Barnes & Noble hit by Egregor ransomware, strange data leaked

By Lawrence Abrams

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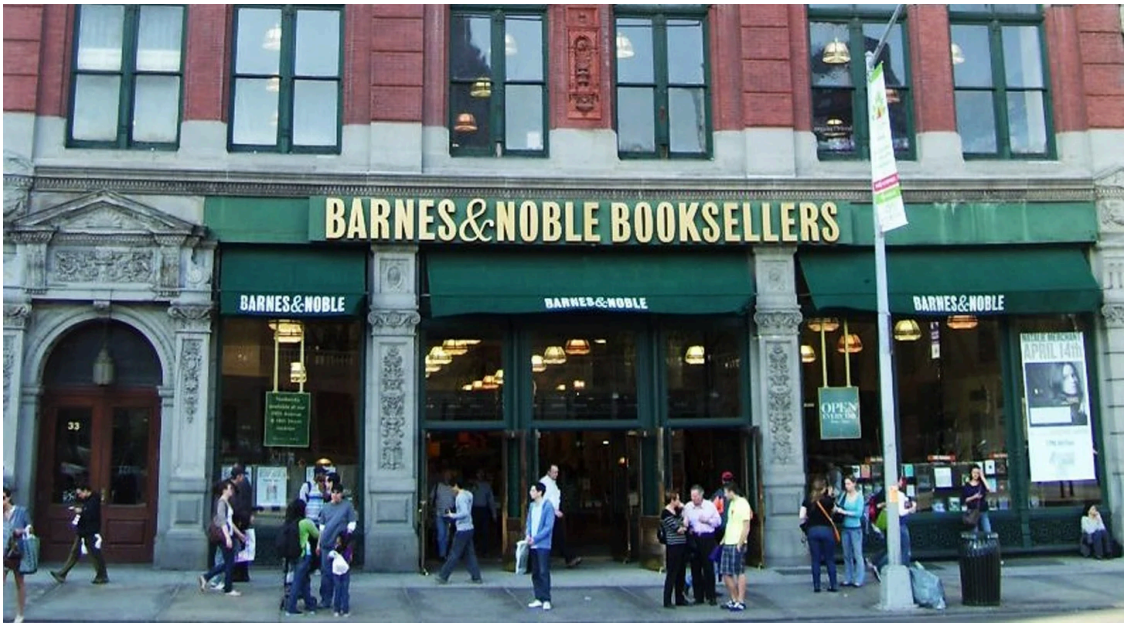
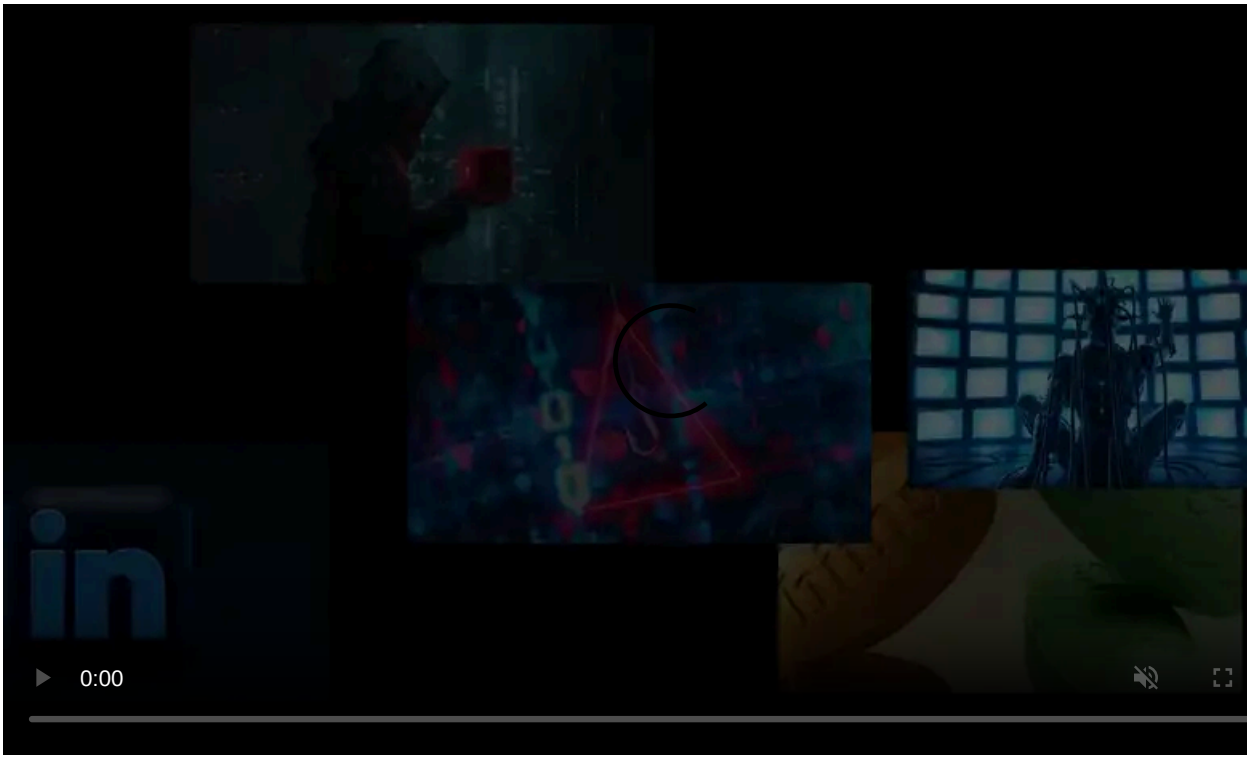


