



## Majority of Americans Want Action on Big Tech, New Poll Finds

Significant majorities of Americans want the government to rein in Big Tech companies on matters of size, oversight, and privacy, according to a [new poll](#) by Axios and the Illinois Institute of Technology.

A majority of the survey's 1,500 respondents indicate that they have concerns about the use of artificial intelligence, the reach of algorithms, the state of their online privacy, and the size of tech firms.

Of those polled, 81 percent think "the government should be doing more to protect privacy." Seventy-five percent think "Big tech companies are too big," and 71 percent said, "There should be public oversight in use of algorithms." The latter statement garnered overwhelming support from both liberals and conservatives.



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On the issue of the size of tech companies, left and right were also in alignment. Eighty-three percent of conservatives said tech companies are too big, while 80 percent of liberals believe they are.

A small group of corporations own many of the most popular social media services. Facebook (recently renamed Meta), for example, not only owns its namesake platform, but also Instagram, WhatsApp, and Oculus. Google (now Alphabet) not only runs its famous search engine, but owns YouTube and the Android smartphone operating system.

Artificial intelligence was another issue on which the Left and Right strongly agreed. Sixty-nine percent said they would limit the use of AI for hiring decisions; nearly 60 percent distrust AI for processing loan applications and setting mortgage rates; and over 70 percent of respondents distrust the use of AI for self-driving buses and airplane autopilot systems.

Advertising was also a wide concern among those surveyed, and in the eyes of many it ties into privacy. Most poll respondents (78 percent) said they feel they are targeted in online ads based on their web activity, and 50 percent believe they're targeted for online ads based on their offline conversations.

Interestingly, many expressed concern with society's dependence on devices, with 56 percent agreeing "we are dependent on smartphones."

"We're in a situation in which we already depend so deeply on technology for all of these aspects of our day-to-day lives, but at the same time, we have a deep distrust of this same tech," said Christine Himes, dean of Lewis College of Science and Letters at Illinois Tech.

"[The results] may be indicative of increasing distrust for all institutions, whether they are secular, religious, governmental, private or public," said George M. Langlois, executive director of the Center



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on December 22, 2021

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for Research and Service at Illinois Tech.

“It does seem the public wants more control and is open to support changes that reflect that.”

A [poll](#) from Harvard’s Institute of Politics released earlier this year found that Facebook was the least-trusted institution among people in the 18-29 age range — putting it behind the Supreme Court and the police.

The survey of 2,500 young people asked how often respondents trusted major institutions to “do the right thing.” Of these, only 19 percent said they trusted Facebook to do the right thing most of the time. A similar percentage, 21 percent, said the same of fellow social-media company Twitter.

It’s no wonder why the American people have come to distrust Big Tech. The major platforms have engaged in widespread censorship over the years to silence information that goes against their preferred (left-wing) politics.

Back in 2019, Facebook and YouTube [scrubbed](#) all content mentioning the name of Eric Ciaramella, the CIA analyst and former National Security Council staffer who was the whistleblower in the first impeachment inquiry into President Trump.

In 2020, Facebook announced a [stricter level of censorship](#) related to coronavirus and vaccinations, removing content that supposedly includes false claims about COVID-19 vaccines that have supposedly been debunked by the platform’s health “experts.” The platform is also promoting the COVID-19 shot by [suppressing](#) content that expresses “vaccine hesitancy.”

It shouldn’t be surprising that Facebook is pro-vaccine. As *The New American* [reported](#), Dr. Susan Desmond-Hellmann, who currently serves on Pfizer Inc.’s board of directors, was previously the Lead Independent Director at Facebook, which has frequently censored user content related to the coronavirus outbreak and vaccines. She was also CEO of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation from 2014-2020.

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg said, “Sue has been a wonderful and thoughtful voice on the board for six years, and I’m personally grateful to her for everything she has done for this company,” with regard to her departure from the company.



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