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Ann Arbor-based Web hosting firm's eviction sends clients scrambling

by Nathan Bomey | Ann Arbor Business Review

Wednesday December 17, 2008, 10:46 AM

The eviction this week of a local Web hosting firm temporarily crippled the Web sites of several nonprofits and businesses.

IAS.net lost its office space in Swisher Commercial's Northern Brewery building on Jones Drive due to "chronic late-payment of rent," said Doug Smith, a Swisher Commercial agent.

Smith said his attorney advised him not to comment further. But IAS's Web site lists dozens of clients, including the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority, Eastern Michigan University Foundation, Zingerman's and Michigan Radio.

IAS owners Arthur Talbot and Kelley Bezrutch could not be reached for comment this morning.

Other local Web hosting companies scrambled to provide services to the list of affected clients. Ypsilanti-based HDL is offering two months of free hosting services to affected clients, said owner Steve Pierce. Ann Arbor-based Online Technologies Corp. is offering a month of free Web hosting services to groups that lost their services.

Lihn Song, npServ director for Ann Arbor-based Nonprofit Enterprise at Work, said nonprofits can't afford not to invest in technology. She said NEW received calls from some IAS clients seeking help to find an alternative hosting solution, but she declined to provide additional information.

"The big lesson from the fallout is a lot of nonprofits usually don't think about technology as being so instrumental in how they conduct their daily business operations," Song said. "But when something as simple as e-mail and your web site can cripple you, it has to take a higher priority."

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