Restoring a Wikibook about competitive intelligence to an active state after a hacker attack

University of Haifa - The Department of Information and Knowledge Management

Ronen Amsalem

Advisor: Prof Daphne Raban

My goal was to restore a Wikibook about competitive intelligence, which collapsed after hackers attacked the server storing the information. The site had to be restored so that the content could be viewed. In 2006, Prof. Daphne Raban from the Department of Management at the University of Haifa initiated a Wikibook about competitive intelligence according to the principle of the "wisdom of the masses". A Table of Contents was developed by Prof. Raban. Students then filled out the topics as part of their projects. Wikibook allows content to be inserted and updated quickly. It creates a sense of community and encourages activity because it gives the participants a sense of ownership of the knowledge. A hacker attack on the unprotected wiki server filled the site with spam. The site was taken offline, and the contents became inaccessible. My work included investigating the matter and reviewing relevant sources of information. I consulted information security experts and the damaged site was restored. Storage space was purchased on a virtual server and a PHP engine was installed to support the database and fix the coding errors. The main outcome at the end of the practicum is that the site is once again accessible. The conclusions are as followed. First, servers must be better protected against attacks. Yet, despite server protections, the server may still be damaged and therefore it is also important to carry out ongoing backups. Finally, it is essential to upgrade the PHP engine and SQL to the latest versions so that the site can be restored more easily. This project has taught me how these sites are built and stored, and the importance of their ongoing maintenance and security. The department and the students can now use the great knowledge stored in the Wikibook.