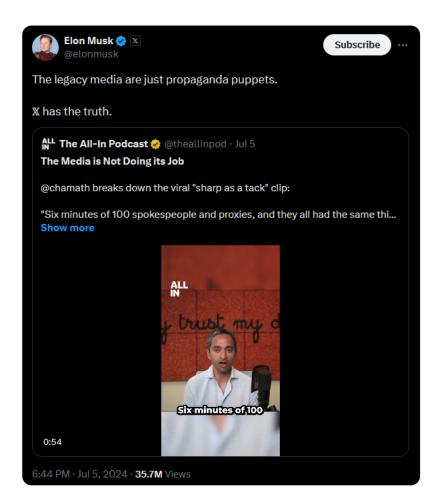


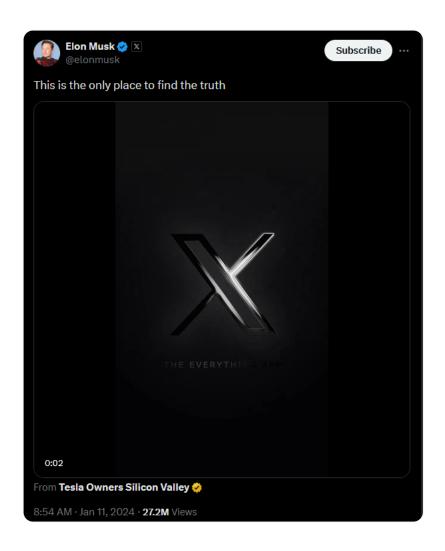
In today's #vatniksoup, I'll introduce further details about South African-American businessman and social media figure, Elon Musk (@elonmusk). He's best-known for running companies like Tesla, SpaceX & Twitter/X, and for using the latter for political campaigning.

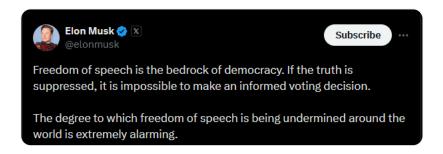
1/25



In this soup, I will focus on how his social media platform Twitter/X has become a cesspool filled with racism, propaganda & conspiracy theories. Elon himself, living fully in denial, has stated that "X has the truth" & that X is actually "the only place to find the truth".

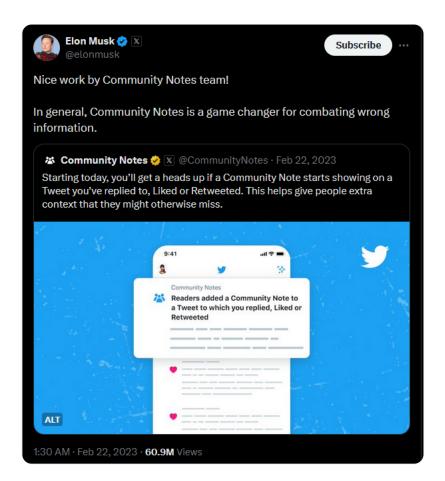


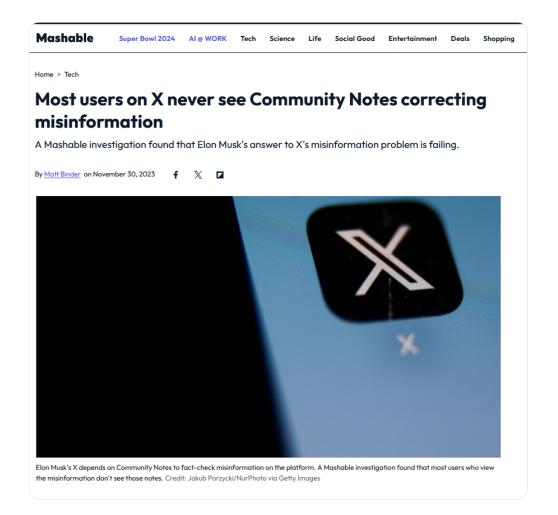




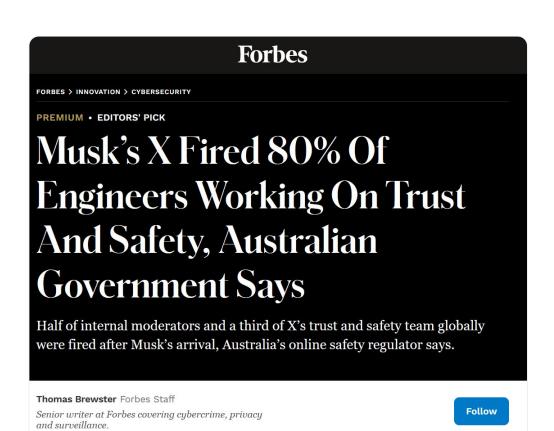


Elon has claimed that X's community-driven content moderation program, Community Notes, corrects disinformation spread on X. This couldn't be further from the truth, as most made-up stories are never Community Noted. And if they do, the notes are hardly ever seen by anyone.





Since Elon fired 80% of engineers who worked on X's trust and safety, the moderation system on X has been in shambles. Allegedly, the decisions are AI-based and focus on volume - the more reports, the bigger the impact. Also, the bigger the account, the more difficult...

