

Reddit goes down just as a site-wide protest against its unpopular new API policy kicks off

Sarah Perez

@sarahpereztc / 10:03 AM CDT • June 12,

2023



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Just as thousands of Reddit communities [went dark](#) to protest the company's [controversial new policy](#) that will put third-party apps out of business, the website itself has gone down. Reddit confirmed to TechCrunch a planned protest against its new policy has caused the outage. According to [user reports](#), Reddit.com first began experiencing problems around 10:25 AM EDT.

Reddit's Status page initially showed "all systems operational." including its website.

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Soon after, [the status page](#) was updated to reflect the outage.

When you try to load the site, the main feed displays the message “Something went wrong. Just don’t panic,” and a pop-up says “Sorry, we couldn’t load posts for this page.” Content isn’t loading in the official mobile app, either.

According to Reddit’s Status, the company is aware of the problem loading content and is working to resolve the issues. The status page didn’t identify the cause or ETA to a resolution.

However, a Reddit representative confirmed the outage had to do with the planned protest, which saw a number of Reddit communities (subreddits) turning private at once.

“A significant number of subreddits shifting to private caused some expected stability issues, and we’ve been working on resolving the anticipated issue,” said Reddit spokesperson Tim Rathschmidt.

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User reports indicate Reddit is having problems since 10:25 AM EDT. downdetector.com/status/reddit/ RT if you’re also having problems #Redditdown

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Identified: We're aware of problems loading content and are working to resolve the issues as quickly as possible.
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TechCrunch is seeing a number of complaints across Twitter about the outage, including those that wonder if it's somehow tied to the planned protest. [Asked one user](#), "how can Reddit be down if no one's using it?"

Thousands of subreddits had been preparing to go dark on Monday in one of the [largest protests on the site](#) to date. At issue is the company's new [API pricing policy](#), which will increase the cost for developers to the point that those operating third-party Reddit apps will largely [have to shut down their businesses](#). In a testy AMA (Ask Me Anything) last week from Reddit CEO Steve Huffman, aka u/spez on the internet forum site, the company further explained its decision but didn't show any signs that it would reconsider, despite the massive community backlash. The exec also [singled out the developer of one of the most popular third-party apps, Apollo](#), claiming bad behavior on the developer's part, which further angered users.

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Popular third-party Reddit app Apollo is shutting down as a result of Reddit's new API pricing



The popular third-party Reddit app Apollo is shutting down on June 30, 2023, as a direct result of Reddit's recently announced new API pricing plans which would end up costing Apollo \$20 million per year to continue to operate its business.

Some accessibility-focused communities were also highly concerned about the coming shutdowns of their preferred third-party apps, as the official Reddit mobile client didn't meet their diverse needs. Reddit relented on this front and said a handful of [accessible apps would be exempt](#) from the new API policy, which goes into effect July 1, 2023.

Today, thousands of subreddits were launching a coordinated protest against Reddit leadership, by "going dark" — meaning they would switch their forums to private instead of public, which impacts their visibility both inside Reddit and on outside search engines. Dozens of these communities have over 10 million subscribers, and include some of Reddit's biggest groups, like r/aww, r/videos, r/Futurology, r/LifeHacks, r/bestof, r/gaming, r/Music, r/Pics, r/todayilearned, r/art, r/DIY, r/gadgets, r/sports, r/mildlyinteresting and many others.

Some, [including r/iPhone](#), decided it would extend the protest beyond the planned 48 hours and remain private "indefinitely." That

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means that no one, except moderators and approved submitters, could see the subreddit's front page. Others would just see a message that the community had been set to private.

Ahead of the protest, over 5,000 subreddits had signed up to participate.

At 11:47 AM ET, Reddit's Status page says it's monitoring the site: "We're observing improvements across the site and expect issue to recover for most users. We will continue to closely monitor the situation."

Updated, 6/12/23, 11:31 PM ET with Reddit comment; story has been updated at other indicated times to reflect current status.

Multiple subreddits and moderators are protesting Reddit's API changes



Multiple subreddits and moderators are protesting Reddit's API pricing changes that may shut down many third-party clients. Popular subreddits such as r/aww, r/video, r/Futurology, r/LifeHacks and r/bestof will go dark on June 12 to protest the company's move. Separately, a moderator

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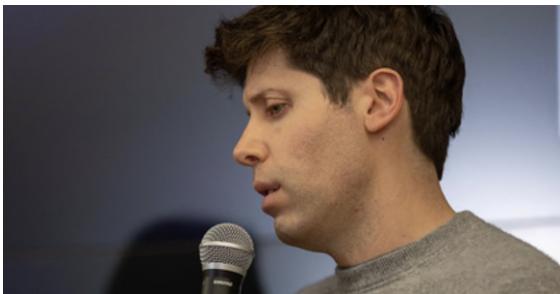
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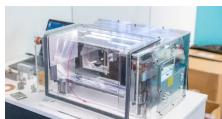
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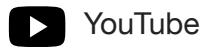
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