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# What Caused Facebook's Worst Outage in Four Years

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By *DeVries*

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The [massive Facebook outage](#) on Thursday was the site's worst in more than four years, the company says.



The site was down or nearly unreachable for many of its 500 million users for about two and a half hours. And the "Like" buttons peppered across the Web also weren't working, leaving the many websites that use the system with errors on their pages. The root problem was so bad that Facebook had to shut down the entire site to fix it, the company's engineering team wrote in an [official blog post](#).

So what went wrong? In a nutshell, Facebook had a problem with an automated system that was meant to prevent errors. Usually, the system checks for coding errors, and then fixes them by replacing the invalid code with correct code stored in a file. But on Thursday, problematic code was put into the file itself. This meant that all of Facebook's clients got code that wasn't valid, and when they tried to fix it, they overwhelmed Facebook's databases with hundreds of thousands of queries a second.

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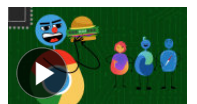
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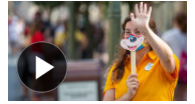
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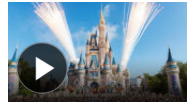
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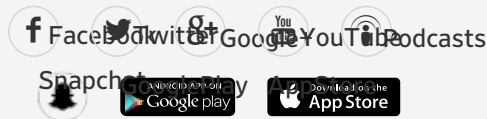
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