The Egregor ransomware gang is claiming responsibility for the cyberattack on U.S. Bookstore giant Barnes & Noble on October 10th, 2020. The attackers state that they stole unencrypted files as part of the attack.

Barnes & Noble is the largest brick-and-mortar bookseller in the United States, with over 600 bookstores in fifty states. The bookseller also operated the Nook Digital, which is their eBook and e-Reader platform.

Ransomware attack leads to an outage

On October 10th, users began complaining on Nook's Facebook page and Twitter that they could no longer access their library of purchased eBooks and magazine subscriptions.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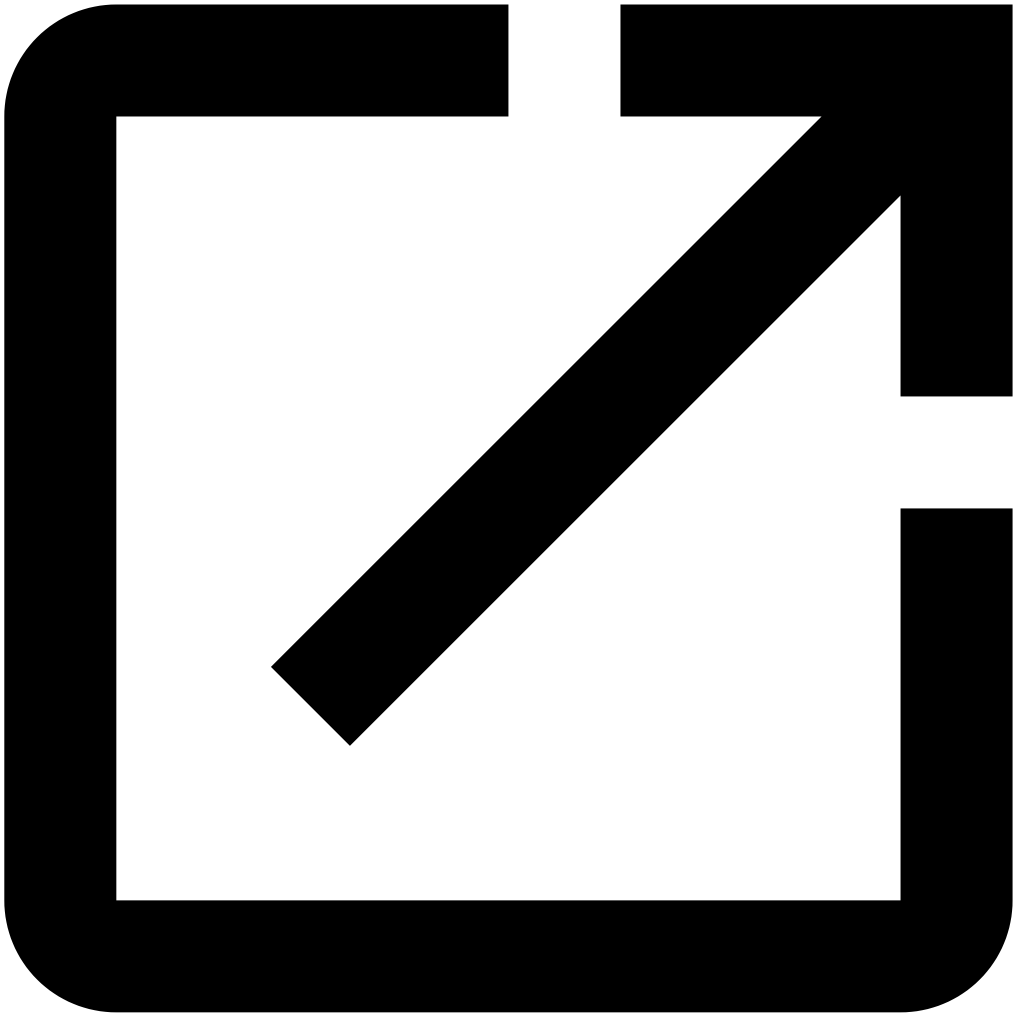
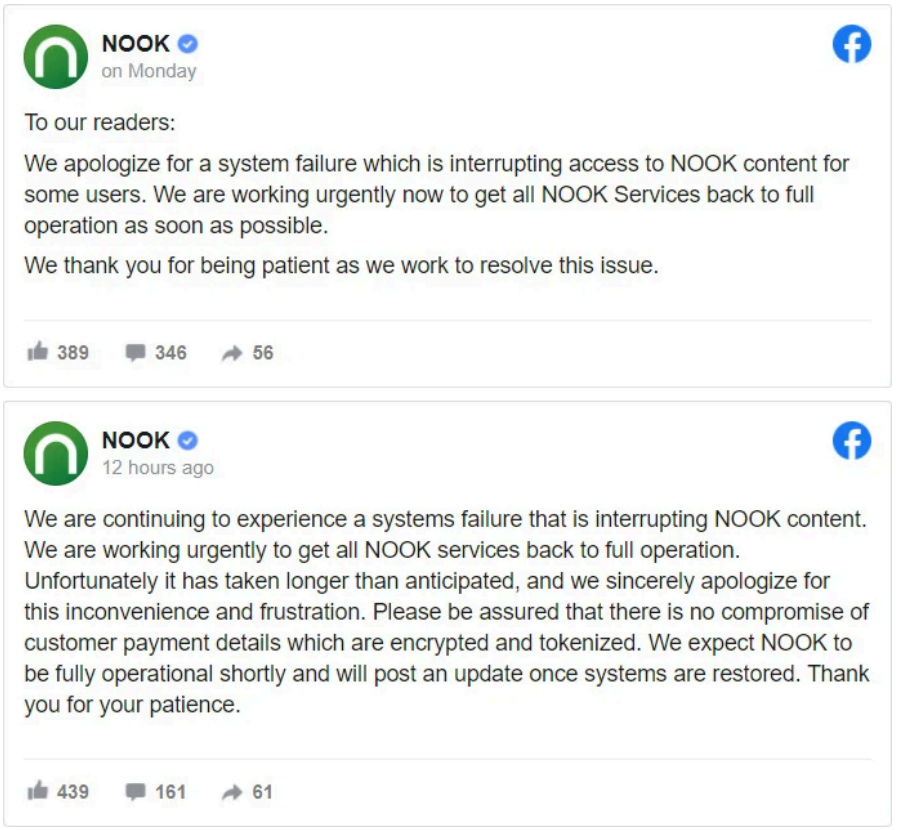


In response to the concerns, Barnes & Noble posted an update on the Nook Facebook page stating that they are experiencing a severe system failure and are working to get systems operational again.

