March 6, 2022

Sent via electronic mail

Tim Cook Chief Executive Officer Apple One Apple Park Way Cupertino, CA 95014

Re: Apple Advertising Next to Hateful Content on Twitter

Dear Mr. Cook:

We, the undersigned 61 civil-rights, human-rights and consumer-advocacy organizations, call on Apple to end its advertising spending on Twitter. Apple is one of Twitter's top three advertisers, and we're alarmed that Apple has been increasing its ad buys in recent months while other advertisers have left the platform entirely or wound down their relationships with Twitter. As a trusted App store provider with terms of service to which Twitter is subject, Apple's deep investment in Twitter also poses a potential conflict of interest.

As a private company, Apple of course has every right to make business decisions about where it advertises, how it brands its products, and the best methods to protect its reputation. We would urge that continued advertisement on Twitter is detrimental to Apple's reputation and out of step with Apple's own <u>policy</u> on human rights, which states that Apple is "committed to respecting the human rights of everyone whose lives we touch."

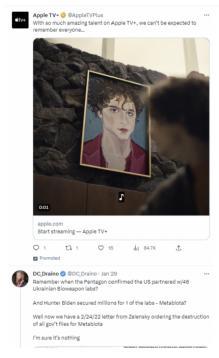
Elon Musk has made Twitter less safe for brands and users, especially LGBTQIA+ people, religious minorities, people of color and women. Musk has welcomed neo-Nazis, white supremacists, misogynists, climate deniers and conspiracy theorists back onto the site in droves, and has failed to mitigate the spread of hate and lies. He has <u>ditched</u> long standing content moderation policies and <u>laid off</u> thousands of employees responsible for enforcing them.

Apple advertising is now featured next to some of the most toxic content on Twitter.

For instance, new <u>research</u> from the Center for Countering Digital Hate has revealed a number of Apple ads next to hateful content, including the advertisement below, which appears adjacent to a sexist post from self-professed neo-Nazi Andrew Anglin.



Another Apple ad, below, features actor Timothée Chalamet next to a tweet in which Rogan O'Handley promotes the debunked claim that Ukraine was developing biological weapons with the assistance of the U.S. government.



Before his takeover, Elon Musk promised companies like Apple that Twitter would not become a "free-for-all hellscape." Yet his decisions since taking Twitter private have only made the platform worse.

Hate and conspiracy theories have real life consequences. They incite violence; they threaten public health; they suppress the vote and undermine democracy; they chill the speech of their targets. The undersigned organizations, as part of the #StopToxicTwitter campaign, have called on advertisers across the globe to take action and stop their advertising spending on Twitter in light of the platform's inability to moderate and remove hateful, racist and extremist content that violates Twitter's own policies as well as those of any reasonable company – including Apple.

Brands are recognizing the real risk and taking action: in just the last month, <u>reports</u> have revealed that 625 of Twitter's top 1,000 advertisers have pulled their ads or announced they would do so, and dozens of other companies have curtailed spending on the platform.

We understand that fixing Twitter requires a series of measures, including reversing dangerous policy decisions Musk has made, reinvesting in content moderation and enforcement, and restructuring the governance of the platform. These measures would make Twitter safer and more equitable — a place where brands like Apple could showcase advertising with confidence that Twitter is doing its part to keep the platform safe. Unfortunately, Musk has shown no intention to adopt such measures and no desire to combat racism – in fact, just the opposite. This past week Musk came to the defense of "Dilbert" cartoonist, Scott Adams, following his racist rant where he described the Black community as a "hate group" and suggested that White people "get the hell away from Black people."

The #StopToxicTwitter coalition is calling on Apple to be a leader in the corporate sector and show that it will stand on the right side of human and civil rights. We welcome the opportunity to brief you on the extent of the problem, and we look forward to hearing from you in writing no later than March 20, 2023 to schedule a meeting.

Sincerely,

Accountable Tech Free Press Media Matters for America Access Now Anti-Defamation League Advocates for Youth AI for the People Inc. Azerbaijan Internet Watch Benton Institute for Broadband & Society

Center for Countering Digital Hate Center on Race and Digital Justice Change the Terms Coalition Coding Rights Color Of Change Common Cause **Dangerous Speech Project** DemCast USA Digital Africa Research Lab Distributed Artificial Intelligence Research Institute (DAIR) **Doctors In Politics Equality Labs** Fair Vote UK Freedom Forward Friends of the Earth **GLAAD** Global Indigenous Data Alliance Global Project Against Hate and Extremism International Women's Media Foundation Jewish Women International JustLeadershipUSA Latino Anti-Disinformation Lab Majal.org Maria Ressa MoveOn Muslim Advocates NAACP National Center for Transgender Equality National Hispanic Media Coalition National LGBTQ Task Force NEVER AGAIN Association Numun Fund **PFLAG** National ProgressNow NM Public Citizen Public Knowledge **Ranking Digital Rights** Right To Be (formerly Hollaback!) Roger McNamee, Author of Zucked: Waking Up to the Facebook Catastrophe Stop Hate for Profit Coalition Stop Online Violence Against Women

SumOfUs Superbloom Design The Real Facebook Oversight Board The Sparrow Project The Tech Oversight Project The TransLatin@ Coalition Ujima Inc. The National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community UltraViolet Union of Concerned Scientists United Church of Christ Media Justice Ministry United We Dream Valor US **#VOTEPROCHOICE** Voto Latino Whose Knowledge?