



# Twitter Purges 70,000 Accounts Since Friday

Twitter, like Facebook, Apple, Google and Amazon, thinks it can hide behind its own terms of service while destroying the basic human right to free speech of millions of Americans. Meanwhile, congress and states do nothing to correct them. This is the end result of Technocracy. □ TN Editor

In a Monday night blog post, Twitter lays out all the latest details of a historic purge that started with the suspension of president Trump and has escalated into the ban of tens of thousands of conservative voices, or as Twitter puts it, “steps taken to protect the conversation on our service from attempts to incite violence, organize attacks, and share deliberately misleading information about the election outcome.” Odd how none of those considerations emerged during the summer when US cities were literally burning as a result of countless violent protests and frequent riots, but we digress.

In any case, In twitter’s own delightfully ironic words, “It’s important to be transparent about all of this work as the US Presidential Inauguration on January 20, 2021, approaches.” Which is a probably a good idea in the aftermath of the biggest censorship purge in twitter history, one

which sent Twitter stock tumbling. So this is what how twitter justifies “the purge”:

*We’ve been clear that we will take strong enforcement action on behavior that has the potential to lead to offline harm. Given the violent events in Washington, DC, and increased risk of harm, we began permanently suspending thousands of accounts that were primarily dedicated to sharing QAnon content on Friday afternoon.*

And with tens of thousands of accounts suspended (most of them permanently), banned, or merely disappeared, it will hardly be a surprise that according to Twitter, “**more than 70,000 accounts have been suspended**”. What is the justification? “*These accounts were engaged in sharing harmful QAnon-associated content at scale and were primarily dedicated to the propagation of this conspiracy theory across the service.*”

More in the full blog post below. Meanwhile, as BofA warned today and as traders clearly agreed, Twitter now faces the risk of wholesale “churn”, i.e., exodus, by the conservative community in response to this unprecedented crackdown, which could see tens of millions of MAUs gone:

### ***More engagement risk for Twitter than Facebook***

*Donald Trump had 88mn followers on Twitter, the 6th most followed account, and on Facebook he had over 33mn followers. President Trump’s follower count represents 47% of Twitter’s daily active users (DAUs) (though clearly not all followers are DAUs), with his account averaging 34 Tweets per day in 2020 (up from 21 in 2019). Additionally we see churn from the conservative community within Twitter as a modest 1Q DAU threat, however SensorTower suggests DAUs on Parlor (a conservative focused alternative) is roughly 130k (0.37% of Twitter’s US DAUs) as of January 8th. Our call is that after some deactivation newsflow near-term, strong political activists will stay on Twitter for other content.*

### ***Content risk and Section 230 back in focus***

*In June, The DoJ had a proposal to rollback some Section 230 protections, which specifies that Internet companies are generally not liable for user posted content. While a Democratic administration may be less focused on significant reform of Section 230, recent events may make content legislation more likely. While we think social platforms may welcome content guidelines, risks of a rollback of Section 230 include: 1) potential civil liability arising from victims of Online content, and; 2) expense risk from need to increase content review capabilities. Facebook CEO, Mark Zuckerberg, has been vocal in embracing an update to Section 230, while Twitter CEO, Jack Dorsey, noted "Eroding the foundation of Section 230 could collapse how we communicate on the Internet, leaving only a small number of giant and well-funded technology companies".*

And now we wait to find out just how extensive the conservative user "churn" has been.

Meanwhile, here is Twitter's full statement on the *Friday night purge*:

### ***An update following the riots in Washington, DC***

*Following the horrific events in Washington, DC, last week, here are some of the steps we've taken to protect the conversation on our service from attempts to incite violence, organize attacks, and share deliberately misleading information about the election outcome. It's important to be transparent about all of this work as the US Presidential Inauguration on January 20, 2021, approaches.*

### ***Updated our coordinated harmful activity policy***

*We've been clear that we will take strong enforcement action on behavior that has the potential to lead to offline harm. Given the violent events in Washington, DC, and increased risk of harm, we began permanently suspending thousands of accounts that were primarily dedicated to sharing QAnon content on Friday afternoon.*

*Many of the individuals impacted by this updated enforcement action held multiple accounts, driving up the total number of*

*accounts impacted. Since Friday, more than 70,000 accounts have been suspended as a result of our efforts, with many instances of a single individual operating numerous accounts. These accounts were engaged in sharing harmful QAnon-associated content at scale and were primarily dedicated to the propagation of this conspiracy theory across the service.*

*Our updated enforcement on QAnon content on Twitter, along with routine spam challenges, has resulted in changes in follower count for some people's Twitter accounts. In some cases, these actions may have resulted in follower count changes in the thousands.*

*As stipulated in this policy that we announced ahead of the 2020 US election, accounts that have Tweeted or Retweeted associated content will continue to be subject to limited visibility across search, replies, and on timelines and are prohibited from being recommended to others by Twitter. It's important that these types of accounts — that are not predominantly engaged in sharing this material — can see different perspectives in the open public conversation that Twitter uniquely provides.*

*Our teams are discussing ways we can empower research into QAnon and coordinated harmful activity on Twitter.*

### ***Escalated enforcement measures for our civic integrity policy***

*During the past several weeks, misleading and false information surrounding the 2020 US presidential election has been the basis for incitement to violence around the country. We took action on these claims in line with our Civic Integrity policy*

*Now that the results of the election have been officially certified by Congress, we updated our Civic Integrity policy on Friday to aggressively increase our enforcement action on these claims. The updated policy provides details about how we enforce against violations of this policy, including repeated sharing of Tweets that receive warning labels. Ultimately, repeated violations of this policy can result in permanent suspension.*

## ***Deployed tech to surface potentially harmful Tweets for urgent human review***

*Our teams are continuing to aggressively deploy technology to surface potentially harmful Tweets for human review in an effort to take action as quickly as possible on violative content. Using this combination of technology and human review helps our teams work at scale during this critical time. We continue to update these tools as terminology and behaviors evolve on Twitter.*

## ***Limited engagement on labeled Tweets***

*On Tuesday, we limited engagement by no longer allowing any Tweets labeled for violations of our civic integrity policy to be replied to, Liked or Retweeted. People on Twitter are still able to Quote Tweet to share this content with additional context or their own perspective.*

## ***Blocked violative keywords from Search and Trends***

*We want Trends to promote healthy conversations on Twitter. This means, at times, we may prevent certain content from trending. There are rules for Trends, and if we identify Trends that violate these rules, we'll take enforcement action.*

*Since last week, we've prohibited certain terms from surfacing in Trends and Search suggestions based on the following Twitter Rules:*

- *Coordinated harmful activity*
- *Civic integrity*
- *Hateful conduct*
- *Glorification of violence*
- *Violent threats*
- *Sensitive media*

We will also continue to prioritize reviewing and adding context to Trends. Our goal is to help people see what's happening while ensuring that potentially confusing trends are presented with

context.

## **Fought spam and challenged potentially inauthentic accounts**

It is against the Twitter Rules to engage in spamming behavior, including bulk, aggressive, or deceptive activity. That's why we routinely deploy anti-spam challenges to accounts to fight this behavior and protect the public conversation. During these challenges, account owners must verify their authenticity through a variety of measures, such as reCAPTCHA or providing a functional email address.

As always, while accounts are undergoing these challenges, they're temporarily removed from follower counts. This, along with our updated enforcement around coordinated harmful activity, means some people may notice drops or fluctuations in their follower count.

Ahead of the inauguration, we'll continue to monitor the situation, keep open lines of communication with law enforcement, and keep the public informed of additional enforcement actions.

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