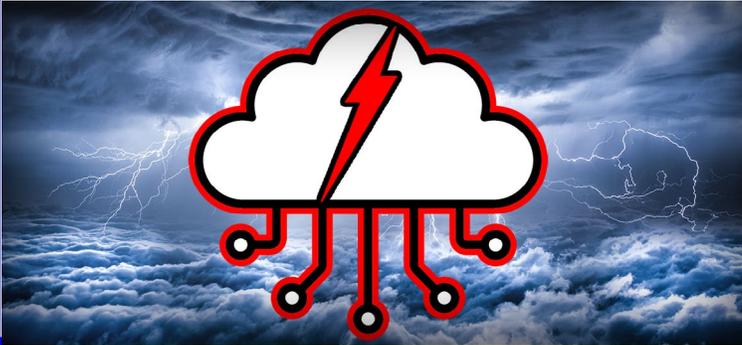# Secure Networkers®
IT NEWS BRIEF
JANUARY 2023

A STORMY MONTH IN THE RACKSPACE CLOUD

If you are not already familiar, Rackspace is a cloud provider, and it was recently hit by a ransomware attack. The attack disrupted their customers' ability to access their email accounts because the ransomware targeted the Hosted Exchange environment. After weeks of mitigation and moving customers over to Microsoft 365 to restore email communication, there remain questions about what happened, what will be the continuing ramifications of it, and what lessons should be learned from the incident.

Our CTO Todd Ellis addresses all these concerns.

Todd Ellis
Chief Technical Officer

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT THE RACKSPACE OUTAGE

On Friday, December 2, 2022 at 01:49 AM CST, Rackspace became aware of an incident that occurred in in its hosted Microsoft Exchange environment.

The services affected included MAPI/RPC, POP, IMAP, SMTP, ActiveSync, and the Outlook Web Access (OWA). All of these are interfaces for accessing Hosted Exchange to manage email accounts online. According to Rackspace, the issue was localized strictly to a segment of their Hosted Exchange platform. Seven more updates were published before at 7:19 PM on the same day before they conceded that it would be best to move to Microsoft Office 365.

For their impacted customers, Rackspace has provided complimentary Microsoft Exchange Online Plan 1 licenses until the incident resolves, with comprehensive instructions about how to activate the free licenses and how to migrate mailboxes to Microsoft 365. Customers are encouraged to review the information as soon as possible if they have not already done so.

However, in their attempts to receive answers about the incident, some Rackspace customers report that they faced long wait times and limited customer service. On Saturday, December 10, 2022, Rackspace released another update stating that they continue to work hard to provide the best support possible for its customers during the migration process. In the update, Rackspace reported that as of Friday, December 9, more than two-thirds of their customers utilizing the Hosted Exchange environment had been successfully reconnected to their emails. Yet as of the publication of this article there are customers still waiting on their exchange mailbox data.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THE RACKSPACE OUTAGE?

The incident at Rackspace reminds all companies of the importance of having a comprehensive cybersecurity plan. While it remains unclear whether or not the ransomware attack could have been prevented, this incident illustrates how critical it is to have...

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