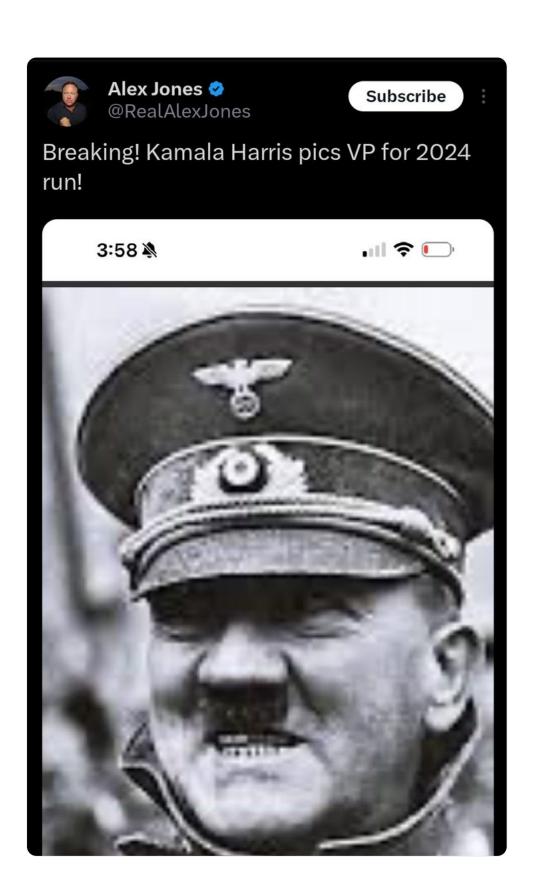


Jan 10, 2024, 08:00am EST



...it is to suspend, even in case of clear Terms of Service violations. One contributor said that the Notes system is "probably making the disinformation worse." As of today, the company doesn't have any full-time staff singularly dedicated to hateful conduct issues globally. 5/25



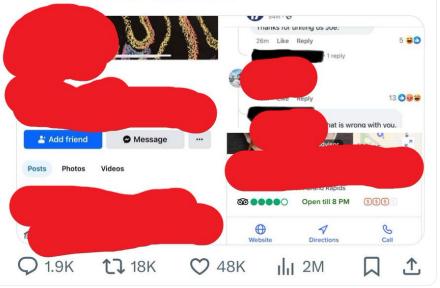




this person wno was very sad that the shafter missed.

He already took his emploment out of his bio but we just called and confirmed he still currently works there.

Beware of this restaurant!



"I understand why they do it, but it doesn't do anything like what they say it does," one Community Notes contributor tells WIRED. "It is prone to manipulation, and it is far too slow and cumbersome. It serves no purpose as far as I can see. I think it's probably making the disinformation worse, to be honest."

This contributor, who was granted anonymity for this story because of concerns about retaliation from Musk or his supporters, should know about platform manipulation, because he is one of those engaging in it.

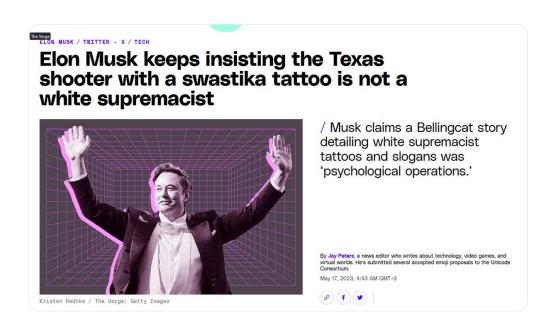
He is one member of a group of about 25 Community Notes contributors who actively coordinate on a daily basis in order to upvote or downvote particular notes. He is a member of the North Atlantic Fella Organization (NAFO), a decentralized online volunteer movement that emerged following Russia's invasion of Ukraine and uses humor to counter Russian disinformation and propaganda while raising funds in support of Ukraine.

"We have a group so we can coordinate who writes what Community Notes, and if you write one, you can coordinate so you get one voted as helpful, and there's no validation on any of that," the contributor says. The contributor claims that Russian embassies have engaged in similar tactics and alleges that they "will downvote anything that's anti-Russian." A WIRED review of unpublished notes accompanying contested Russian embassy posts written by NAFO members shows they have all been repeatedly downvoted.

I have previously written about Elon being a massive social media megaphone, that can sway people's opinions on basically anything. While garnering this following, he has also stumbled deeper and deeper into the rabbit hole of conspiracy theories and extreme ideologies.







His recent pet peeve was the newly elected government in the UK, led by Keir Starmer. According to Elon, UK was a strong opponent of free speech, comparing their laws to those of Soviet Union. But Keir Starmer was a perfect target for Elon's silly antics also for...





BBC Newsnight 🤣 @BB... · 12h ···

"[Elon] Musk is trying to pretend freedom of speech as some absolute right. It's never been an absolute right." Keir Starmer's biographer Tom Baldwin says there should be more regulation of social media #Newsnight



