

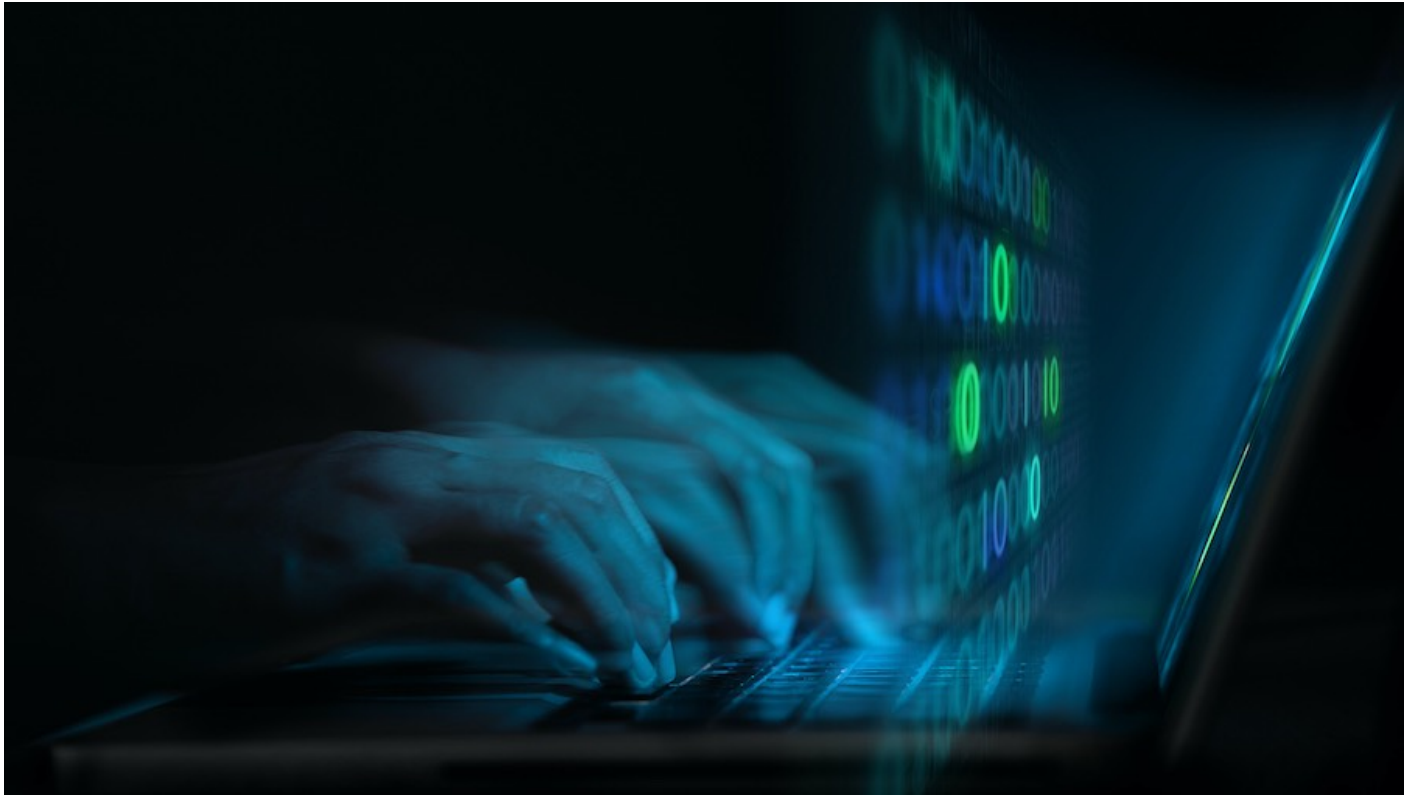
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High-Level ExpressVPN

Executive Ensnared in Criminal Surveillance Operation

September 17, 2021 By Sven Taylor —



The Chief Information Officer for ExpressVPN, Daniel Gericke, has entered into a plea deal with the US government for his role in facilitating the United Arab Emirates in hacking and surveilling state dissidents. Gericke, who was formerly employed by the US military, has admitted to violating US hacking laws and facilitating the UAE in a covert cyber espionage operation called Project Raven. These activities transpired before Gericke was employed by ExpressVPN.

