

Re: Idiot spam attack on sci.lang

Source: <http://sci.tech--archive.net/Archive/sci.lang/2008-01/msg01363.html>

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 - *Date:* Thu, 31 Jan 2008 01:49:59 -0800 (PST)
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On Jan 28, 1:06 pm, António Marques <m...@xxxxxxx> wrote:

There is/was no MI5Vic 'account'. There is a person writing messages (from wherever) under that name. As far as anyone can tell, no one has ever used that name to write 'normal' messages – so quite a few server administrators, and possibly Google as well, chose to ignore messages signed by MI5Vic. It's as simple as that. There are no 'accounts' or 'banning' involved – not any more than Google giving you results when you search for 'hamburger' means that there is a google account for hamburgers. That's all google's 'profiles' are – aggregated views of searching their archives for a given e-mail address.

Thank you for the three replies. I answer only here, for the sake of simplicity. You may know that we entered the era of structured products (for exampl the structured financial products, which, in combination with rating agencies, caused the present financial crisis). Another example is the firm Swisscom, a phone company with a web section called bluewin, and bluewin has web mail called bluemail. Bluemail was free for a long time. I got two bluemail addresses myself, one of which I use for posting here. Bluemail is very good, so when they announced that it won't be free any longer, some two years ago, I decided to keep my bluemail accounts and pay the modest fee for their good service, including spam filters and a lot of comfort, and fifty kilobytes storing capacity per e-mail address. I could get more e-mail addresses for the same price, but the two I have are sufficient for me, as I don't run a business. Now Google has a similar structured product: Google took over Deja News, then simply deja, Google maintain the archive of the Usenet, and they added Google groups, where everyone who got something to say can create his or her own forum, within a couple of minutes. Google stores the terabytes of Usenet messages, and provides access to the Usenet for computer morons of my caliber (I can't handle other Usenet portals, or how they are called). I subscribed to

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sci.archaeology, then also to sci.lang, and so I got an account, I can post to these two groups, and to any other group, either in the Usenet, or in the Google groups. Google runs a profile, which lists up my messages, and the groups I wrote to, by year and month, a very useful instrument (apart from the sum total of ratings – you know my opinion about rating in the sciences). Using my profile, I can easily find again a message of mine I wrote years ago. Now Google runs a profile on every poster to the Usenet, not only subscribers to Google. This function is a free service, such as bluemail was a free service in the structured product offered by Swisscom. The profile of another poster allows me to find again messages others wrote a long time ago (I remember he said this or that, in the spring of 2004, if memory serves, I would like to retrieve that specific part of information, now I could use it for my work ...). From the viewpoint of a firm, the free part of a structured product must work especially well, for it is the interface to the global consumer and potential customer. Now if Google allows criminals to fill my profile with krap, sent by people who abuse my name and Google identity, they have a problem. Imagine that a criminal could flood a bank with counterfeit money, and do so in the name and using the accounts of the regular customers – that bank would have a real problem. Google must solve their problem, the steps they took until now are not sufficient. One step they took was closing the account – note well: the free account that runs under the name of profile – of the MI5Vic... spammer. You can't retrieve his profile anymore. Yet if you go back and find an old message by him, and klick on the function "Find messages by this author," you'll find that he sent 144'000 messages that were sent by him, via a robot, of course, and you can retrieve the first 1,000 spam messages, or, by varying your query, many more. Now the spammer goes on with other e-mails, one for example big foot (or so), and Google runs profiles for these identities. I could cope with a temporary flooding of the groups with spam, but I don't accept the flooding of my profile as part of my Google account with krap I did not write and did not send. As I said before: the free part of a structured product must work especially well.

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