

1 July 2009

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Political scandal  
caused by Hotmail  
hack  
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## [Email Hack Exposes U.S. Governor's Extramarital Affair](#)

*Mistress claims emails were leaked after her Hotmail account was compromised*

South Carolina Governor Mark Sanford faces a lot of pressure, both in his personal and political life, after news broke out of an extramarital affair he was having with a woman from Buenos Aires. Being blamed by the media for the leak, the 41-year-old mistress told an Argentinian news outlet that it was actually the work of hackers who had broken into her Hotmail account back in November.

It all started with an anonymous e-mail sent to South Carolina newspaper "The State" back in December 2008, which contained [intimate messages](#) between Governor Mark Sanford and a mysterious woman. Before, the newspaper could not verify the source, nor identify the woman, so it kept back from publishing anything and deemed the story unlikely.

That changed recently, when Sanford's whereabouts during a certain time were questioned by a state senator, as nobody seemed to know where he was. The newspaper received a tip from someone who said they saw Sanford on a flight to Argentina.

Picking up on this new trail, The State reporters confronted sources in the governor's office with the possibility of an affair. "The result: Within a few short hours, Mr. Sanford stood at a press conference where he revealed his indiscretions," the newspaper [explains](#).

The woman at the heart of the scandal has since been identified as Maria Belen Chapur, who used to work as a producer for an Argentinian television network. Being originally named as a possible source for the leak, the woman agreed to speak for a local news agency in order to set the record straight.

Ms. Chapur, who was previously married, but was divorced at the time when the relationship started, said that her Hotmail account, which contained the messages, had been broken into back in November. The hacker, whose identity she suspected, but refused to reveal, allegedly used one of her older accounts to obtain access to the new one. She noted that, after the incident, MSN's support staff assisted her with recovering the compromised e-mail box and suspending the old one.

The State later [learned](#) from someone who had knowledge of Ms. Chapur's private life that the person responsible was most likely her ex-boyfriend, whom she broke up with several months after starting the relationship with Sanford. The anonymous source said that the man accidentally saw one of the messages, became suspicious and hacked into the account to read the rest.

Aside from its obvious ethical and moral conclusions, this story is proof of why security experts constantly recommend never to give out your passwords to or be less security-conscious around other people, friends, lovers and family included. Somebody should also remind this to Lindsay Lohan, if she doesn't want more intimate pictures [being leaked](#) out by her younger sister. At the same time, this incident might serve as a good argument in the recent [debate](#) over the risks of shoulder surfing and password masking.