Earlier this week, we wrote an article about how [ExpressVPN sold out to Kape Technologies](https://restoreprivacy.com/kape-technologies-owns-expressvpn-cyberghost-pia-zenmate-vpn-review-sites/) (<https://restoreprivacy.com/kape-technologies-owns-expressvpn-cyberghost-pia-zenmate-vpn-review-sites/>), a former malware distributor operating out of Israel. Today, we're going to be covering another hot issue that just surfaced involving a high-level ExpressVPN executive, criminal charges, and international espionage.

According to Reuters (<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/american-hacker-mercenaries-face-us-charges-work-uae-2021-09-14/>), Daniel Gericke, the current Chief Information Officer at ExpressVPN, was one of three people who entered into a plea deal with the Department of Justice. These three individuals, all of whom are former military or intelligence officials, were ordered to pay a combined total of \$1.69 million, cooperate with the U.S. government, and never seek a U.S. security clearance again.

What exactly did Daniel Gericke do?

Before joining ExpressVPN in December 2019, Gericke was part of a team that helped the UAE government hack and spy on its enemies. This was all revealed in court documents that were recently made public. Reuters (<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/american-hacker-mercenaries-face-us-charges-work-uae-2021-09-14/>) further reports,

*At the behest of the UAE's monarchy, the **Project Raven team hacked into the accounts of human rights activists, journalists and rival governments**, Reuters reported.*

*The Reuters investigation found that Project Raven spied on numerous human rights activists (<https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/usa-spying-karma>), some of whom were later **tortured by UAE security forces**.*

Baier, Adams and Gericke admitted to deploying a sophisticated cyberweapon called "Karma" that allowed the UAE to hack into Apple iPhones without requiring a target to click on malicious links, according to court papers.

*Karma **allowed users to access tens of millions of devices and qualified as an intelligence gathering system** under federal export control rules. But the operatives did not obtain the required U.S. government permission to sell the tool to the UAE, authorities said.*

Not only did Gericke break US laws, but he also facilitated the surveillance efforts of an oppressive regime that is known for human rights violations.

Cooperation and plea agreement

The Department of Justice has released a deferred prosecution agreement (<https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/three-former-us-intelligence-community-and-military-personnel-agree-pay-more-168-million>) that details the case. It contends that Gericke was notified on “several occasions” that his work with the UAE government was in violation of International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) and US law.

As part of the plea agreement, Gericke was fined \$335,000. Additionally, he must fully cooperate with the FBI, as detailed in court documents (<https://cdn-resprivacy.pressidium.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Gericke-case.pdf>):

*The defendants shall **cooperate fully** with the Offices and meet with and **provide full, complete, and truthful information to the FBI or any other U.S. government organization**, upon request of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), including any follow-on meetings requested (the first meeting to occur within 90 days of signature of the agreement unless otherwise agreed to by the parties) at places and times to be determined by the FBI. This includes **providing any documents, material, data, or information requested by the FBI** that are in the possession or control of the defendants as of the time of the acceptance of this agreement.*

Based on these records, it appears that Gericke is under the thumb of the FBI “or any other U.S. government organization” that wants information from him. Given this fact, it would seem concerning to have such a person holding a high position in a VPN service that must resist government demands for user data.

Was it this cooperation that prevented Gericke from being prosecuted?



Joel Schectman 
@joel_schectman



ICYMI DoJ let 3 ex American intel operatives off the hook for hacking US networks for the UAE. They spied on

for hacking US networks for the UAE. They spied on activists, journalists and dissidents some of whom were tortured. DoJ let them off with no prosecution. The question is why.

Ex-U.S. intel operatives admit hacking American networks for UAE
Three former U.S. intelligence operatives who worked as cyber spies for the United Arab Emirates admitted to violating U.S. hacking laws and ...
[reuters.com](#)

6:22 AM · Sep 15, 2021



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ExpressVPN defends their CIO

ExpressVPN has chosen to stand by Gericke and continue his employment despite the controversy. They penned a [blog post \(https://www.expressvpn.com/blog/daniel-gericke-expressvpn/\)](https://www.expressvpn.com/blog/daniel-gericke-expressvpn/) responding to the situation and explaining how Gericke has helped the VPN bolster security.

