

How Elon Musk paid millions in order to fake a fan club on Twitter

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How Elon Musk paid millions in order to fake a fan club on Twitter

- Elon Musk pays to have himself suggested as a person to follow when you first sign up for Twitter
- Most of his Twitter "followers" found to be fake, purchased, troll accounts
- Possible sociopathic or psychopathic narcissism could be the reason

Buying Fake Twitter Followers Will Leave You Tweeting to Mannequins

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By [Julie Keck](#)

It's hard starting a Twitter account from scratch. Not only do you not know who to follow (start with [@LouisCK](#) and [@PBSMediaShift](#), then work outward from there), but it seems almost impossible to get people to follow you. And how can you develop your personal brand / spread your beliefs / be on the cutting edge of your field / meet Ashton Kutcher if you don't get a respectable Twitter following under your belt?

The sad truth for the attention-deficit-disorder crowd is that if you're actually trying to build a solid fan base with which to start a movement, or an audience to whom you can sell something, or be something, then you need to take the long road. Five hundred real, organic, true-as-the-day-is-blue Twitter followers are worth more than 10,000 fake followers any day.

It Takes Time to Build a Tribe

When I consult on social media campaigns, often the first thing my clients ask for is the magic formula to getting lots of Twitter followers fast. My question for them: What's your goal? If it's to seem big to someone who's only going to take a cursory glance at your Twitter account and make a decision based on that, then go for it. Just remember, these are the same people who will decide you're cool by the shade of your tan or your latest tattoo, and they're probably not going to stick around and be supportive or helpful, because shallow people often have shallow attentions spans.

Twitter followers. Image by [Pong on Flickr and used here with Creative Commons license.](#)

On [my personal account](#), I have just over 7,000 followers, and it's taken me five years and an embarrassing number of tweets to get there. And what has it gotten me? My gig on MediaShift, for one. A steady stream of other valuable clients. A position with a web series production company I respect. And countless connections, some of which will lead me to the *next* things that I'm going to do that I don't even know about yet. With Twitter, I've created real connections with real people that resulted in real opportunities, real jobs, and real money. And that money: it pays real bills. This will not happen for someone who buys their followers, because fake Twitter followers can't refer you for a job, buy your new book, or RT your genius tweet. In this case, the short cut is vastly inferior to the long haul. Forget the hare; be the turtle.

If Puffing Up is Good Enough for Prairie Chickens, It's Good Enough for Me

Some people reason that having a boosted Twitter following, even for a short time, will encourage real followers to follow them, a fake-it-til-you-make-it strategy. They think that they'll just appear bigger than they are at first, use the eye-catching numbers to lure real people, then go back and delete the fake followers once a real following has amassed. What's the harm in that? It's true that puffing oneself up to look bigger and sexier works for some (just ask prairie chickens), but artificially enhancing your Twitter following with fake followers does not make you look more attractive: it makes you look more desperate.

Fake Followers Can Be a Real Pain

If you buy fake Twitter followers, others will catch on. For example, if your Twitter account is new — say you just started last week or last month — and suddenly you have 5,000 followers, it raises red flags.

I once saw this happen with a client I took on in my early social media career. Katie Todd, a Chicago-based indie singer with great pipes, asked me to help her crowdfund and release her most recent album. I loved her style, but I was also drawn to her because she has a massive (to me at the time) Twitter following. I was eager to get my hands on it to see what I could do. However, after a few weeks of stellar tweeting (I'm not vain, just confident), there was still no engagement from the Twitter audience. I was really confused. If these people had followed her here, why weren't they getting excited about the new music?

After a little investigating, I realized that Katie's Twitter feed was primarily comprised of locked accounts from places like Indonesia, Central America and Eastern Europe, which made very little sense for an English-tweeting, English-singing singer to target. It turned out that Katie's social media manager prior to me had purchased Twitter followers to make her account look better. But, as we know, this was for naught, as Katie was singing beautifully (and I was tweeting hard) to a crowd that didn't speak the language.

[Luckily for Katie, she had actually grown an organic fan base on Facebook over the years](#) comprised of friends, fans and family who were sincerely interested in her new album and who responded well to regular and creative social media engagement. Through Facebook, Katie and I raised the funds she sought (plus a little more) and, for the first time, she released an album in the black rather than in the red. That was a win for both of us. But if it hadn't been for that great Facebook crowd, there would have been no crowdfunding to be had.

Building relationships, even on Twitter, takes time. Anyone who seems like the belle of the ball in their first month at the dance is wearing falsies. (No, I'm not linking to a definition. Ask your mom.)

How Can You Spot a Twitter Trickster?

I can spot accounts with a majority of fake followers a mile away, mostly because of how they tweet without engaging. See for yourself: If you notice someone who tweets a lot (and usually poorly, spammily) but doesn't seem to know how to get their apparently massive Twitter following to tweet back, there's a problem.