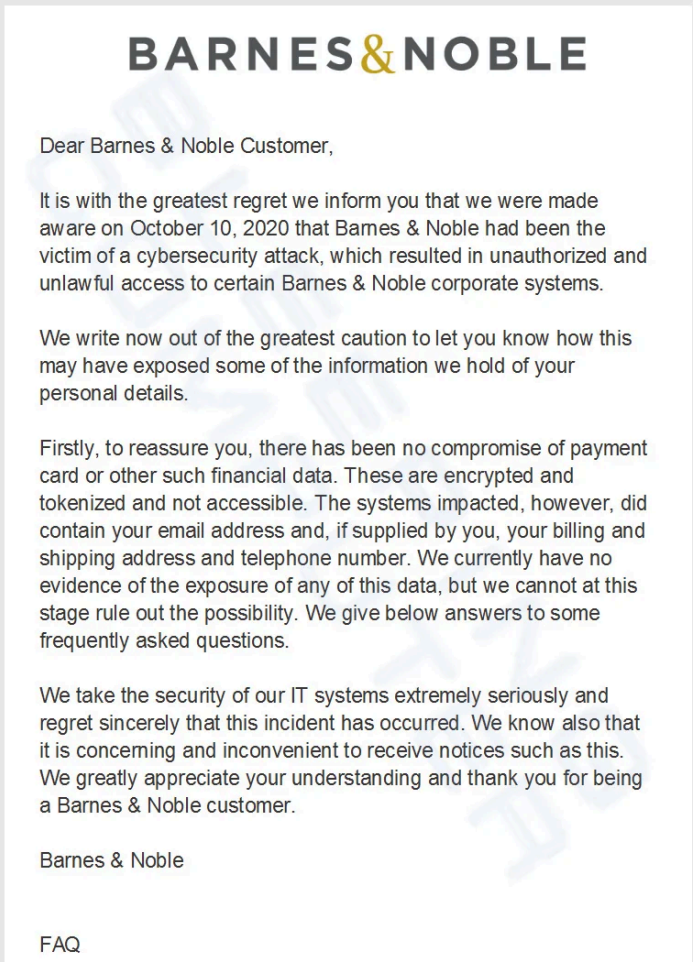


Late Wednesday night, Barnes & Noble disclosed that they suffered a cyberattack on October 10th, 2020.

As part of this attack, ransomware attackers actors gained access to corporate network for the company. After discovering the attack, Barnes and Noble shut down their network to prevent the attack's further spread, which led to a service outage.

"It is with the greatest regret we inform you that we were made aware on October 10, 2020 that Barnes & Noble had been the victim of a cybersecurity attack, which resulted in unauthorized and unlawful access to certain Barnes & Noble corporate systems."

"We write now out of the greatest caution to let you know how this may have exposed some of the information we hold of your personal details," Barnes & Noble stated in their email.



BARNES&NOBLE

Dear Barnes & Noble Customer,

It is with the greatest regret we inform you that we were made aware on October 10, 2020 that Barnes & Noble had been the victim of a cybersecurity attack, which resulted in unauthorized and unlawful access to certain Barnes & Noble corporate systems.

We write now out of the greatest caution to let you know how this may have exposed some of the information we hold of your personal details.

Firstly, to reassure you, there has been no compromise of payment card or other such financial data. These are encrypted and tokenized and not accessible. The systems impacted, however, did contain your email address and, if supplied by you, your billing and shipping address and telephone number. We currently have no evidence of the exposure of any of this data, but we cannot at this stage rule out the possibility. We give below answers to some frequently asked questions.

We take the security of our IT systems extremely seriously and regret sincerely that this incident has occurred. We know also that it is concerning and inconvenient to receive notices such as this. We greatly appreciate your understanding and thank you for being a Barnes & Noble customer.

Barnes & Noble

FAQ

Barnes & Noble email notification

Barnes & Noble states that no payment details have been exposed but are unsure at this time if the hackers accessed other personal information.

They do admit that email addresses, billing addresses, shipping addresses, and purchase history were exposed on the hacked systems.

In response to our queries about the attack, Barnes & Noble shared the following statement.

"As the letter to our customers explains, we closed down all our networks immediately once a cybersecurity attack was suspected. We engaged then a firm of cybersecurity consultants to evaluate the nature of the threat. With their guidance, we have cautiously restored our networks which by its nature has taken time. We acted as quickly as we could given the circumstances and notified customers once we were able to give credible information of what happened. No credit card details are stored on Barnes & Noble systems and therefore the speculation that financial loss from fraudulent activity could result is inaccurate. As of writing, the cybersecurity consultants have detected no evidence of data having been exposed. We have acted therefore with an abundance of caution. We regret sincerely that in so acting we have caused disruption to our customers, especially those of NOOK."