Since Daniel joined us, he has performed exactly the function that we hired him to do: He has consistently and continuously strengthened and reinforced the systems that allow us to deliver privacy and security to millions of people.

Since the scandal erupted, it seems that Gericke's social media accounts are all but gone. However, we did find [this account \(https://archive.is/gYQjC\)](https://archive.is/gYQjC) that details some of his previous work history. Meanwhile, a reporter for Reuters also found that Gericke [renounced his US citizenship \(https://twitter.com/joel_schectman/status/1438140153437069323?s=20\)](https://twitter.com/joel_schectman/status/1438140153437069323?s=20) back in 2017.

Gericke's controversial activities transpired before he worked for ExpressVPN

It's also important to note that all of this **transpired before Gericke began working at ExpressVPN**. ExpressVPN also explained that they did not know about any of these activities involving Project Raven.

When we hired Daniel in December 2019, we knew his background: 20 years in cybersecurity, first with the U.S. military and various government contractors, then with a U.S. company providing counter-terrorism intelligence services to the U.S. and its ally, the U.A.E., and finally with a U.A.E. company doing the same work. We did not know the details of any classified activities, nor of any investigation prior to its resolution this month. But we did know what we had built here at ExpressVPN: a company where every system and process is hardened and designed to minimize risks of all kinds (<https://www.expressvpn.com/trust>), both external and internal.

Can you trust ExpressVPN? Is it still safe?

In just the past few days, ExpressVPN has taken two major blows to its reputation.

First, it was acquired by Kape Technologies, a company with a history of distributing malware. Additionally, as we noted here (<https://restoreprivacy.com/kape-technologies-owns-expressvpn-cyberghost-pia-zenmate-vpn-review-sites/>), Kape leadership also has ties to state surveillance operations. The latest news involving Gericke and the UAE, which emerged just one day later, adds fuel to the fire.

Taken together, these events will be challenging for ExpressVPN to recover from. Nonetheless, in an attempt to mitigate concerns and bolster trust, ExpressVPN has promised (<https://www.expressvpn.com/blog/daniel-gericke-expressvpn/>) to undergo more third-party audits to verify privacy and security measures:

While we are confident that our commitment to this mission is unwavering, we understand that actions speak louder than words. To begin with, we'll be increasing the cadence of our existing third-party audits to annually recertify our full compliance with our Privacy Policy, including our policy of not storing any activity or connection logs.

Ultimately, the question of trust is very subjective and there are many things to consider. While it's reassuring to know these activities transpired before Gericke worked for ExpressVPN, the Kape acquisition is not a good fit for a VPN that was previously at the top of the pack.

From our perspective, all of the recent events have **given us pause in our recommendation of ExpressVPN**. While this is a service that we have used, trusted, and recommended for years, this week's news stories have certainly raised some questions about ExpressVPN and its future.

As always, we will continue to keep a close eye on the situation, including the upcoming audits, and update our recommendations based on all of the latest information and our own test results.

About Sven Taylor

Sven Taylor is the founder of RestorePrivacy. With a passion for digital privacy and online freedom, he created this website to provide you with honest, useful, and up-to-date information about online privacy, security, and related topics. His focus is on privacy research, writing guides, testing privacy tools, and website admin.

Comments

John

[October 18, 2021 \(https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-250663\)](https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-250663)

Hi Sven, thanks for the info. I use Expressvpn(I switch soon) with a safe browser. When I visit the site tracefree.com, on that site you can check your privacy in 4 steps. The last step from the test opened a folder on my device and all files in my folder where visible? They say that Google can trace you all the time, you can not hide for Google no matter what local installed browser or vpn you use, their solution is a cloud browser. Is that true? Is there anything to do about it? Thanks

Reply

Restorer

[October 26, 2021 \(https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-256300\)](https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-256300)

Virtualization or cloud computing can be a good option for privacy.

Reply

Kell

[October 16, 2021 \(https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-249757\)](https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-249757)

Thank you for the information! Is there anything you recommend now? I pay for Express but my anxiety is worsening with it. This is so messed up and bizarre, I like none of the Israeli and UAE implications along with the original malware existence

and the data manipulation for aggregate sites. I use tunnelblick for openvpn bc EV has sincerely become difficult on macs. Anyway, thank you for sharing and for the info.