If you don't have my particular brand of fake-dar, [Fakers.statuspeople.com](#) has a tool which instantly assesses someone's Twitter audience. Admittedly, all Twitter users will have a few fakes, not because they've purchased them, but because there are lots of bots out there. I analyzed my own Twitterfeed for the purposes of this piece, and I discovered that I have 4% fake followers. I obviously didn't buy any followers (or if I did, I'm awful at it), but there are still a few bots in there. I may not have an [Alyssa Milano](#)-level of Twitter followship, but I'm pretty pleased that my followers are 96 percent authentic. This means that when I need to call on them for something, they are real people I can rouse and rally.

While some people use services like the one above to pare down their own followers, others use it to expose phonies. And you don't want to be one of those phonies. In fact, [earlier this year the Daily Dot documented their experience when hackers bought fake Twitter followers for them](#), supposedly to discredit them. You can also find stories weekly about [politicians](#) and others who boost their Twitter numbers with fake followers. It doesn't make you look big; it makes you look silly. Or worse ... like a liar. Not a quality you want to exude when you're trying to convince people to listen to you, trust you, give you money, or vote for you.

I See Fake People: Building an Authentic Audience

If you insist on buying Twitter followers, be prepared for a rude surprise when you actually start tweeting. It's even less effective than singing to the choir (a danger associated with a narrowly curated Twitter feed); it's like tweeting to a theater full of mannequins. [The imaginatively named Buy1000followers.co](#) encourages you to "boost your marketing power" by buying 1000 followers for \$2. Or is it \$3? The site states different prices at different spots.

Be a fake 'boss' with your fake followers.

Say you take Buy1000Followers up on their offer and get those 1000 fake followers. They're as useless as mannequins for your marketing efforts. They're not going to clap when you hit your high notes. They're not going to throw flowers to you after your big finish. They're not even going to write scathing reviews of what you do or engage you in heated debates. They're going to do nothing. Because they are mannequins. And they can't move their hands. Or think. Or tweet.

Wait – I take it back. Fake Twitter followers are worse than mannequins; you can't even hang your clothes on them. They're totally, completely useless.

Of course, gathering followers is only one part of the Twitter equation; interacting with them, charming them, and keeping them interested and engaged is another. It's the difference between getting that first date and making it to your 10th anniversary: The former takes a little mascara and a shower, maybe a good Tinder pic; the latter, getting the other person to want to talk to you everyday, even after they know your worst habits. That second group: Those are the keepers.

People follow you on Twitter because they see a tweet of yours and think it's interesting; they stay because they dig your overall style. These are the people you want to collect and connect with over the years in order to reach your ultimate goal, even if it's just to have fun. So get out there, start being your real self on Twitter, and show the people — the real people — what you've got.

Julie Keck is a social media and crowdfunding consultant and co-author of the e-book [Social Media Charm School](#) (with Jessica King). She has run and consulted on crowdfunding campaigns that have raised more than \$300k, mostly for independent films and webseries. She has spoken about crowdfunding and social media at SXSW, the University of Notre Dame, Columbia College, the Chicago Documentary Film Summit, the Chicago International Film Festival, and more. Julie is also a filmmaker (primarily for the niche subscription site [tellofilms.com](#)) as well as the social media and newsletter editor for PBS MediaShift. Play with her on Twitter at [@kingisafink](#).



How to spot a psychopath: Expert reveals the traits to look out for in others and how to tell if YOU have the personality disorder

- Self-professed psychopath Jacob Wells posted his advice on Quora
- He described how he befriends people then uses them to his advantage
- Description matches psychopathic traits such as charm and manipulation

By [Sarah Griffiths for MailOnline](#)

Like Patrick Bateman in American Psycho, psychopaths can be intelligent and charming, while hiding a lack of empathy. So given their ability to manipulate others, how easy it is for you to spot one?

Self-professed psychopath Jacob Wells has revealed how he behaves in different situations and has listed questions that may help others identify whether they have any psychopathic traits - as well as recognise them in others.

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Like Patrick Bateman in American Psycho, (played by Christian Bale, pictured) psychopaths can be intelligent and charming, while hiding a lack of empathy. Now a self-confessed psychopath has shared how he generally behaves to gain the trust of others and then use them to his own advantage. These include superficial charm, a grandiose notion of self-worth, the need for stimulation and impulsiveness, pathological lying, the ability to manipulate others and a lack of remorse and empathy.

Of course, not all psychopaths are criminals and murderers - in fact, many hold important positions in businesses thanks to their ruthless and impulsive attitude.

The Hare Psychopathy Checklist-Revised (PCL-R) is used as a diagnostic tool to determine where someone lies on the psychopathy spectrum, as not all psychopaths display all the traits.

There are 20 items on the checklist, which score between zero and two points depending on whether someone matches a trait, to give a score out of 40.

In the UK, users are deemed psychopathic if they score above 25, but in the US it is 30.

