

Fastly breaks the internet with a bad software update taking down thousands of ecommerce, media, and government websites and services

Article

Various websites, apps, and services around the world were down suddenly on Tuesday morning because of a failed software update at Fastly, a content delivery network used, [per](#) CNN.

While Fastly was down for 50 minutes, the ripple effects of the outage lingered for several hours on worldwide.

- **The outage was felt on a global scale:** Various websites and blogs including CNN, The New York Times, Bloomberg, and Reddit were affected. Service oriented websites like Amazon, Twitter, PayPal, Spotify, Twitch, and the BBC were also affected.
- **Government services also took a hit:** Several British government websites suffered downtime from the outage, [per](#) The Guardian. Taxpayers were unable to file their taxes online, and some users were unable to book COVID-19 tests. Even visitors to the White House website were greeted by “Error 503 service unavailable,” as a result of the outage.

Network outages have a true and growing cost. A January 2020 [study](#) from Opengear revealed that nearly one-third (31%) of their 500 senior IT decision-makers lost more than \$1 million in the past 12 months due to network outages. Further, 23% of respondents reported a 25% or more increase in network outages in the past five years. Internet outages of this magnitude are expected to continue with more users working from home and consuming more bandwidth. The proliferation of streaming services, online gaming platforms, IoT devices, and online services are also taking their [toll](#) on an internet infrastructure that simply can't scale fast enough.

Like the Cloudflare [outage](#) last year and Google's outage in [December](#), Fastly's failure exposes a weakness in internet infrastructure. Many websites and online services rely on content delivery networks to speed up page loading and deliver consistent streaming audio and video speeds. Outages are a reminder that most of the internet relies on just a handful of service providers, so when they fail, they can affect thousands of websites across multiple countries. Diversifying bandwidth providers and increasing [network resilience](#) could help businesses recover from outages faster.