Reply

Sven Taylor

October 16, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-249913>)

You can find our current recommendations here (<https://restoreprivacy.com/vpn/best/>).

Reply

October 12, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-246469>)

Rhanre

<https://www.vice.com/en/article/y3dawk/wickr-cia-funding-inqtel> (<https://www.vice.com/en/article/y3dawk/wickr-cia-funding-inqtel>)

Sven check at this please ,Wickr and CIA

Reply

Sven Taylor

October 12, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-246481>)

Thanks for sharing, we're researching the issue now.

[Reply](#)

Sven Jack

October 10, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-244990>)

what are currently the options to run a VPNclient on RDP?

ExpressVPN was good, because you didn't loose connection. Most of VPN I tried, you couldn't connect to the VPN after you started the VPN.

R.I.P. ExpressVPN. You have been a good friend ;-(

[Reply](#)

Riley Reid

October 8, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-243022>)

"According to sources close to the Russian law enforcement system, the partners "sold" Sagi's debt to criminal elements – the Russian mafia. Sagi, who ran for 25 years in prison for bribery and fraud, has tried in recent months to reach an agreement with them. Despite this, the move was unsuccessful, and apparently led to the implementation of the assassination attempt"

Wow, the new owner of ExpressVPN sounds like a real upstanding guy! Certainly someone who I would trust my money and data with! Lmao

<https://middleeast.in-24.com/News/amp/279013> (<https://middleeast.in-24.com/News/amp/279013>)

[Reply](#)

Baller Buddha

October 8, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-243295>)

Express should be a case study on how an industry leader was sold off by greedy management, to make it one of the companies with the lowest trust and goodwill in the market overnight.

Reply

Muxic

October 9, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-243715>)

HOT DAMN! That is insane news!

Reply

A concerned user

October 14, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-247726>)

Don't forget the other co owner who has links to Israeli spooks 😬 its not like they have a reputation of abusing there services and not survailing people 😬

Reply

WTFunny

October 24, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-255187>)

Assassination attempt? OMG I'm months behind!

This isn't going to end well...

Reply

WTFunny

October 3, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-239305>)

A CIO with a consent decree, or whatever the plea deal entailed, to cooperate with FBI being an officer of a VPN company is ludicrous! With any company it's beyond stupid. Is Express secure, private and trustworthy with him there? Of course not!

This is the simplest no-brainer imaginable, get rid of him. The only possible out is if Express knew this guy was a criminal and hired him anyway, then he should be fired and given a severance payment. But if that's true, the situation is even worse! CIO's are a dime a dozen, get another one and let this clown work for CIA or whomever; he's a good spy.

Reply

Baller Buddha

October 6, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-241093>)

You're right and that's why I ditched Express. Moved to ProtonVPN and extremely satisfied.

Reply

Vids

October 9, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-243586>)

Protonvpn have log and dns leaking never trust to proton company.

Reply

Riley Reid

September 24, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-231738>)

ExpressVPN employees are mega pissed off at their senior management. They've got a riot on their hands, and rightfully so, what with their reputation in tatters and all.

<https://www.vice.com/en/article/jg87p4/expressvpn-employees-ask-questions-project-raven> (<https://www.vice.com/en/article/jg87p4/expressvpn-employees-ask-questions-project-raven>)

Reply

PM

September 24, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-231555>)

Hello, Sven. I'm from South Korea. NordVPN, Surfshark's Korean Server can't bypass the Korean government's internet censorship. ExpressVPN's bypass that. So I wondered if it was a NordLynx or Wireguard problem, and I tried UDP and TCP, but it didn't work. No matter how I connect, Nord and Surfshark don't bypass it, and ExpressVPN bypasses it. So I've been using ExpressVPN, and this problem popped up. Which VPN should I use? Very confusing. Is it okay to continue using ExpressVPN in the future? If not, please recommend a VPN that has Korean servers and can bypass censorship. Except for Adguard VPN. Both conditions are met, but the speed is too slow. Thank you.

