

Instagram, Twitter used to organize harassment campaigns on Zoom

Instagram says it's still in the process of pulling down accounts and hashtags used for 'Zoombombing.'

The anonymous Instagram accounts, some with thousands of followers, encourage users to share information that would allow people to hijack a call on the video conferencing app Zoom.

"If you hate your teachers just tell us. We start zoom raids," the bio of one Instagram account states.



"Zoomraiding" or "Zoombombing" is a type of online harassment in which someone disrupts a video call on Zoom and shares inappropriate or unexpected content including hate speech, profanity and pornography. As video chatting becomes more popular because more people are staying at home to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus, harassment through video calls is a growing problem. The issue has also become a headache for social media companies including Facebook-owned Instagram and Twitter, which are being used to organize these harassment campaigns on Zoom.

RAID INFORMATION



CODE / TIME will be posted the night before.

Turn post notifications ON so you know when its about to start.

RECORD YOUR FUNNY MOMENTS DURING RAIDS TO AND SUBMIT THEM VIA DMS TO BE FEATURED ON THE PAGE.

Rules: Pretend to be a student at first, asking stupid questions. When it all fails, result to roasting everyone and causing a scene.

On Friday, Instagram said it was still in the process of pulling down accounts and hashtags used for Zoombombing after The New York Times discovered 153 Instagram accounts created for this purpose. These accounts ask users to share Zoom meeting codes so they can raid video conferences that are protected by a password. CNET searched for "Zoomraid" on Instagram after The Times published its story and more than 50 results still popped up. Instagram declined to share how many Zoomraid accounts have already been pulled down.

In one top post using a hashtag for Zoomraids, a video shows teachers being interrupted during online classes with the n-word and nudity. Worship services and Alcoholics Anonymous meetings hosted on Zoom have been hijacked too, according to media reports.

The New York Times reported that a network of Instagram accounts with the name "Zoomraid" and "Zoomattack" popped up over the weekend and had nearly 30,000 followers as of Thursday. Teenagers who ran these accounts told the news outlet they were stressed about the amount of school work they had to complete and Zoomraiding was an escape.

While some of these pranks might appear harmless, the practice has prompted the FBI to warn the public about Zoombombing. One school in Massachusetts reported that their video chat was interrupted by an unidentified person who displayed swastika tattoos, according to the agency. The FBI is advising Zoom users to not make meetings or classes public, manage screen sharing settings and not share a link to the video conference on a public social media account.

#FBI warns of Teleconferencing and Online Classroom Hijacking during #COVID19 pandemic. Find out how to report and protect against teleconference hijacking threats here: <https://t.co/jmMxyZZqMv> pic.twitter.com/Y3h9bVZG30

— FBI Boston (@FBIBoston) March 30, 2020

Other sites including Twitter, Reddit and 4Chan are also being used to organize Zoomraiding. The New York Times found dozens of Zoomraid Twitter accounts. CNET did a search on Twitter and tweets asking users for Zoom meeting codes were still on the social network. Users were also using hashtags like on Instagram to spread the word.

"Send us your zoom code through dm and we will raid it. You remain anonymous if you choose so," a bio on one Twitter account that had more than 200 followers stated.

A Twitter spokeswoman said it's looking into the issue.

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