was a large, extremely well-orchestrated DDoS attack," ViaWest told SCO.

The ISP worked to screen out the offending data, and SCO's Web site was back in operation by 4 p.m., Stowell said.

ViaWest found that 138 different machines were involved in the attack. Apparently, the systems had been infected earlier with an DDoS program that was triggered by a signal. It was the second-largest onslaught ViaWest had experienced, according to SCO.

The U.S. Attorney's office is investigating the attack, and information on its details was provided to the FBI's Cyber Crime Division, the software maker added.

News.com's Rob Lemos contributed to this report.

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