Reply

Sven Taylor

September 24, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-231585>)

You can try to use the obfuscation method with Surfshark, which is called Camouflage Mode (<https://support.surfshark.com/hc/en-us/articles/360008344799-What-is-Camouflage-mode->). With NordVPN, they have a lineup of Obfuscated servers you could try using for this situation. I think you should be fine either way and keep using Express if it is working for you in Korea, which is a tough situation.

Reply

PM

September 24, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-231876>)

I tried NordVPN's obfuscated servers, but they didn't have Korean servers. I didn't know Surfshark had something similar! I'll give it a try. Thank you so much for your kind and quick reply.

Reply

Riley Reid

September 24, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-231645>)

Hey PM, hope you're doing well.

This is a common misconception that people have, that if they get a VPN, it will be their silver bullet to accessing prohibited content. The reality is, when a government bans a certain content from the Internet, all points of contact to it are severed, which means both ISPs and Servers/Datacenters have to comply with it. That's the reason why your VPN's Korean server is not able to access content prohibited in Korea. If a different Korean server/VPN operator is able to access it, its because they haven't complied with the law, but they soon will. It's only a matter of time.

Much love,
Riley

Reply

Richard Allen.

September 23, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-230487>)

Jeez what a bunch of sniveling babies some of you are!

"Oh this company's executive did this, this one is offering a service I don't like, someone on reddit said this....I'll never trust them again!" Wah wah waaah.

So expressvpn employed a bad Apple who is now in front of a judge & a company you don't like bought them, and??? Until you've evidence that expressvpn is hovering up your data & handing it to the NSA, stop acting like the sky is falling. There are alternatives, use them. I doubt any of you whiner's are dissidents in HK, Iran or North Korea & just want to be 100% anonymous for " reasons".

You could always live in the Canadian wilderness with no phone or internet, or otherwise, stop moaning & accept theres imperfect solutions & digital privacy evolution for you didn't end yesterday.

Reply

Riley Reid

September 23, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-230721>)

No need to be snarky. When a company f***s up, people are bound to call them out, boycott their services and move to competing ones.

Reply

Richard Allen

September 24, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-231492>)

Isn't that effectively what I wrote?

It's good Sven has shown us this info, very. But some of the reactions are... immature, to say the least. Check the guy below talking about dumping a VPN service because they added an anti-virus option.

The fact is that, yes...Wickr & ExpressVPN, have in my opinion, made bad commercial decisions that may or may not impact their userbase. Ok nevermind, move on to other products when your subscription is up & move on.

Maybe some of the response here are hyperbole, hope so.

Reply

September 24, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-230997>)

lol

We found the Express vpn employee

Reply

Night Pinch

September 22, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-230259>)

Surfshark is moving to Netherlands. Big news! Bad news! Crazy news!

Reply

Sven Taylor

[September 22, 2021 \(https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-230280\)](https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-230280)

Yes we are investigating this situation and will report on it when we have more information.

Reply

Bronco

[September 23, 2021 \(https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-230493\)](https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-230493)

Where did you find that? There is nothing about that on their website.

Reply

Sven Taylor

[September 23, 2021 \(https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-230589\)](https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-230589)

They updated their Terms of Service.

Reply

redditor

[September 24, 2021 \(https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-231327\)](https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-231327)

they made an announcement on reddit: https://www.reddit.com/r/surfshark/comments/ptyqzp/regarding_reorganization_surfshark_bv_and/ (https://www.reddit.com/r/surfshark/comments/ptyqzp/regarding_reorganization_surfshark_bv_and/)

September 22, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-230244>)

Vikky

Hello guys, many month's before i did warning to using expressvpn but many bodies did it ridicule !

But in here i say some of many servers of expressvpn still safe to use and most of theme are danger to use !

Good luck

Best cheers.

Reply

ArnonS

September 21, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-229575>)

Hi,

I don't like the service Surfshark is "pushing" to you when buying vpn service, it's like anti virus/ melware protection, which asks access to all your data , files etc in your device, for extra 1.5\$/month to be safe in real time..., think it's called one/alert...

We know what worth all the the anti virus softwares....only to spy

It's about time to check the option of setting your own vpn, if it's possible

Reply**Sven Taylor**

September 21, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-229758>)

Yes, that's a new Surfshark **optional** add-on. You don't need to select this option at check out.

