



Written by [James Murphy](#) on November 20, 2023

Multiple Corporations Pull Advertising From X Over Alleged Antisemitism of Elon Musk

Several large corporate advertisers have announced that they are “pausing” ad purchases on X, the social-media platform purchased by Elon Musk in 2022. Thus far, Disney, Apple, Comcast, IBM, Warner Brothers, Paramount Global, Lionsgate, and others have announced they will no longer purchase ads, after Musk was accused of antisemitism by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and other activist organizations.

The European Union has also announced that it will cease advertising on X.

The boycott was definitely pushed along by left-wing media watchdog group Media Matters, which [claimed](#) that Musk is descending “into white nationalist and antisemitic conspiracy theories.”

“During all of this Musk-induced chaos, corporate advertisements have also been appearing on pro-Hitler, Holocaust denial, white nationalist, pro-violence, and neo-Nazi accounts,” wrote Eric Hanonoki for Media Matters. “[X CEO Linda] Yaccarino has attempted to placate companies by claiming that ‘brands are now “protected from the risk of being next to” potentially toxic content.’”

According to the group, X has placed ads on several high-profile accounts next to posts from a pro-Hitler account, Holocaust deniers, a leading white-nationalist group, a group that advocates the killing of LGBTQ advocates and politicians, a neo-Nazi group, a pro-Hitler and Holocaust denier account, and a group spreading antisemitic conspiracy theories about 9/11.

In a Thursday afternoon post, Yaccarino vehemently [denied](#) the antisemitism charge, or that any purposeful discrimination was rampant on X .

“X’s point of view has always been very clear that discrimination by everyone should STOP across the board — I think that’s something we can and should all agree on. When it comes to this platform — X has also been extremely clear about our efforts to combat antisemitism and discrimination. There’s no place for it anywhere in the world — it’s ugly and wrong. Full stop,” she [posted](#).

An unnamed X executive told Axios that X “did a sweep on the accounts that Media Matters found and they will [no] longer be monetizable.”

The same executive denied that X was placing ads next to any group on purpose: “The X system is not intentionally placing a brand actively next to this type of content, nor is a brand actively trying to support this type of content with an ad placement.”

As for Musk, he promised to not sit back and allow X to be destroyed by the corporate ad pullout, and that Media Matters and any others who have worked to push the boycott are in for a legal battle.



AP Images
Elon Musk



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“The split second court opens on Monday, X Corp will be filing a thermonuclear lawsuit against Media Matters and ALL those who colluded in this fraudulent attack on our company,” he posted.

Accompanying the Musk post was an X company blog post that appeared to claim that the Media Matters story was an attempt to quell free speech:

“This week Media Matters for America posted a story that completely misrepresented the real user experience on X, in another attempt to undermine freedom of speech and mislead advertisers.”

The split second court opens on Monday, X Corp will be filing a thermonuclear lawsuit against Media Matters and ALL those who colluded in this fraudulent attack on our company pic.twitter.com/55vl7PspaQ

— Elon Musk (@elonmusk) [November 18, 2023](#)

The X Safety department claimed, “To manipulate the public and advertisers, *Media Matters* created an alternate account and curated the posts and advertising appearing on the account’s timeline to misinform advertisers about the placement of their posts. These contrived experiences could be applied to any platform.”

X accused Media Matters of even more chicanery, to the point of manipulating the platform in order to help create the unfriendly ad experience that it was complaining about:

Once they curated their feed, they repeatedly refreshed their timelines to find a rare instance of ads serving next to the content they chose to follow. Our logs indicate that they forced a scenario resulting in 13 times the number of ads served compared to the median ads served to an X user.

X also pointed out that many of the unfavorable ad placements were not organic, but had been deliberately created by Media Matters themselves. “Of the 5.5 billion ad impressions on X that day, less than 50 total ad impressions were served against all of the organic content featured in the Media Matters article,” X Safety reported.

IBM spoke for the boycotters in a statement: “IBM has zero tolerance for hate speech and discrimination and we have immediately suspended all advertising on X while we investigate this entirely unacceptable situation.”

GOP presidential hopeful Vivek Ramaswamy accused the corporations that have pulled advertising from X of cowardice.

“The advertisers sanctimoniously ‘pausing their ad spending on X’ are cowards,” Ramaswamy posted on X. “And yes, it is different from when individual consumers choose not to buy Bud Light. It’s one thing if you want to use your own money to signal your own personal values. It’s quite another to use corporate \$\$ to engage in personal virtue-signaling which is what these executives are doing. Even worse when it’s based on false pretenses & intentional distortions of Elon’s comments.”



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