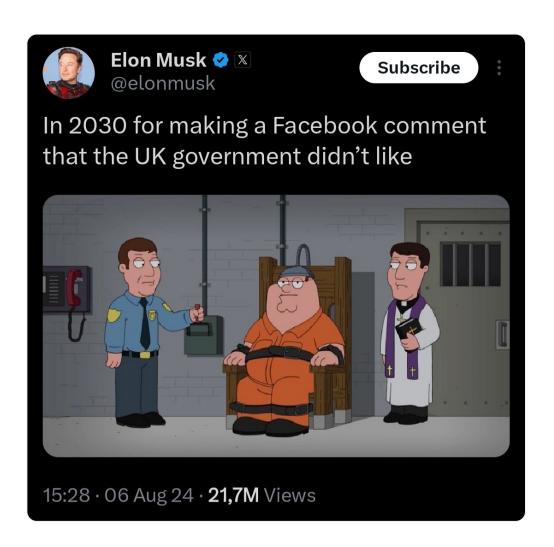


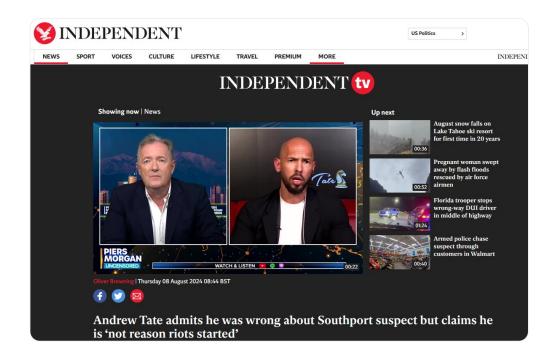


Stalin would be proud



...another reason: his left-wing politics. In Aug 2024, violent riots erupted all around the UK after a Cardiff resident killed three and injured 10 in a stabbing in Southport, UK. Soon after this, large social media accounts, including Andrew Tate, Tommy Robinson,...





Tommy Robinson's tweets from Cyprus viewed 50m times a day

The far-right activist — unbanned by Elon Musk — has had a surge in traffic since fleeing Britain



Tommy Robinson left the UK after an arrest warrant was issued over a breach of an injunction CHRIS J RATCLIFFE/REUTERS

Posts by Tommy Robinson, the far-right activist, on Twitter/X have been viewed more than 434 million times since the riots began, an analysis claims.

Robinson has received an average of 54.3 million daily views on the social media website, according to the Center for Countering Digital Hate. That is compared to 11.1 million views before the crisis, which was sparked by a mass stabbing in Southport.

...and Nigel Farage started spreading disinformation that the attacker was an immigrant who had arrived to UK by boat in 2023. Elon quickly poured gas on the fire by criticizing the UK government for "suppressing free speech" after they arrested people provoking the riots.







As was mentioned before, most moderation resolutions on X are probably made by its AI, Grok. As any AI model is as good as its training data, Elon has harnessed all user data on X to

Irish Independent 🗑

Subscribe





Business

Elon Musk's X agrees to suspend collection of EU users' data to train its AI system



Elon Musk. Photo: Getty

Aodhan O'Faolain

Thu 8 Aug 2024 at 20:18

Which?

■ TIPS AND ADVICE

How to stop X using your posts to train AI

ON DESKTOP:

- 1 Click 'More' just above the 'Post' button on the left-hand side
- 2 Click 'Settings and privacy' then 'Privacy and safety'. Then Click 'Grok'
- 3 Uncheck box that says 'Allow your posts as well as your interactions, inputs, and results with Grok to be used for training and fine-tuning'

ON APPLE & ANDROID:

- 1 Tap profile picture then 'Settings & Support'
- 2 Do steps 2, 3. (You'll need to scroll down to find Grok)



Even though claiming otherwise, Elon yearns to be liked. After his Superbowl tweet did worse than Joe Biden's, he pulled 80 engineers from their daily work and made them change the algorithm so that his tweets would be boosted massively and shown to basically everyone.





NEWSLETTER

Yes, Elon Musk created a special system for showing you all his tweets first

After his Super Bowl tweet did worse numbers than President Biden's, Twitter's CEO ordered major changes to the algorithm



Zoë Schiffer, Casey Newton Feb 14, 2023 — 7 min read



In recent weeks, Musk has been obsessed with the amount of engagement his posts are receiving. Last week, **Platformer** broke the news that <u>he fired one of two remaining principal engineers at the company</u> after the engineer told him that views on his tweets are declining in part because interest in Musk has declined in general.

His deputies told the rest of the engineering team this weekend that if the engagement issue wasn't "fixed," they would all lose their jobs as well.

Late Sunday night, Musk addressed his team in-person. Roughly 80 people were pulled in to work on the project, which had quickly become priority number one at the company. Employees worked through the night investigating various hypotheses about why Musk's tweets weren't reaching as many people as he thought they should and testing out possible solutions.

By Monday afternoon, "the problem" had been "fixed." Twitter deployed code to automatically "greenlight" all of Musk's tweets, meaning his tweets will bypass Twitter's filters designed to show people the best content possible. The algorithm now artificially boosted Musk's tweets by a factor of 1,000 – a constant score that ensured his tweets rank higher than anyone else's in the feed.

Internally, this is called a "power user multiplier," although it only applies to Elon Musk, we're told. The code also allows Musk's account to bypass Twitter heuristics that would otherwise prevent a single account from flooding the core ranked feed, now known as "For You."

That explains why people opening the app Monday found that Musk dominated the feed, with a dozen or more Musk tweets and replies visible to anyone who followed him and millions more who did not. Over 90 percent of Musk's followers now see his tweets, according to one internal estimate.

Musk claims to be a "free speech absolutist", which is a massive overstatement. According to El Pais, Elon has approved 83% censorship requests made by countries like India and Turkey. Elon claimed that "we can't go beyond the laws of a country", even though he had no...