Reply**ArnonS**

September 21, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-229869>)

But they lost me, I canceled the subscription(less than 30 days) can't trust them now, maybe they see that data mining is much more profitable.

Till now I use only NordVpn....

Reply**Richard Allen**

September 23, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-230580>)

...

How can you not trust a VPN service, just because they include an optional anti-virus service?

[September 20, 2021 \(https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-229152\)](https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-229152)

Mama

I disagree, the VPN industry is becoming "bleak". Think of the fall/winter of 2020 when Corona reared it's ugly head in Asia. It's only going to become worse. I believe.

VPN companies are being consolidated by unethical people. The latest casualty of course is Express VPN and PIA before them.

Reply

ArnonS

[September 21, 2021 \(https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-229872\)](https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-229872)

So what do you recommend?

Reply

Benz

[September 23, 2021 \(https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-230880\)](https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-230880)

I have moved from ExpressVPN to Ivpn.net. I can highly recommend them.

Reply

Bronco

September 18, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-228153>)

If nothing, this is a good test for the privacy websites that are working in public interest. If you see “privacy expert websites” that are still recommending Express, PIA etc. just skip it: they are probably working for some corporation. Sadly, there are only few places left when you can get the REAL news about these subjects. This website is one of them, thankfully. Keep up the good work, RP!

Reply

Sven Taylor

September 18, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-228159>)

Thanks Bronco

Reply

Jaques

September 20, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-229329>)

As far as I can tell, installing a vpn on a router while using a different vpn on all devices is the only way to give surveillance the middle finger. I have researched and used many VPNS and have settled on these: MULLVAD, IVPN, OVPN, VYPRVPN and PERFECT-PRIVACY

Reply

Bronco

September 20, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-229422>)

Sounds interesting. But speed must be very bad... it's not the same like when you use double hop from one provider. It's more something like tor network, I doubt you can download much stuff. 😊

Mark

September 18, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-227907>)

But what's the point of using a VPN? All of these "no logs", "safe" vpns are showing up like this right now. Not to be offensive but every VPN DOES keep logs and i'm sure they could hand them out to any of the authorities.

Tor and I2P is probably the best option right now...

Correct me if i'm wrong tho 😊

Reply

Sven Taylor

September 18, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-228120>)

No, there are definitely a few VPNs that have proven to be no logs (<https://restoreprivacy.com/vpn/no-logs/>) through third-party audits and/or through real-world cases. The VPN world is not as bleak as you suggest, despite the recent bad news.

Reply

Adolphin Butler

September 18, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-227892>)

Expert comments:

- John Scott-Railton (163K followers), senior researcher at the University of Toronto’s Citizen Lab, said on Twitter that the ExpressVPN decision to hire and retain Gericke showed that “ExpressVPN knowingly hired a man that helped the UAE build its spy system.....and help hack human rights defenders & target Americans. Time for a shakeup: the VPN industry is a toxic, dangerous mess”.
- David Maynor (14k followers), independent security researcher and former research scientist at Barracuda Networks, said on Twitter, “For safety reasons maybe skip ExpressVPN and Kape.”
- Liam Pomfret, PhD (2500 followers) privacy researcher and board member of the Australian Privacy Foundation, tweeted, “If you’re using VPNs to do more than just view overseas streaming services, you really want to move away from ExpressVPN.”
- Edward Snowden (4.8M followers), ex Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) employee tweeted: “If you’re an ExpressVPN customer, you shouldn’t be”.

Reply

Sven Taylor

September 18, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-228117>)

Yes, we concur that there are serious concerns and are in the process of updating our [main VPN recommendation page](https://restoreprivacy.com/vpn/best/) (<https://restoreprivacy.com/vpn/best/>).

Reply

BoBeX

September 18, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-227820>)

Hi Sven,

I don't usually like to be cynical;
But wouldn't it be nice if those bastards at Kape just blew a billion dollars?

Regards,

BoBeX

Reply

Boss Hogs

September 18, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-227880>)

Here's hoping Express burns itself to nothingness.

Reply

Blondi

September 17, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-227457>)

With the decision to defend Gericke, a guy whose work has been used to spy, track down and torture dissidents by the authoritarian UAE Govt, ExpressVPN can go get fudged.

