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## ROMhacking.net Shuts Down After 20 Years

by Shawn Wilkins | Aug 1, 2024 | News | 0 comments



ROMhacking.net, a fundamental source of rom hacks for over 20 years, has shut down.

Announced via a news post by Nightcrawler, ROMhacking.net will be shutting down all portions of its site except for its forums and news. Current downloads and shared files have been sent to the Internet Archive for archival purposes.



Metroid II DX Romhack

With the closure of ROMhacking, it signals a shift in both internet culture and in how patches will be distributed or found going forward. Starting in 2005, the site has taken on an identity as the one-stop shop for patches or other mod files used to tweak games and, in some instances, create entirely new ones.

We have released the site database (sans account and/or profile information) as well as all of the files and images to the Internet Archive. In summary: Internet Archive of Database and Download Files All Submissions other than News are permanently closed. All sections of the site will remain up as read only. Downloads and images will be available for as long as DarkSol, FCAndChill Calico will allow. Forum will remain up Twitter and Discord affiliations have ended. Anything further from these outlets do NOT represent myself or ROMhacking.net.

News articles, however, will still be posted on the site. Judging from recent postings, it can be assumed that the news section will consist of articles covering bigger, attention-grabbing patches and releases.

Within the announcement of its closure, there's mention of copyright pressures, the ever-increasing amount of attention the site was garnering, and resource management being contributing factors leading up to this moment.

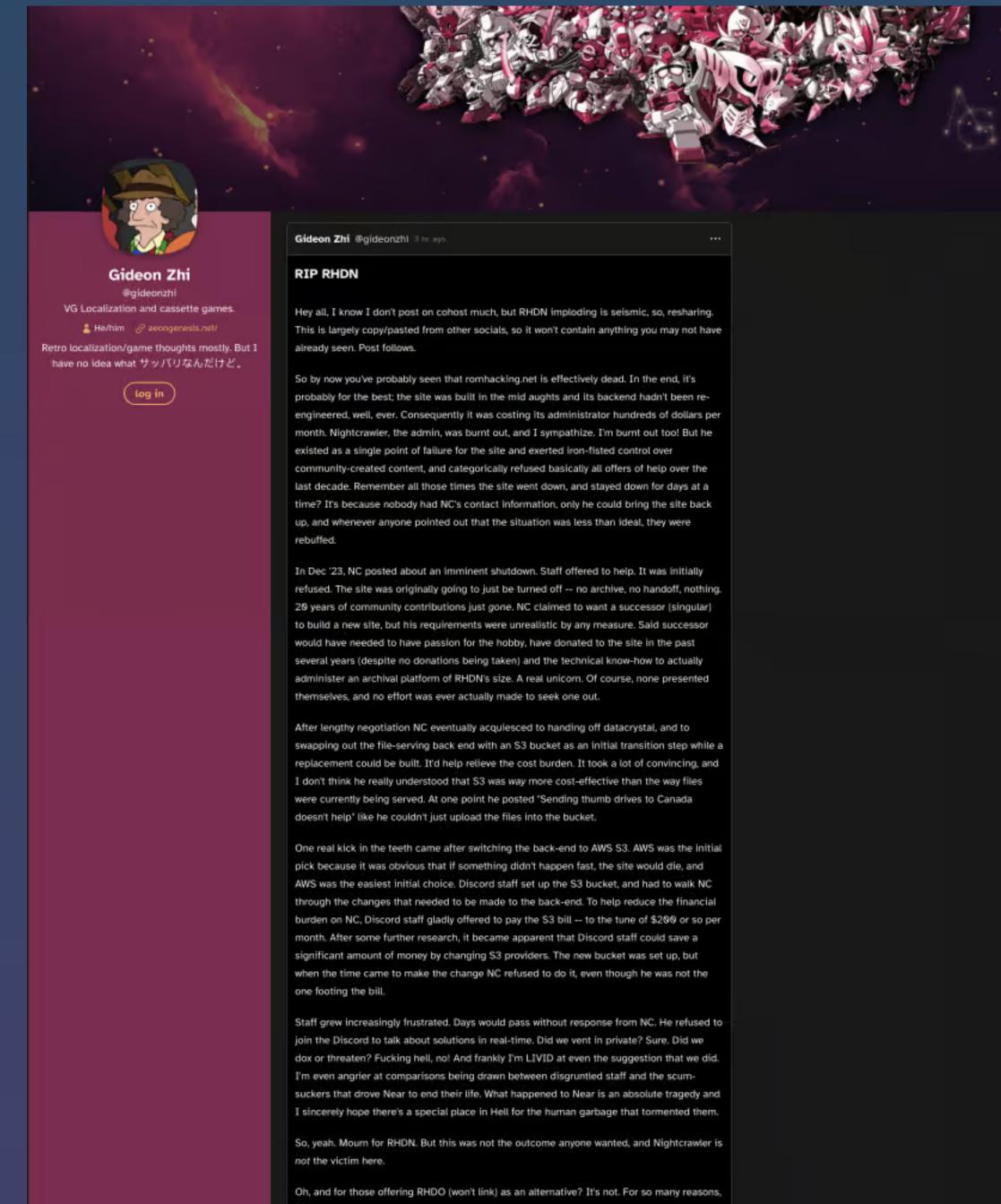
Nightcrawler also says that during an attempt to put the site's future into the hands of a small group of users, they were on the receiving end of personal attacks, doxxing, and what they characterize as "being dehumanized." Nightcrawler says they had recently found out that there were plans to remove him from the site's operations altogether, and that is ultimately what led to them ceasing all site operations and affiliation with any Twitter or Discord groups.

