

Re: All my posts have been censored

Re: All my posts have been censored

Source:

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.general/2006-05/msg02594.html>

- *From:* "cquirke (MVP Windows shell/user)" <cquirkenews@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Sun, 07 May 2006 12:05:03 +0200
-

On Sat, 6 May 2006 21:38:00 -0400, "Rhonda Lea Kirk"

cquirke (MVP Windows shell/user) wrote:

On Fri, 5 May 2006 19:53:56 -0400, "Rhonda Lea Kirk"

Many newsgroups have a charter; some are formally moderated, while others just flame you and refer you to the ng's FAQ. Then there's one usenet ng that is moderated but has no moderator; if you don't know enough to forge a moderated state, you aren't welcome :-)

I have searched and failed to find a charter for these groups. I've never seen a posted FAQ. I guess my objection is to the use of usenet without any respect for its longstanding customs.

IKWYM – if there is a charter or T&C, the chances are it won't be discoverable via usenet UI norms (the point of your objection) but via the primary interface for the newsgroups as private MS newsgroups.

This is likely to be an accident of history. Originally, the MS ngs were intended to be a private service hosted directly from MS's servers, using NNTP client software. They became de facto usenet ngs when MS embraced propagation via other news servers (initially, they were more inclined to block such propagation) but the charters were probably not ported over to usenet territory at that time, or since – either as a failure of integration, or to keep the door open in case MS policy wanted to reclaim their private status.

<laughing> The one thing that bothers me about the Berlin server is that alt.dev.null is set to read only.

Re: All my posts have been censored

Heh heh... in Windows, try "If Exist D:\NUL" where D: is a read-only device like a CD-ROM. This is why that is unsafe as an existence test, when used on at-risk file systems or disks, etc.

In that sense, you could think of MS ngs as having a charter set by MS, and potentially moderated by MS. To me, that seems within the norms for usenet, and I'd like to maintain NNTP access.

Instead of asking me to think of them that way, MS should've set them up that way. That's the point. I've never violated any newsgroup's charter, but this group hasn't got one that's recognizable as such.

What is the standard UI to read a usenet ng's charter?

There's a background to all this – many of us want MS to maintain a commitment to NNTP for these forums, in the face of a tendency to move towards web-based newsgroup client software.

Web forums can look nicer and be easier to use (as users usually "know" the web and don't have to learn a new Internet service), plus a greater degree of control may be possible when the news groups are accessed through MS's own site and/or via MS's own client sware. It's seen to lower the barrier to entry if it's "webbed".

OTOH, web forums are poor at handling the large volumes of posts that are typical in these ngs, and so far the web interface SUCKS when it comes to accountability and the ability to maintain thread context.

I prefer text-only NNTP because everyone speaks at the same volume; there's no opportunity for deep pockets to fund a more authoritative voice by buying professional HTML layout smarts, etc. I also like the way NNTP can be read by any NNTP software, and large volume of posts are managed far more effectively and efficiently by such software. I still have all retained and posted posts going right back to 1995, which I still access via Free Agent, a few versions on.

Having said all that, MS censorship of content is unusual, unless it's for offensive language, divulgence of NDA material, exposure of product keys, etc. One thought occurs to me; perhaps "Alias" is a reserved word, making it as difficult to handle as a nym as the * character would be when embedded in an actual file name? Something like 127.0.0.1 or reserved device names like COM, CON, AUX etc.?

Well, none of what I posted falls into the categories you set forth.

Re: All my posts have been censored

Re: All my posts have been censored

Exactly; that's why this situation attracts my interest. Either there's a screw-up, such as a regression bug in new service parsing software, or a dangerous new precedent is being set.

And I'm pretty sure my name contains no reserved words.

:)

<g> ...are you saying this happened to you as well? If so, what did you post that got censored?

Adding risk-filtering to a parser is tricky. If you add it "low", then you can be bypassed by obfuscation; if you add it "late", then you expose the innards of the parser to possible exploitation.

Let's say you host Hotmail, and it is pointed out to you that running scripts in arbitrary HTML "message text" may be a bad idea. So you want to filter all mail to detect and suppress scripts – but you filter at the first point of entry, before escape-character sequences are expanded. Your defence is bypassed by escaping characters within the "script" signature, and a later stage in the parser recognises and runs the script after the escape characters have been parsed.

OK, so you wise up; you let the parser expand and interpret all escape characters etc. first, and then you filter out scripts before the engine actually does anything. But there's an unchecked buffer in your parser engine, so that deeply-recursive escaped sequences can overflow into code areas when expanded; now you've escalated exploitability from running scripts to running arbitrary code.

Now let's say someone decides to change the logic that detects "banned" posters such as spambots etc., possibly in response to a real-world exploit. Depending on how the new logic works, certain keywords may not be parsed correctly and/or be inappropriately blocked, and I was thinking "Alias" could possibly be one of those.

All brand new code is 1.00 (at best)

The most accurate diagnostic instrument
in medicine is the Retrospectoscope

Re: All my posts have been censored

Re: All my posts have been censored
