



Written by [James Murphy](#) on January 7, 2025

Zuckerberg Drops Fact-checking; Announces Return to Free Speech at Meta

On Tuesday, social-media entrepreneur Mark Zuckerberg announced in a video that he was ending the controversial “fact-checking” program at Meta and embracing the quintessentially American ideal of free speech to his platforms. Instead of the politically biased fact-checking system, Meta will move to a “community notes” system inspired by Elon Musk’s X.

In the five minute [video](#), Zuckerberg also said Meta was moving its trust and safety and content moderation teams out of California and relocating them to Texas. The moves appear to be an attempt to address complaints that Facebook and its satellite companies, Instagram and Threads, have become far too censorious in the past decade due to governmental intrusion.



AP Images
Mark Zuckerberg

“Back to Our Roots”

“It’s time to get back to our roots around free expression on Facebook and Instagram,” Zuckerberg said.

Zuckerberg implied that the election of Trump in November may have been a reason for his change of heart.

“The recent elections also feel like a cultural tipping point towards once again prioritizing speech. So, we’re going to get back to our roots and focus on reducing mistakes, simplifying our policies, and restoring free expression on our platforms,” Zuckerberg said.

“More specifically, here’s what we’re going to do. First, we’re going to get rid of fact-checkers and replace them with community notes similar to X, starting in the U.S.,” he added.

Previously, Meta engaged “independent fact-checkers,” which were, in fact, politically and culturally biased actors with a decidedly left-wing slant.

“When we launched our independent fact-checking program in 2016, we were very clear that we didn’t want to be the arbiters of truth. We made what we thought was the best and most reasonable choice at the time, which was to hand that responsibility over to independent fact checking organizations,” a Meta statement said.

Readers might recall that this [approach](#) was used to censor John Stossel over a video questioning the extent to which climate change played a role in wildfires, and another video simply questioning, “are we doomed?” in regard to global warming.



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Community Notes

“We will end the current third party fact checking program in the United States and instead begin moving to a Community Notes program,” the Meta [statement](#) said. “We’ve seen this approach work on X - where they empower their community to decide when posts are potentially misleading and need more context, and people across a diverse range of perspectives decide what sort of context is helpful for other users to see.”

Zuckerberg also declared that moderators will be less likely to throttle opinions on topics such as immigration and gender identity in the future.

“We’re going to simplify our content policies and get rid of a bunch of restrictions on topics like immigration and gender that are just out of touch with mainstream discourse,” Zuckerberg said. “What started as a movement to be more inclusive has increasingly been used to shut down opinions and shut out people with different opinions, and it’s gone too far.”

Leaving California

As mentioned above, Meta is also ditching California and heading to Texas, at least for its trust and safety and content moderation teams.

“We’re going to move our trust and safety and content-moderation teams out of California, and our U.S. based content review is going to be based in Texas,” Zuckerberg announced. “As we work to promote free expression, I think that will help us to build trust to do this work in places where there is less concern about the bias of our teams.”

MAGA Makeover?

CNN [called](#) Zuckerberg’s announcement “a MAGA makeover”

“It oftentimes seems that these tech CEOs actually are favoring or preferring a certain kind of speech,” CNN media analyst Brian Stelter said. “The changes announced by Meta today are very much a MAGA makeover, a pro Trump makeover.”

Really? CNN is concerned that Facebook is now pro Trump? After nearly a decade of attacking Trump and his followers and declaring them a reincarnation of Adolf Hitler and the Nazis, the left-wing media can’t believe that Facebook is taking steps to undo the type of censorship people have been complaining about.

Is Zuckerberg’s transformation to free speech warrior genuine, or has he simply made a business decision, sensing that the political winds have shifted?

Whatever the case, it’s good news for those who truly value free speech. For now, at least.



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