
Dear CEOs:

Elon Musk’s takeover of Twitter came with his promise to advertisers like you that the social network would not transform into a “free-for-all hellscape” and would remain “warm and welcoming to all.”

But beware: Musk’s promises in no way accurately portray his plans for Twitter, nor are they a reflection of the evolving reality of the platform as it transforms by the minute under Musk. If Elon Musk follows through with just a fraction of what he has already committed to doing, then Twitter will not and can not be a safe platform for brands. Urgent action is needed by advertisers.

Among Musk’s first acts as owner was to spread a dangerous conspiracy theory about a violent attack on the husband of Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi. He also fired several top executives, including Vijaya Gadde, Twitter’s head of legal policy, trust, and safety.

Within 24 hours of Musk taking ownership, the platform was inundated with hate and disinformation. Not only are extremists celebrating Musk’s takeover of Twitter, they are seeing it as a new opportunity to post the most abusive, harassing, and racist language and imagery. This includes clear threats of violence against people with whom they disagree. Without deliberate efforts by Twitter to address this type of abuse and hate, your brands will be actively supporting accelerating extremism.

Additionally, he has threatened to drastically reduce employee headcount, putting those responsible for maintaining community standards and protecting user safety first on the chopping block. Musk has also publicly supported the idea of restoring the accounts of prominent individuals Twitter had suspended for inciting and glorifying political violence, spreading election- and COVID-related disinformation and abusing people based on their race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, religious affiliation, age, or disability.

Your companies are Twitter’s 20 largest US advertisers, spending hundreds of millions of dollars each year. Your posture and response to Musk’s plans during this moment matter for your
brands.

We, the undersigned organizations, call on you to notify Musk and publicly commit that you will cease all advertising on Twitter globally if he follows through on his plans to undermine brand safety and community standards including gutting content moderation. This means that Musk must not roll back the basic moderation practices Twitter already has on the books now and must commit to actually enforcing those rules.

We know that brand safety is of the utmost importance to you. As such, you also have a moral and civic obligation to take a stand against the degradation of one of the world’s most influential communications platforms, and to hold Musk to the pledge he made to you to ensure that Twitter is a welcoming and civil place for everyone.

Sincerely,

Accountable Tech
Free Press
Media Matters for America
Access Now
Advocates for Youth
AI for the People Inc.
Asian Americans Advancing Justice Center
Azerbaijan Internet Watch
Benton Institute for Broadband & Society
The Center for American Progress
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
Friends of the Earth
GLAAD
Global Indigenous Data Alliance
Global Project Against Hate and Extremism
Jewish Women International
Majal.org
MediaJustice
Muslim Advocates
NAACP
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Hispanic Media Coalition
Numun Fund
PFLAG National
ProgressNow NM
Public Citizen
Public Knowledge
Ranking Digital Rights
The Real Facebook Oversight Board
Right To Be (formerly Hollaback!)
The Sparrow Project
SumOfUs
Superbloom Design
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 We Dream
United Church of Christ Media Justice Ministry
#VOTEPROCHOICE
Whose Knowledge?