Reply

Jens

September 17, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-227331>)

This media outrage feels a little bit cancel culture-ish to be honest. Not defending the dude, but he was probably earning big bucks as a contractor working for some UAE company, not really thinking about the consequences. It's not like Express as an org was helping the UAE spy on people. I dunno, this doesn't really bother me. The kape situation is a shitshow though. No recovering from that mess.

Reply

J.M.

September 17, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-227304>)

Wow! Two blows against Express, an a hard blow against ProtonMail (I know, not a VPN but still).

While I never used them or even considered them, or Nord, I always just assumed they would be a mainstay. Surprise, Surprise, Surprise.

Reply

Bronco

September 17, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-227160>)

Horrible infos, really. I wouldn't be surprised if NordVPN would be next. Here they are, suggesting log-ins through Google credentials: <https://nordvpn.com/blog/nord-account-third-party-logins/> (<https://nordvpn.com/blog/nord-account-third-party-logins/>)

This is becoming tragicomedy. 😊 I wouldn't trust too much to so-called big players in this industry. For starters, don't take long plans anyway. Explore, take extensive informations before you buy some service. So many websites are suggesting the same VPN companies as "the top ones", like broken records...

Reply

Sven Taylor

September 17, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-227313>)

Ok, did you read the Nord blog post? They are simply offering authentication through Google as an option, not a requirement. It's a convenience thing for those who want it. Additionally, they warn, "However, convenience does have a cost. By letting third parties authenticate your login, you become vulnerable to their data practices."

I don't see any problem with this.

And as to Nord, they are still sailing strong from everything I see, while ExpressVPN had been losing ground for the past year or so. But even still, all of this stuff with Gericke transpired years before he worked for ExpressVPN.

Reply

Bronco

September 17, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-227334>)

Yes, I read the article. The way I see the internet security and privacy company: less third parties (especially those you are preaching against!), and more open-source and transparency. Be meticulous with your own standards. Keep it simple and don't confuse your customers. I didn't say NordVPN has done much wrong, just noticed what I didn't like. Time will tell, hopefully they will keep the good reputation.

Reply

Jeffrey

September 17, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-227436>)

First, I would like to THANK YOU for your efforts on this page! I follow every bit of info that you write!

So, I use PIA (Private Internet Access) and my subscription ends on 02.2022. I use this because I got a good price (32euro/year and one of the VPN servers is in my country) But with this whole situation with express VPN/pia- same owners I having big doubts about my privacy. Do I need to change to NordVpn? What are your recommendations? Thanks!

Reply

Sven Taylor

September 17, 2021 (<https://restoreprivacy.com/expressvpn-executive-uae-surveillance/#comment-227451>)

There are still lots of great options on the market, including NordVPN and others. We'll be updating all of our VPN recommendations in the coming days based on the latest news, stay tuned...

RestorePrivacy Checklist

1. **Secure browser:** Modified Firefox (<https://restoreprivacy.com/firefox-privacy/>) or Brave (<https://brave.com>)
2. **VPN:** NordVPN (<https://restoreprivacy.com/vpn/reviews/nordvpn/>) ([72% Off Coupon](https://restoreprivacy.com/go/nordvpn/)) or Surfshark (<https://restoreprivacy.com/vpn/reviews/surfshark/>)
3. **Ad blocker:** uBlock Origin (<https://github.com/gorhill/uBlock>) or AdGuard (<https://restoreprivacy.com/go/adguard>)
4. **Secure email:** Mailfence (<https://restoreprivacy.com/email/reviews/mailfence/>) or Tutanota (<https://restoreprivacy.com/email/reviews/tutanota/>)
5. **Secure Messenger:** Signal (<https://restoreprivacy.com/secure-encrypted-messaging-apps/signal/>) or Threema (<https://restoreprivacy.com/secure-encrypted-messaging-apps/threema/>)
6. **Private search engine:** MetaGer (<https://metager.org/>) or Swisscows (<https://swisscows.ch/>)
7. **Password manager:** NordPass (<https://restoreprivacy.com/password-manager/reviews/nordpass/>) or Bitwarden (<https://restoreprivacy.com/password-manager/reviews/bitwarden/>)

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