Egregor claims to have stolen Barnes & Noble data

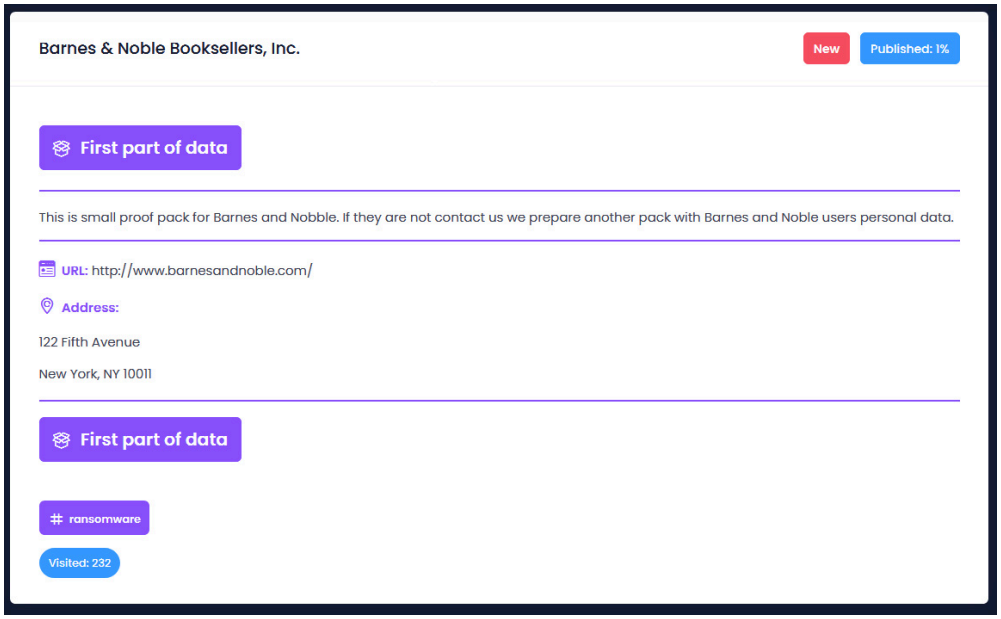
After publishing our report on the Barnes & Noble cyberattack, BleepingComputer was contacted by a threat actor who stated that the Egregor ransomware operation was behind the attack.

Egregor is a relatively new but active ransomware gang that began operating in the middle of September 2020.

BleepingComputer was told that Barnes & Noble's corporate network was compromised by threat actors who stole unencrypted "financial and audit" data from their systems.

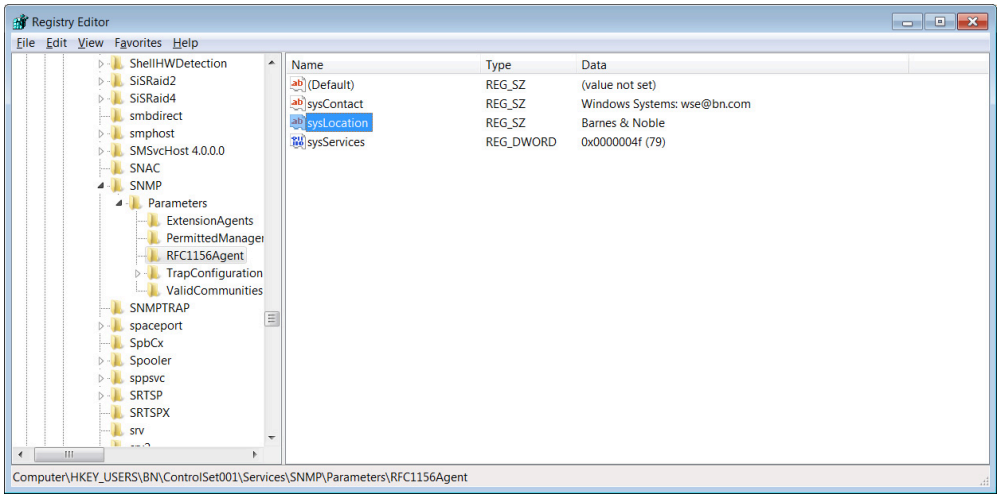
After the hacker gained access to a Windows domain administrator account, another threat actor was given access to the network on October 10th, 2020, who then encrypted the network's devices.

Today, the Egregor ransomware operation confirmed the threat actor's statements and published files that they claim were stolen during the attack on Barnes & Noble.



Barnes & Noble data leak on Egregor site

Strangely, instead of leaking stolen files, the leaked data contains two Windows Registry hives that appear to have been exported from Barnes & Noble's Windows servers during the attack.



Leaked Registry hive

While this corroborates that Egregor was involved in the attack, it does not necessarily prove that Egregor stole any financial documents or other files.

BleepingComputer has reached out again to Barnes & Noble with questions regarding this development.

Egregor also recently attacked game developers Crytek and Ubisoft, whose stolen data was also leaked online.

Source: https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/barnes-and-noble-hit-by-egregor-ransomware-strange-data-leaked/