



Let us serve you, but don't bring us down

Posted on May 29, 2023 by Brewster Kahle

What just happened on archive.org today, as best we know:

Tens of thousands of requests per second for our public domain OCR files were launched from 64 virtual hosts on amazon's AWS services. (Even by web standards, 10's of thousands of requests per second is a lot.)

This activity brought archive.org down for all users for about an hour.

We are thankful to our engineers who could scramble on a Sunday afternoon on a holiday weekend to work on this.

We got the service back up by blocking those IP addresses.

But, another 64 addresses started the same type of activity a couple of hours later.

We figured out how to block this new set, but again, with about an hour outage.

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How this could have gone better for us:

Those wanting to use our materials in bulk should start slowly, and ramp up.

Also, if you are starting a large project please contact us at info@archive.org, we are here to help.

If you find yourself blocked, please don't just start again, reach out.

Again, please use the Internet Archive, but don't bring us down in the process.

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2 thoughts on “Let us serve you, but don't bring us down”



Hasford Albrecht

May 29, 2023 at 5:15 am

[quote]

Tens of thousands of requests per second for our public domain OCR files were launched from 64 virtual hosts on amazon's AWS services. (Even by web standards, 10's of thousands of requests per second is a lot.)

[/quote]

Thank you for taking the time to let your users know what happened.

I was using IA earlier today and got a “server error 502” screen. I was so surprised at seeing this I felt compelled to take a screenshot of it, if only to convince myself that what I was seeing was real. And while getting a 502 error from IA probably wasn't the End of the World, I admit I did trot over to the window to make sure the sun was still in the sky.

(You know, just in case.)

Admittedly, getting an error screen does help one to better appreciate when a website becomes available again, so it wasn't all bad. But it *was* surprising – and I feel all the better for knowing what happened.



Brewster Kahle

Post author

May 29, 2023 at 5:48 am

I guess the good news for us is that this does not happen very often or you would not doubt the sun in the sky.

Sorry that we went down. We appreciate your message here.

-brewster
