

One potential explanation for the website's connection timeout error message is could be a Denial of Service (DoS) attack. The logs show this afternoon that a large number of SYN requests coming to the server from an unfamiliar IP address.

When website visitors try to establish a connection with the web server, a three-way handshake occurs using the TCP protocol. A device sends a SYN (Synchronize) request to the server, the server returns a SYN/ACK (Synchronize/Acknowledge) and leaves a port open for the device to return ACK (Acknowledge) packet and establish a connection. This type of attack simulates a TCP/IP connection and floods the server with SYN packets. The server is unable to respond because it is overwhelmed with network traffic. This in turn cause real traffic (employees) to be unable to access the sales webpage and receive connection timeout error in their browsers.