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Dec 20, 2022 · 10 tweets · [P_Kallioniemi/status/16051067475771138](https://twitter.com/P_Kallioniemi/status/16051067475771138)

In today's [#vatnik](#) soup I'll continue talking about troll farms and social media manipulation, extending the topic to other social media platforms, too.

Our social media space is constantly manipulated by paid actors whose goal is to control the online narratives.

1/10



Most (if not all) social media platforms are saying they are effectively fighting against fake accounts & bots. This is not true: fake account industry is blooming & it's also a very lucrative business. Changes made on these platforms have not changed the manipulation industry.

2/10

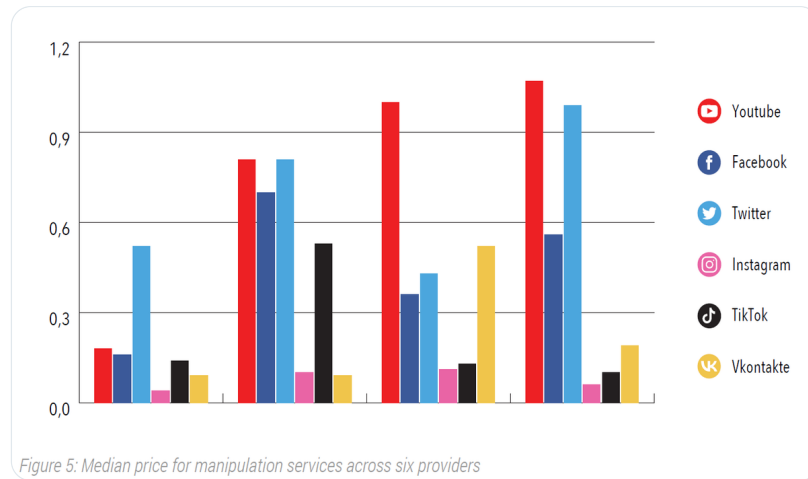


Figure 5: Median price for manipulation services across six providers

From the big social media sites, (pre-Musk) Twitter is actually the best at rooting out the fake accounts, with VKontakte coming close 2nd. Even if you'd think otherwise based on the news, FB, IG, TikTok and YouTube are quite terrible at this and have a massive troll problem. 3/10

	2019	2020	2021
Facebook	124	647	437
Twitter	68	41	25
Instagram	193	165	251
TikTok	*	*	999
YouTube	*	*	∞
VK	*	*	16

Table 1: Inauthentic account half-life by platform (days)
 * Not available
 ∞ Infinite/no half-life due to lack of account removal

Facebook	90.00%
Instagram	99.00%
YouTube	100.00%
TikTok	96.08%
Twitter	98.00%
VKontakte	100.00%

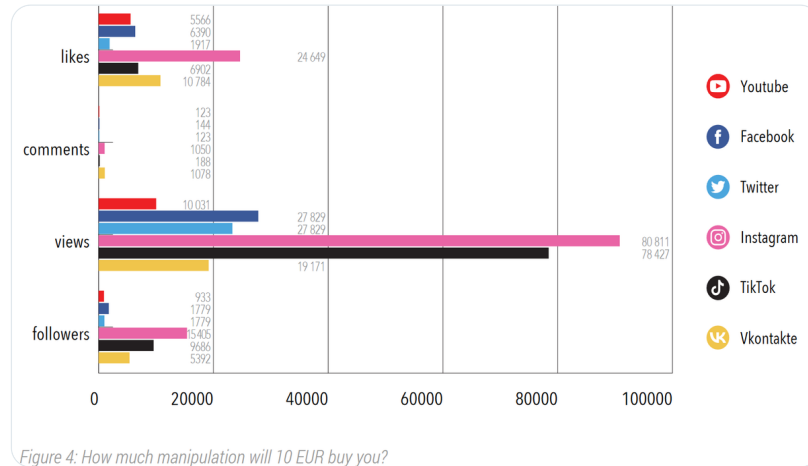
Table 3: Share of accounts remaining five days after reporting.