12/25

TWITTER >

Under Elon Musk, Twitter has approved 83% of censorship requests by authoritarian governments

The social network has restricted and withdrawn content critical of the ruling parties in Turkey and India, among other countries, including during electoral campaigns



What Wikipedia did: we stood strong for our principles and fought to the Supreme Court of Turkey and won. This is what it means to treat freedom of expression as a principle rather than a slogan.



🚇 Elon Musk 🤣 🛂 @elonmusk · 15h

Did your brain fall out of your head, Yglesias? The choice is have Twitter throttled in its entirety or limit access to some tweets. Which one do you want?

5:12 PM · 5/13/23 from Earth · 3.6M Views

...problems in threatening to shut down operations in Brazil after the country's Supreme Court Judge Alexandre de Moraes ordered X to block certain accounts associated with rightwing former President Jair Bolsonaro who lost the elections in 2022. For some reason,...

News - War on Gaza

US Election

Opinion

Sport

Video

News | Social Media

Elon Musk's X to shut operations in Brazil amid bitter legal fight

Social media platform says shutdown 'effective immediately' but Brazilian users will still have access to X.



'The decision to close the X office in Brazil was difficult,' says owner Elon Musk, who blamed the move on Brazilian Supreme Court Judge Alexandre de Moraes [File: David Swanson/Reuters]

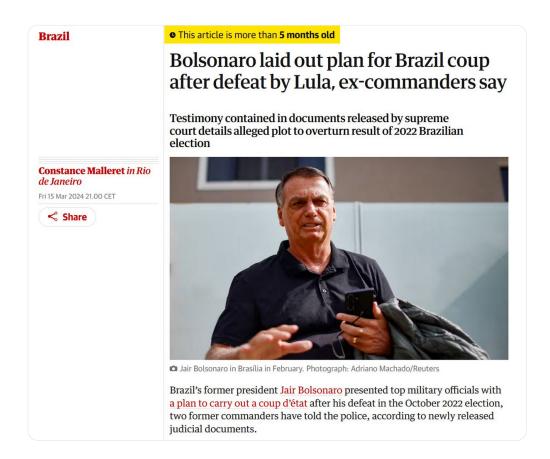












...Elon hasn't been very vocal about Saudi Arabia condemning a retired Saudi teacher to death over tweets. He also had no problem in selling X user data to a company called Dataminr, thus profiting from the sale of user data for government surveillance purposes.

Saudi Arabia: Man Sentenced to **Death for Tweets**

Peaceful Criticism on Social Media Brings Death **Penalty**









The Intercept_

ELON MUSK FOUGHT

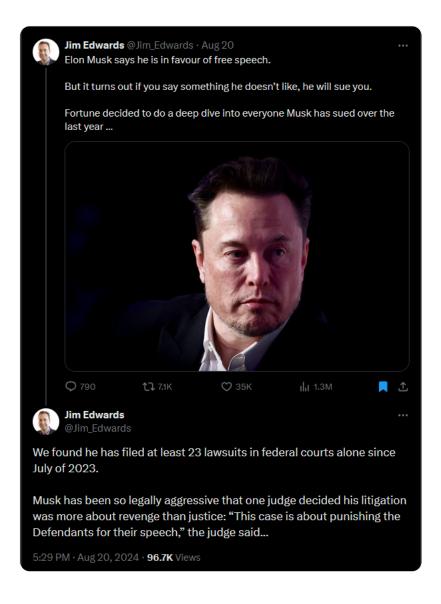
Musk made hay of his legal battle against secret surveillance but continued selling X user data to a company that facilitates government monitoring.

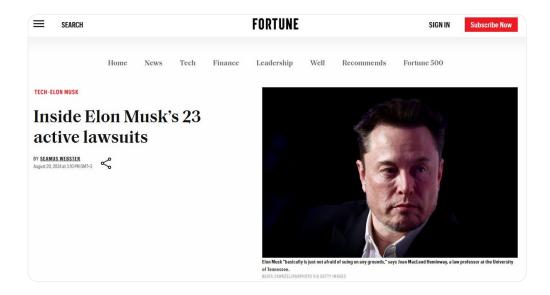


< Share

However, emails between the U.S. Secret Service and the surveillance firm Dataminr, obtained by The Intercept from a Freedom of Information Act request, show X is in an awkward position, profiting from the sale of user data for government surveillance purposes at the same time as it was fighting secrecy around another flavor of state surveillance in court.

For a strong supporter of free speech, Elon sure likes to sue people. According to @Jim_Edwards, Musk has filed at least 23 lawsuits in federal courts since Jul 2023. One of the judges even stated that his litigation was more about "revenge than justice".





One of the biggest sources of disinformation on X is Elon himself. As of today, he's the #54 most Community Noted account, and him sharing a fake newspaper headline posted by the co-leader of far-right party, Britain First, is just one example of bullshit he has promoted.