I wanted to provide the site database and file archive to the general public. [In late 2023], an internal group suddenly emerged with an offer to help continue the site. I questioned their intentions, but I thought it could prove to be a more community friendly path forward. However, it turned out to be the opposite. We had a rocky phase 1, moving the downloads into their possession. When I went to startup phase 2, I discovered a most dishonest and hate filled group. I learned that I had been dehumanized for a very long time. My personal details had been given out. Secret deceitful plots had been made to cut me out, and drop a bomb like I am a target to destroy. My family has seen this and after discussion, we are immediately ceasing all related site operations. We are cutting ties to Discord and Twitter social media outlets, and will have no further contact with these individuals.

In response to the above, snarf, a moderator in the formerly official Discord for ROMhacking.net has shared their own response, denouncing any claims of doxxing Nightcrawler or threatening them in any manner.

For those who haven't heard, the site romhacking net is winding down and has switched to read-only mode. To the best of our knowledge, the content on the site will remain available for download. Additionally, while we aren't going anywhere, this discord server is no longer affiliated with the website or its ownership. It's an end of an era and it's a bittersweet thing. Problems were mounting, baggage was accumulating, and relationships were souring. But this is a community built by builders and doers. In recent years new options have emerged, and more may yet. We have nothing but hope for the future. Unfortunately, we feel the need to address some remarks posted by the owner of the web site. My personal details had been given out. Secret deceitful plots had been made to cut me out, and drop a bomb like I am a target to destroy. My family has seen this and after discussion, we are immediately ceasing all related site operations. We are cutting ties to Discord and Twitter social media outlets, and will have no further contact with these individuals. Things have been rocky between site staff and discord staff for a while, and while discord staff had been exploring possible ways forward, likely including severing the relationship with the existing site and its ownership, we are deeply confused and disappointed by the accusation of doxxing and the implication that we've been threatening. We categorically reject these allegations. We would appreciate if the community would refrain from engaging in speculation or gossip within this server. Thanks to everyone that has been a part of this community over the years. We look forward to whatever the future may bring! snarf's response, via Discord, to ROMhacking.net's closure announcement

Likewise, Gideon Zhi, most notably known as the Aeon Genesis lead translator, shared his view of the events on Cohost, also denouncing any doxxing or threat allegations.



Gideon Zhi's response to Nightcrawler's RHDN closure announcement

Regardless of how its end was met, seeing such a pivotal site close its doors is a sign of times changing, but its history can never be forgotten. The majority of retro handhelds we all use are allowing us to replay small bits of nostalgia that we cherish. ROMhacking.net allowed us to look at those same memories in different, new ways while embracing the creativity of gamers around the world.

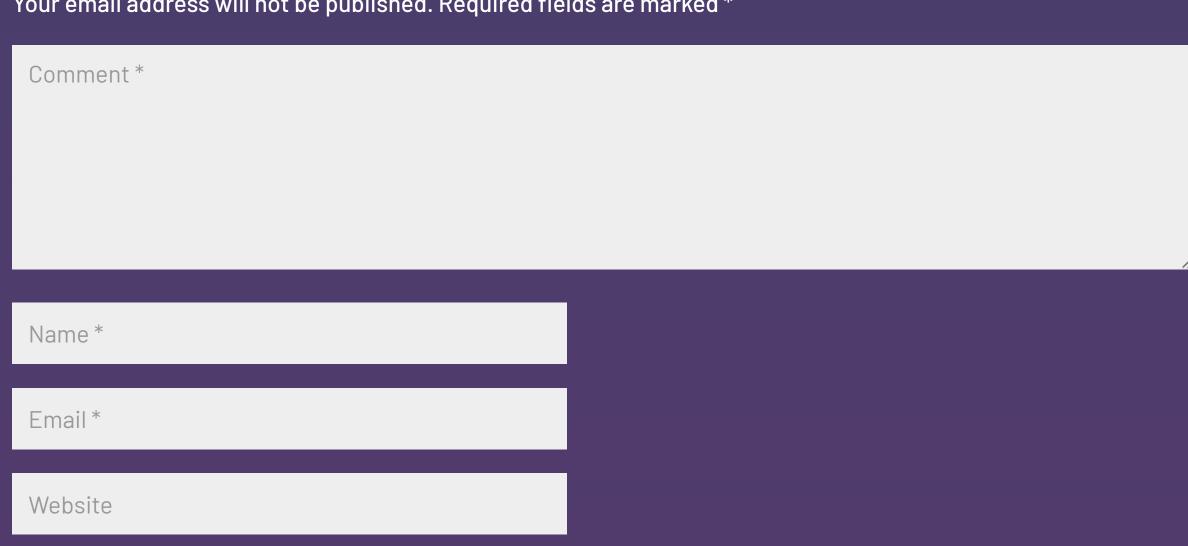
It's a sad day for more than just the retro handheld community; gaming communities are all over the internet. ROMhacking.net was a site that inspired creativity, had gamers from different regions of the world collaborating on projects together, and beyond that, changed the way we enjoy games that already meant so much to us. Its mark in history will never be forgotten.

Looking to reminisce about ROMhacking.net with others? Maybe you have a story you'd like to share with fellow gamers in the retro community. Come join us on Discord as we all remember ROMhacking.net together.

*Update*: This article was updated to include responses from snarf and Gideon Zhi.

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