	2020	2021
Facebook	96.53%	98.52%
Twitter	74.23%	83.43%
Instagram	91.80%	96.01%
TikTok	99.69%	84.77%
VKontakte		99.96%
YouTube	97.17%	92.38%

Table 2: Percentage of inauthentic activity remaining on the platforms after four weeks.

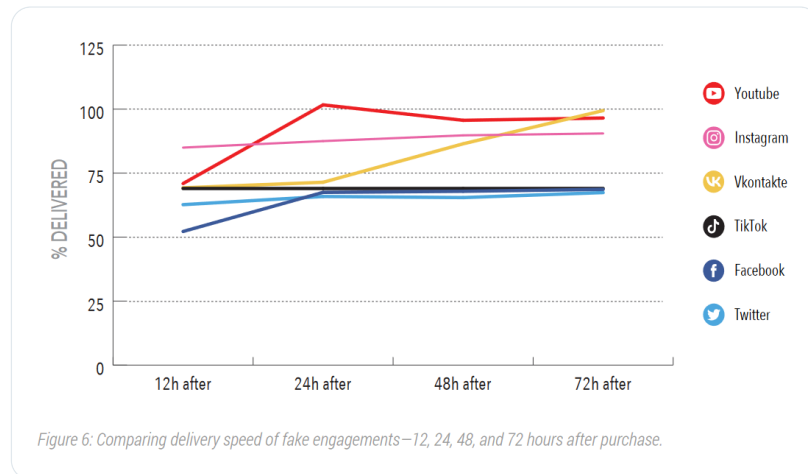
It is usually cheapest to buy automated manipulation, such as views and likes. Buying meaningful content like comments is many times more expensive. Comments are usually written by actual people and often in English, requiring a wider skill set from the manipulator.

4/10



Manipulation is getting much faster, meaning that these troll farms have become much more effective in their work. After an hour after your purchase, 20 % of the manipulation has already been conducted. This means that the networks are huge and responsive to their tasks.

5/10



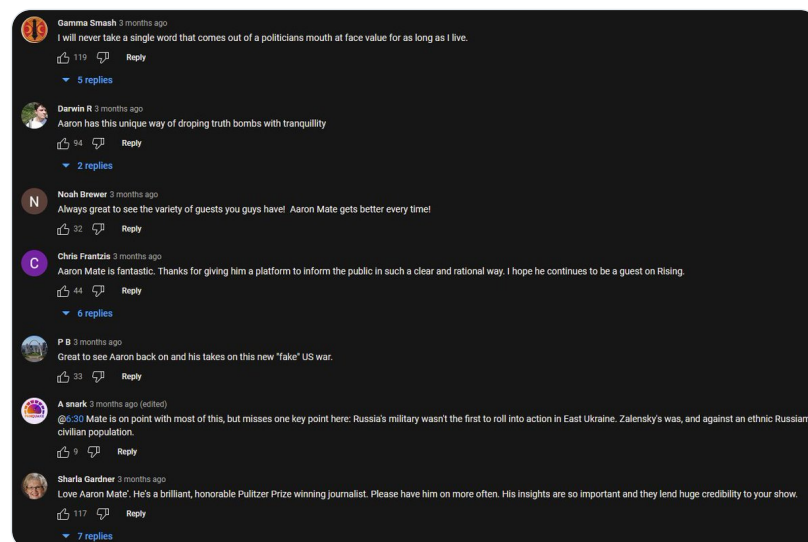
The scale of social media manipulation is incomprehensible: alone in Q3 of 2021 on all social media sites combined, more than 22 billion fake engagements or accounts were detected and removed, and this is probably just the tip of the iceberg.

