

Case Study – A Media Company

Brief

We have chosen to list this web development agency as a case study due to the size and complexity of their client's needs and also the agencies requirement to protect its interests as well as that of its clients. The Media Company run several dedicated windows servers all co-located within a server farm in central London. The server farm does not provide any security services and simply connects the servers to the Internet with their unique IP addresses. These servers run variously databases of SQL Server and MySQL, web applications written in ASP, ASP.NET and PHP as well as Flash action script. JavaScript is also heavily utilised on all applications developed by the Media Company. From the outset we were aware that the Media Company have no security policy, their programmers have no security knowledge and they do not have anyone dedicated to running the servers. In the event of a problem support was requested from the server farm itself, which was provided at a premium rate, and hence only focused on fixing the problem at hand and did not consider the wider implications of online application servers.

Approach

A series of pen tests was performed on each server to evaluate service packs and known vulnerabilities. All servers were found to be out of date in terms of updates, and database servers were easily exploited using basic Unicode exploits.

Solutions

Training was provided to the Media Company technical staff to enable them to perform server updates and instruction on secure application development.