INTERROGATIVE MOOD

Musk Admits He Doesn't Fact-Check Himself and Has Two Burner Accounts on Twitter

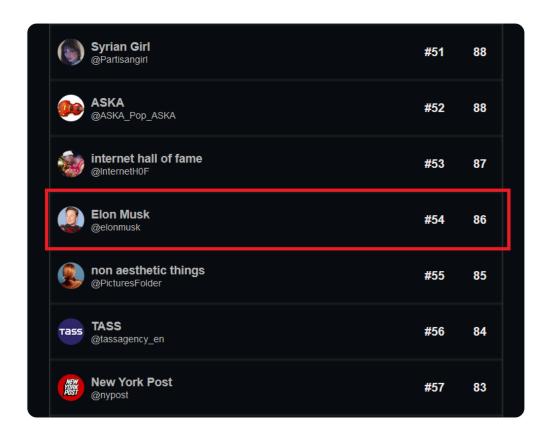
In a humiliating deposition his lawyer tried to keep under wraps, the CEO struggled to justify tweets that prompted a defamation lawsuit

BY MILES KLEE

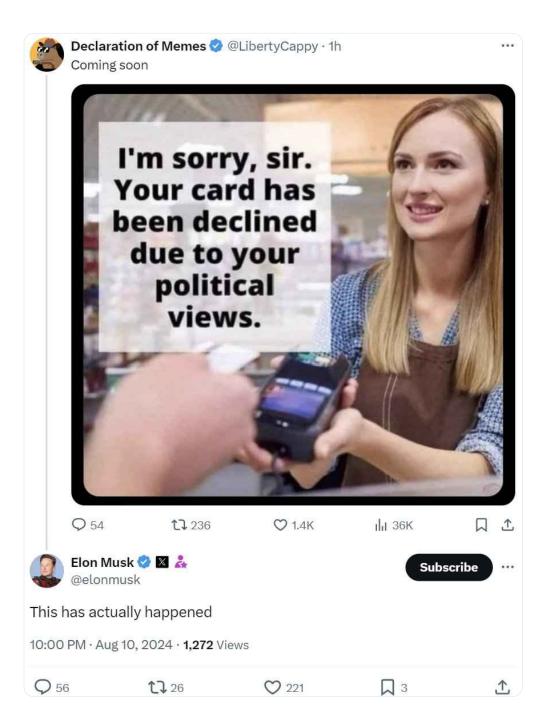
APRIL 8, 2024 9:00PM EDT



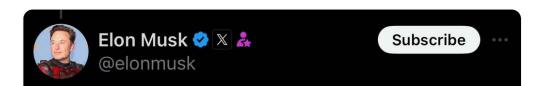
Grzegorz Wajda/SOPA Images/LightRocket/Getty Images







Throughout the years, Elon's political stance has taken a HARD right turn. Today, he's preaching the dangers of "woke mind virus" and supporting Donald Trump's candidacy in the 2024 US elections, allegedly even donating him a large sum of money through his America PAC.



That guy doesn't get it. I would prefer to have zero involvement in politics.

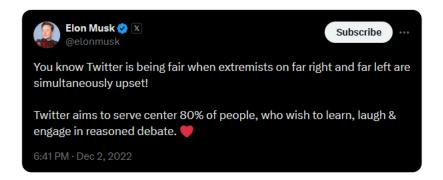
HOWEVER

There is no "company success" unless civilization itself continues to progress.

This insane shift by the "left" away from a meritocracy and personal liberties (eg censorship of free speech under the guise of "hate speech") will be the end of civilization as we know it.

2:31PM \cdot 8/3/24 From Earth \cdot 763K Views

3.5K Reposts 283 Quotes 23K Likes 943 Bookmarks



a sample to open and a construction of the con

Elon Musk's X feed becomes megaphone for his far-right politics

Before he bought the social media giant, his feed focused more on Tesla and SpaceX.

TECH Help Desk Artificial Intelligence Internet Culture Space Tech Policy



Elon Musk arrives at the Capitol ahead of a joint meeting of Congress on July 24. Since buying the platform now known as X, Musk's public persona has shifted from business-minded tech prodigy to right-wing firebrand. (Julia Nikhinson/AP)

By Faiz Siddiqui and Jeremy B. Merrill

Updated August 12, 2024 at 10:43 a.m. EDT | Published August 11, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. EDT



But don't take my word for it, let's ask Grok! According to Grok, X has suspended a number of LGTBQ+ accounts, journalists like Steven Monacelli (for stating the real name of far-right cartoonist Stonetoss), Kamala Harris support account and Tesla critic Aaron Greenspan.

Forbes

FORBES > BUSINESS > MEDIA

Elon Musk Accused Of 'Silencing His Critics' As X Suspends Journalists

Mark Joyella Senior Contributor ⊙

Mark Joyella is a former broadcast journalist who covers media.

Follow

Jan 9, 2024, 12:07pm EST

Updated Jan 9, 2024, 02:32pm EST



The new Twitter logo, rebranded as X, is being displayed on a screen alongside Elon Musk in this ... [+] NURPHOTO VIA GETTY IMAGES



Which large accounts have been recently suspended on X?

Based on the information available up to August 21, 2024, several notable suspensions of large accounts on X have been reported:

- . Political and Activist Accounts: There was a wave of suspensions involving left-leaning journalists and activists, including Ken Klippenstein of The Intercept, Steven Monacelli of the Texas Observer, Alan MacLeod of MintPress News, and others. These suspensions were noted around January 2024 but were reversed shortly after due to public outcry and Elon Musk's intervention.
- . LGBTQ+ Accounts: Over 250 accounts managed by Pink Media, including @GayDesertGuide and @ILoveGay, were suspended in July 2024. This action was part of a broader suspension of accounts related to the LGBTQ+ community, which raised concerns about targeted censorship.
- · Political Fundraising Account: The account for "White Dudes for Harris," which had raised significant funds for Vice President Kamala Harris, was suspended in late July 2024. This event sparked discussions about potential political influence on X's moderation policies.
- Gender-Critical Accounts: In June 2024, hundreds of gender-critical social media accounts were temporarily suspended, which was criticized for potentially stifling free speech, especially given Elon Musk's stance on free speech advocacy.
- . Miscellaneous Large Accounts: There have been mentions of other large accounts being suspended for various reasons, including aggressive following behavior, platform manipulation, or violating X's terms of service, though specific names or details beyond the above were not provided in the given context.

