



CASE STUDY: ZOOM-BOMBING SOUR USERS ON APP

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Abstract:

The coronavirus pandemic forced millions to engage themselves on online to carry out their routine business meetings, learning and to socialise people living in the remote. This created a huge opportunity for video-conferencing app. The Zoom software company founded in the year 2011 made an exponential increase to 30 times in April 2020. The firm counts for more than 300 million daily participants in virtual meetings across the globe. In India too, the app has captured the overwhelmed users in the onset of COVID-19 outbreak as the transition to work from home is preferred by employees and employers as well. At this juncture, the new users in India are totally unaware of the company's privacy practices in existence. Zoom allows employer to track your attention during calls, shares the copious amounts of data it collects with third parties, and has already had a major security vulnerability. India's nodal cyber security agency is quick to respond by issuing a warning to users of video-conferencing app Zoom that it is prone to cyber-attacks.

Introduction:

The global video conferencing industry has made a huge market during the coronavirus outbreak. It is believed that video conferencing is the only solution for the organizations and government to connect with remote employees, customers, and other stakeholders.

There are multiple factors responsible for driving the market growth in recent times such as increased focus on companies towards the expansion of their businesses in the global market and in the management of the workforce in various subsidiaries. But, there is an unforeseen positive impact on the video conferencing industry due to outbreak of the

coronavirus. The travel restrictions has limited the reach of the enterprises in the foreign market as increased the usage of video conferencing software.

Many countries across the globe have announced a lockdown continuously and urged organization to offer work from home facilities to its employees. India too experiencing damage in the economy due to the rapid spread of the coronavirus. This situation triggered the video conferencing market during the pandemic. Moreover, Video conferencing is seen as the only solution for organizations to survive. The market players like 8x8, Inc., Cisco Systems, Inc., Google LLC, Lifesize, Inc., LogMeIn, Inc., Microsoft Corp., RingCentral, Inc., StarLeaf Ltd., Zoho Corp. Pvt. Ltd., Zoom Video Communications, Inc., and so on are also reaching out to the enterprises and government organizations to expand their services. Taking advantage of the market condition, Zoom Video Communications, Inc. introduced the free 40-minute limit on video calls to penetrate into the industry.

Recent Development:

Zoom video conferencing App stands out from its competitors as the app becoming one of the most popular video-conferencing players in a time when many companies globally are looking for ways to maintain communication with their employees during the transition to a work-from-home model.

Zoom plans are very economical and it operates in free and paid services as well. The free plans very suitable small and medium organizations where up to 100 members can participate in one video conference with the fixed time limit of 40 minutes. The organizations with a large of people with no time bound conference can opt for the paid

plan. Currently, the paid plans vary from \$15-20 per month and in the case of larger organizations, the company provides a plan called Zoom Rooms which generally cost from \$50-100 per month to cater to curated requirement of such organizations.

The zoom registered a large increase in the number of free users, meeting minutes, and new

video use cases. Its customer base has increased to 81,900 firms which is an huge increase of 61% from the previous year. During this period of prosperity , the company is surrounded by several controversies regarding privacy and security breach.



Singh Vijaita ,BharagavaYuthika, “Zoom’ is not a safe platform, says MHA advisory”, <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/zoom-is-not-a-safe-platform-says-mha-advisory/article31355460.ece>, April 16th 2020

Problems faced by zoom:

At the time of huge success, Zoom is pressed with many privacy and security backlash from security experts, privacy advocates, lawmakers, and the governments including india. Apple silently removed the Zoom software from Macs last year after a serious security vulnerability. The scrutiny over Zoom’s security practices has intensified, with a lot of the concern focused on its default settings and the mechanisms in recent days. Security researchers have found that allowing anyone to get into meetings is even brute.

The most damning issue that came to light is “Zoombombing”episode. It allowed pranksters join Zoom calls and broadcast porn or shock videos. One of the mistakes of Zoom is its default settings do not compulsorily insist a password to be set for meetings. It also allows any participants to share their screen. Zoom adjusted these default settings for education accounts recently. Though Zoom states that the meeting now secured with end-to-end encryption. The company was misleading people and it was forced to admit it as It is not possible to enable End to End encryption for Zoom video meetings.

A digital rights advocacy group demanded on Zoom to release a transparency report to share the number of requests from law enforcement

and governments for user data. But so far it has not yet published a transparency report.

The FBI has warned schools regarding the dangers of Zoom’s default settings for Zoombombing. A report suggested the UK’s Ministry of Defence has banned Zoom and it investigates the security implications. In the development of security concerns, the office of New York’s attorney general also instructed to Zoom to undertake a broader review of its security practices.

Zoom is very prominent in India during the nationwide lockdown as more and more professionals preferred working from home. The video conferencing app Zoom faced blow from the Indian government's for its privacy concerns that flipped globally. The Home Ministry cautioned Zoom users over placing the important data with the video conferencing app. Further, it also issued guidelines for safety video meetings in the platform. Zoom stated that it is now discussing to the Indian government's Ministry of Home Affairs over the issues in connection with the advisory.

Reply of Zoom:

Though Zoom has not responded seriously to the issues, Zoom CEO Eric S. Yuan said that the company was reviewing its practices to the privacy issues. He sincerely apologized for the concern and remain firmly committed to the

protection of the users privacy. He further stated that the company is reviewing its process and protocols for implementing these features in the future to ensure that it does not happen again. The announcement made immediately after Zoom took the note of the Indian government's reaction against its app's use in the country.

The tremendous success for Zoom came during the dark time for the world. Several controversies with loopholes are encountered during this short span of success. The Company is engaged in fixing these issues at the earliest. In response to security issues, the Californian-based company has released its Zoom 5.0 update featuring new security enhancements which will help to improve the privacy of the platform. This will increase the protection of meeting data and resistance against tampering. This is a part of Zoom's 90-day plan to sought out to deal with security issues in the app.

Suggestion and Conclusion:

The Zoom's status as a frontrunner does not seem threatened the customers. It eventually understand the need to prioritize user security and privacy over just ease of use. It survives all the security vulnerabilities and able to successfully retain customers may without moving away from the free trial over a period of time. Its competitors are making best moves to catch up and it is interesting to observe if Zoom is able to maintain its position as a leader by addressing all its security concerns in the transition period.

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