6/10

TikTok spam accounts prevented	226,557,055
TikTok spam videos removed	11,895,555
TikTok fake followers removed	231,150,220
TikTok fake follow requests prevented	2,078,453,724
TikTok fake likes removed	203,708,379
TikTok fake likes prevented	16,594,976,202
TikTok fake accounts removed	1,728,621
TikTok total interactions	19.3 Billion
Facebook fake accounts actioned	1,800,000,000
Facebook spam accounts actioned	777,000,000
Facebook total interactions	2.6 Billion
YouTube spam channels removed	3,457,303
YouTube spam comments removed	950,872,903
YouTube spam videos removed: 339,763	339,763
YouTube total removals	0.95 Billion
Twitter spam reports	5,144,026 (*for Jan-Jun 2021)

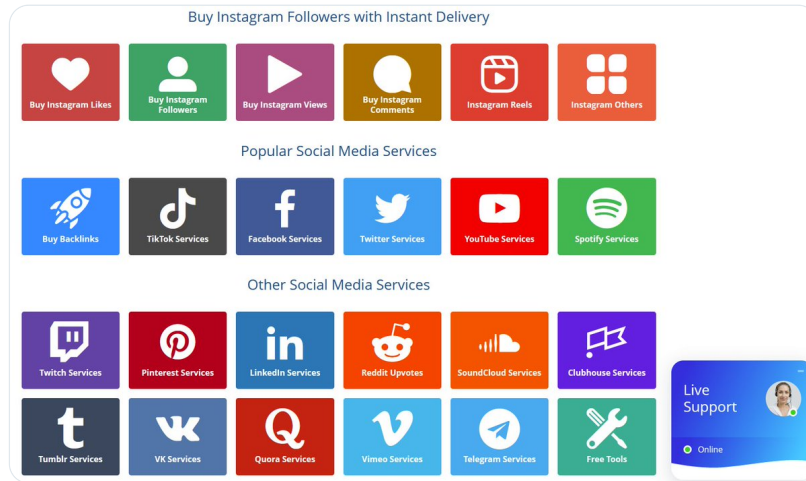
Fully automated bots are still available, but their lifespan is usually quite short. For a few hundred euros, you can get some human touch with an influencer can spread your cause for years. They'll even engage in online fights to defend your ideas.

7/10



Many of the troll farms do business out in the open - the marketplace is easily accessible and requires very little effort to find - just try it on Google or any other search engine. Running troll farm in a developing country can provide income for thousands of people.

8/10



To conclude: whatever Musk and his friends are telling you, Twitter was and has been the most effective platform at countering manipulation. In Stratcom's research, 90% of manipulation accounts purchased were removed from the platform.

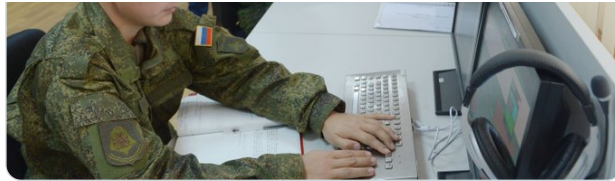
9/10

This will of course be affected, now that Musk fired most of the staff responsible for fighting the manipulation.

Source: <https://stratcomcoe.org/publications/social-media-manipulation-20212022-assessing-the-ability-of-social-media-companies-to-combat-platform-manipulation/242>

My previous soup on troll farms:





7:22 AM · Dec 9, 2022



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Russian info-ops:



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In today's #vatnik soup, I'll start an introduction about the Russian information operations (an activity that tries to affect the public opinion and behavior of a society), disinformation and propaganda.

This topic is a broad issue and I'll do it over several threads.

1/10

RUSSIAN DISINFORMATION

about Syria	about Ukraine
Douma chemical attack was a provocation by the White Helmets	Ukrainian army allegedly working under the command of NATO
West is blocking chemical weapons inspections in Syria	Kyiv plans to launch an offensive in Donbas
UN Supports Disinformation Campaign about White Helmets	Ukraine infected the Azov Sea with cholera
Foreign specialists arrived in Syria to stage chlorine chemical attack	Ukraine wants to poison the territories occupied by Russian and pro-Russian forces
UK secret services created the White Helmets	

7:20 AM · Dec 8, 2022



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