These instances reflect a mix of reasons for suspension, ranging from political viewpoints, community management, to potential platform manipulation. However, the information also indicates that some suspensions were temporary or reversed after public or internal review, suggesting a complex interplay between moderation policies, public perception, and the platform's stance on free speech.



Who are the most popular geopolitical commentators on X?

Based on the information gathered from X posts and general web searches, the most popular geopolitical commentators on X (formerly Twitter) as of 2024

- Tucker Carlson has emerged as a significant figure, especially after leaving traditional media, gaining millions of views per post on X, indicating a strong following for his geopolitical and cultural commentary.
- . Thierry Meyssan was highlighted in a post as a premier geopolitical commentator globally, suggesting his influence and recognition among X users interested in geopolitics.
- · Jeffery Sachs and John Mearsheimer were mentioned for their credibility on the Ukraine-Russia conflict, indicating their prominence in discussing geopolitical issues related to this region.
- Douglas Macgregor and Scott Ritter also received recognition for their insights into the same conflict, showcasing their popularity among those following geopolitical developments.
- · Liz Wheeler was noted for her political and geopolitical commentary, particularly appreciated for her perspective as a devout Catholic, suggesting a niche but dedicated following.
- Gunther Eagleman was described as highly visible on the platform, known for engaging with liberal posts, indicating his popularity among a segment of X users interested in political and geopolitical banter.



🚯 Why were Aaron Greenspan and Plainsite banned from X?

Aaron Greenspan and Plainsite were banned from X due to their critical stance towards Elon Musk and Tesla. Greenspan, through Plainsite, an online database providing free access to legal documents, had been sharing information and court documents that were often unfavorable to Musk and Tesla. This included legal disputes and critical analyses which might have been perceived as detrimental to Musk's interests. The suspension came after Musk had engaged in legal actions against Greenspan, including a lawsuit which was later dismissed. The ban was widely discussed on X, with many users and commentators criticizing it as a contradiction to X's commitment to free speech under Musk's leadership, suggesting instead an authoritarian approach towards critics. However, X did not provide a detailed official reason for the suspension beyond the context of their critical content against Musk, leading to widespread speculation and debate about freedom of speech on the platform.

X has also announced partnerships with right-wing influencers Tucker Carlson and Tulsi Gabbard, both rooting for Trump in the 2024 US elections. X also announced partnership with Don Lemon, but this deal was quickly cancelled after Lemon challenged Elon during an interview.



Media & Telecom

Tucker Carlson's new media company moves toward launch

By Helen Coster

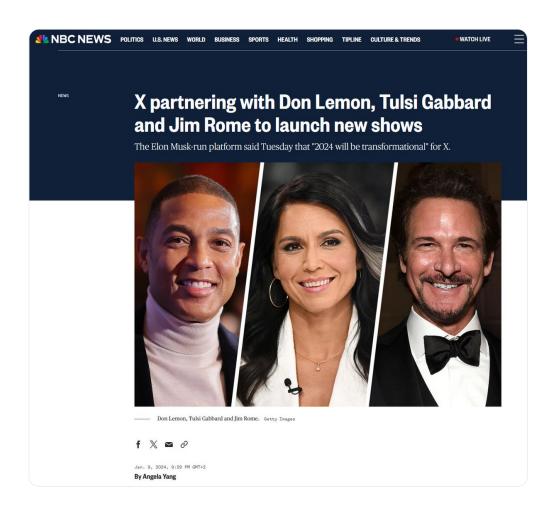
December 7, 2023 9:19 PM GMT+2 · Updated 9 months ago



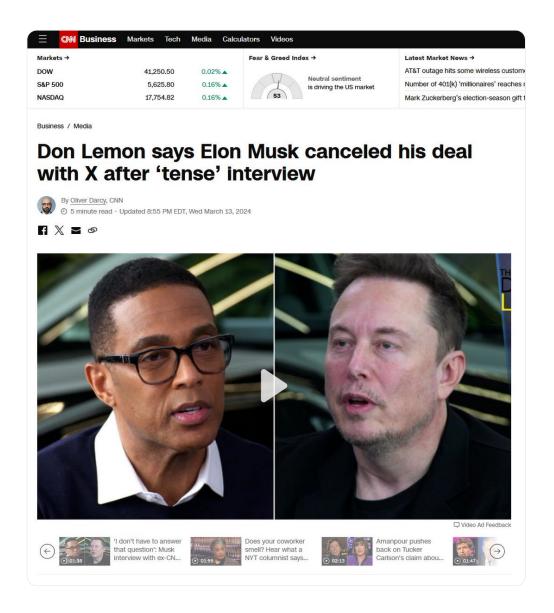
Aa

Former Fox News commentator Tucker Carlson speaks during the Turning Point Action Conference in West Palm Beach, Florida, U.S. July 15, 2023. REUTERS/Marco Bello/File Photo Purchase Licensing Rights [2]

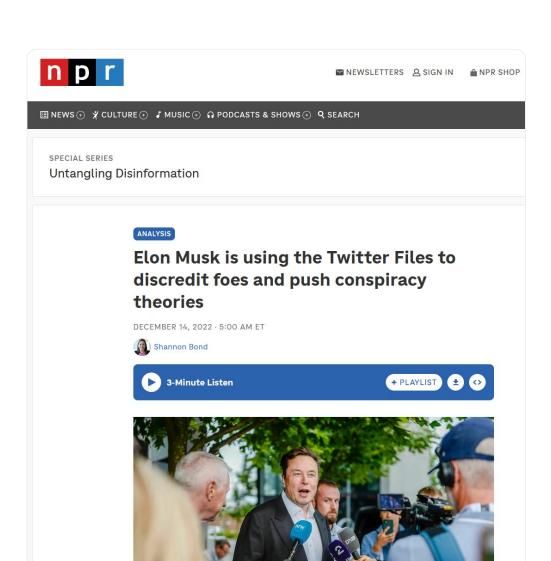
NEW YORK, Dec 7 (Reuters) - Former Fox News host Tucker Carlson's new media company has begun building its base of paying subscribers as it moves toward launch, its chief executive told Reuters.

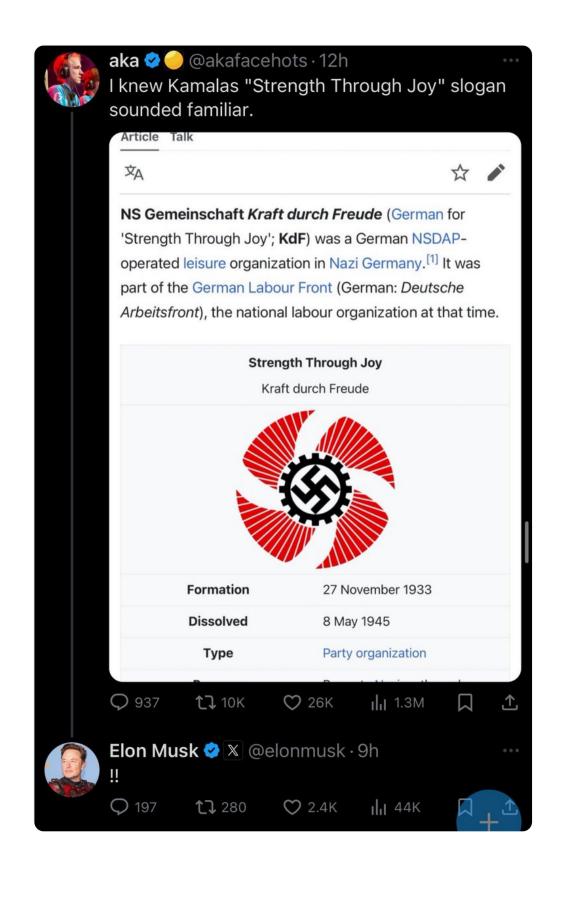






Previously, Musk has accused Twitter of political bias, but now he's doing this exact same thing with X. His endorsement of Trump has boosted this bias to overdrive, and today it's difficult to tell him apart from the other ridiculous MAGA Republican propagandists.







The most blatant propaganda product from him was the "conversation" on X with Donald Trump. Riddled with technical problems, this political ad was basically Trump praising himself and Elon nodding along, while asking the most lowball questions imaginable.

21/25



ELON MUSK / TWITTER - X / POLITICS

The Elon Musk / Donald Trump interview on X started with an immediate tech disaster

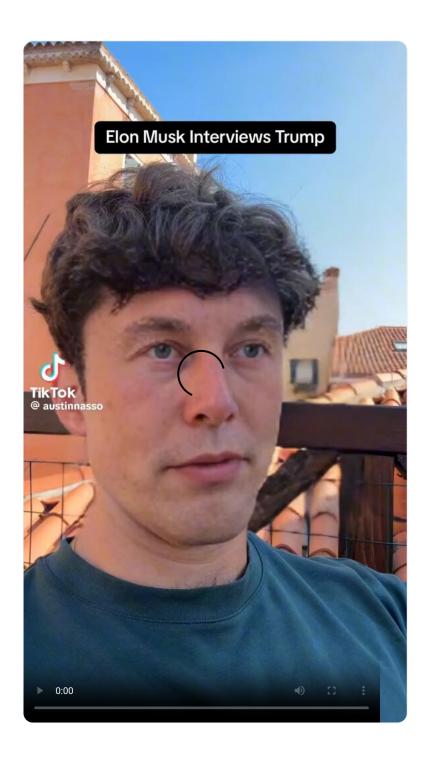


/ Musk claims there was a DDOS attack on X - but The Verge is told there was not.

By Gaby Del Valle and Kylie Robison Aug 13, 2024, 3:38 AM GMT+3

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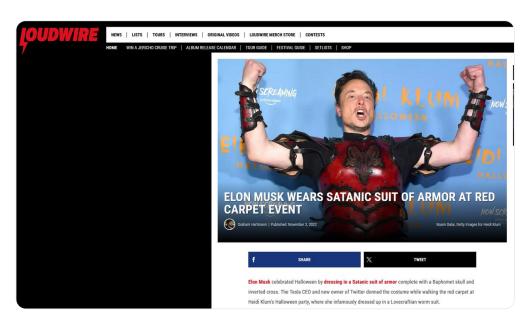
Elon Musk's "conversation" with former President Donald Trump got off to a rocky start. The interview, which was hosted on X Spaces and scheduled to begin at 8PM ET on Monday night, crashed immediately and didn't begin until 42 minutes later.



Elon also supports the basic MAGA issues like gun rights and religion in his own, strange way. In order to "own the libs", he changed the water gun emoji back to an actual gun, and criticized the Olympics opening ceremony for being "extremely disrespectful to Christians".







During the early days of the full-scale Russo-Ukrainian War, Elon seemed to be strongly supporting the Ukrainian effort. But slowly, he seems to have started agreeing with his old friends and Trump supporters like David Sacks and The Heritage Foundation boys.



War in Ukraine



Ilya Yashin, the activist who didn't want to leave Russian prison



Europe · Analysis Kremlin response to Kursk incursion shows how Putin freezes in a crisis



3

4

WAR IN UKRAINE Verified videos Donbas region Russian combat capabilities HIMARS

Whatever the fuss over Elon Musk, Starlink is utterly essential in Ukraine



A medic from Ukraine's 43rd Brigade stands next to Starlink equipment at a base in the Bakhmut district on April 19 in Donetsk Oblast, Ukraine.

By Alex Horton and Serhii Korolchuk

Updated September 18, 2023 at 1:09 p.m. EDT | Published September 8, 2023 at 12:19 p.m. EDT







It was a tragic waste of life for Ukraine to attack a larger army that had defense in depth, minefields and stronger artillery when Ukraine lacked armor or air superiority! Any fool could have predicted that.

My recommendation a year ago was for Ukraine to entrench and apply all resources to defense. Even then, it is tough to hold land that doesn't have strong natural barriers.

There is no chance of Russia taking all of Ukraine, as the local resistance would be extreme in the west, but Russia will certainly gain more land than they have today.

The longer the war goes on, the more territory Russia will gain until they hit the Dnepr, which is tough to overcome. However, if the war lasts long enough, Odessa will fall too.

Whether Ukraine loses all access to the Black Sea or not is, in my view, the real remaining question. I recommend a negotiated settlement before that happens.

8:35 PM · Mar 30, 2024 · 2.9M Views



Musk has gone a long way from the guy promoting Tesla's "LGBTQ equality score" on Twitter to being a hardcore right-winger supporting most authoritarian regimes around the world and calling the US Democrats politics "communism" (and somehow claiming to be "the resistance").

24/25









For many, Musk pledging to donate 45 million USD per month to Trump's presidential campaign (and later backtracking) was big news. To me, the more worrying thing is that Elon has adjusted a massive social media platform to benefit Trump and his supporters.



When Elon Musk came to the White House asking me for help on all of his many subsidized projects, whether it's electric cars that don't drive long enough, driverless cars that crash, or rocketships to nowhere, without which subsidies he'd be worthless, and telling me how he was a big Trump fan and Republican, I could have said, "drop to your knees and beg," and he would have done it...

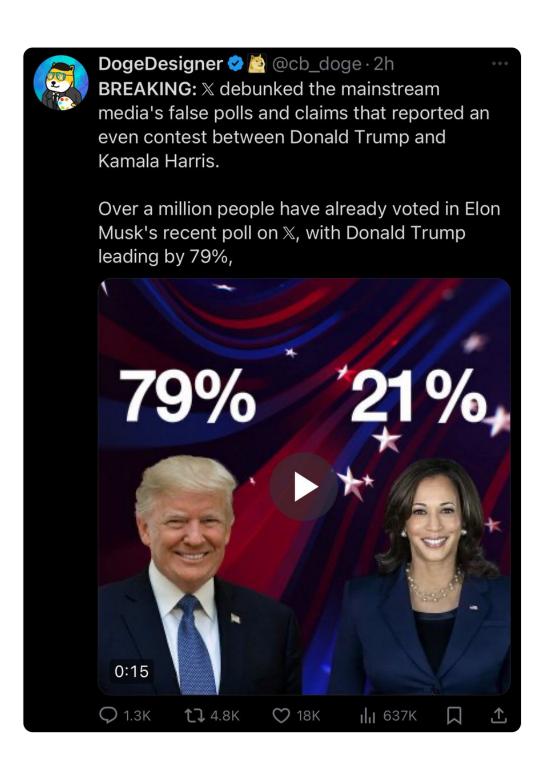








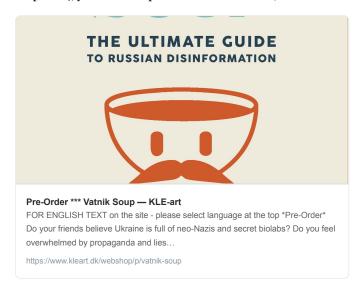




Instances like this, the first former employee tells WIRED, show that Musk is an entirely different actor than other tech CEOs, unbothered by the kinds of laws or norms that could be used to reign in another company. Musk doesn't appear to be cowed by penalties like fines for spreading misinformation that are meant to keep billionaires and companies in check to protect the public interest.

"Regulation is not written for overtly malicious actors," says the first former employee. "We don't have good regulation anywhere in the world that thinks about corporate entities like that ... and it's certainly not how we are used to treating a man who owns multiple companies."

My book titled "Vatnik Soup - The Ultimate Guide to Russian Disinformation" will be published on 20 Sep 2024, you can now pre-order it from here (comes with extra goodies!):



The first Elon Musk #vatniksoup can be found here:



And the second part, which focuses more on the Russo-Ukrainian War, can be found here:



. . .

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257.3K

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