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Psychopathic traits include superficial charm (illustrated in this stock image), a grandiose notion of self-worth, the need for stimulation and impulsiveness, pathological lying, the ability to manipulate others and a lack of remorse and empathy

HOW TO SPOT A PSYCHOPATH: FROM CHARM TO MANIPULATION

Psychopaths display different traits depending on their disorder, but common signs include superficial charm, a grandiose notion of self-worth, the need for stimulation and impulsiveness, pathological lying, the ability to manipulate others and a lack of remorse and empathy.

Experts claim people usually find psychopaths intriguing, but can't put their finger on why.

This is down to incongruous behaviour because psychopaths tend to do a lot of acting to deceive, or mimic normal reactions, sometimes changing their views and reactions quickly.

For example, Mr Wells said upon meeting someone, he tries to become 'the most interesting person they know' and presumably adopts suitable interests and responses to do this.

His response also gives away another common trait - a grandiose notion of self-worth - in that he can be the most interesting person in the room.

Psychopaths occasionally tend to exhibit unconvincing emotional responses, with slip-ups including tone of voice or body language.

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Psychopaths occasionally tend to exhibit unconvincing emotional responses, with slip-ups including tone of voice or body language. They will also offer to do favours and tell false secrets (stock image) to people to gain their complete trust

This may be because they are unable to understand emotions such as fear and love, but can mimic them.

Generally psychopaths' 'emotions' are shallow and short-lived and there is a manipulative ulterior motive to showing them.

For example, Mr Wells said he offers to do favours and tells false secrets to people to gain their complete trust.

He also displays insincere charm - another trait associated with psychopaths.

He says: 'I keep secrets, and tell them fake secrets to further gain their trust, and once they trust me enough, I ask for favours, reminding them of the favours I did them. I can get literally anything from them, which is incredibly useful.'

Psychopaths typically display an incredible ability to manipulate others and sometimes take pleasure in doing so.

Psychopaths often have an air of superiority about them, perhaps shown by Mr Wells' belief he can spot other psychopaths

Even expert Dr Hare warns that anyone can be duped during a short interaction with a psychopath.

Writing on question and answer website [Quora](#), Mr Wells, who claims to score 34 on the Hare checklist, said he deliberately changes how he acts depending on the situation.

However, there is no way of confirming he is a psychopath as he claims.

He wrote: 'I usually present myself as normal at first.

'Some exceptions being academic settings where I try to present myself as either a good student or a genius (the first of which I am not, at all), dating settings where I present myself as being perfect, but unaware of it (both lies), or competitive settings where I act humble but intimidating (neither is true in this case either).'

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According to a survey by psychologist Kevin Dutton, people who hold certain jobs are more likely to display psychopathic traits, including CEOs (illustrated by a stock image), lawyers and TV personalities

He described how he then shows a bit more of his true character by behaving 'a bit abnormally' and trying to become 'the most interesting person they know' by telling stories about himself to gain the person's trust.

'By this point they usually find me intelligent, eccentric, and a bit psychopathic, but fairly normal,' he explained.

HOW TO TELL IF YOU'RE A PSYCHOPATH

Self-professed psychopath Jacob Wells explained there is a series of questions people can use to determine they have psychopathic traits.

They include:

Do you lie to get what you want?

Is it okay to manipulate others to get what you want?

How many of the following feeling do you feel on a regular basis? Sadness, guilt, love, remorse, emotional pain, embarrassment.

Do you ever feel any of these emotions because other around you do?

Do you ever break into fits of rage for no reason?

Are you skilled at manipulating others?

Do you fake emotions?

Do you think yourself superior to others?

The full list can be found [here](#).

If Mr Wells becomes close to a person, he said he seeks to gain their trust completely.

'I gain their trust fully by doing and/or offering to do immense favours that nobody else would do.

'I offer to solve their problems, in any way possible, and then ask them how far to take it so I don't violate their morals.

'If they don't like a teacher/co-worker/ neighbour/whatever, I offer to get rid of them.

'If they say don't put them in prison I'll get them fired. If they say don't get them fired I'll trash their reputation, or scare them into backing off.'

This description near perfectly describes expected behaviour of a psychopath, who uses charm to disguise calculating moves in a bid to manipulate someone to their advantage.

Favours are not done to be kind, but as a way of controlling someone for personal gain and bonds and relationships are often superficial too.

Mr Wells continued: 'I keep secrets, and tell them fake secrets to further gain their trust, and once they trust me enough, I ask for favours, reminding them of the favours I did them.

'I can get literally anything from them, which is incredibly useful.'

It is believed that one per cent of the population displays psychopathic traits, which when subtle, can help people get ahead at work.

Between three and four per cent of senior positions are believed to be occupied by psychopaths.

According to a survey by psychologist Kevin Dutton, people who hold certain jobs are more likely to display psychopathic traits, including CEOs, lawyers, TV personalities, salespeople, surgeons, journalists, police officers, clergymen, chefs and civil servants.

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Psychopathy is characterised by enduring antisocial behaviour, impulsivity, selfishness, callousness, and remorselessness. Famous psychopaths in films include Hannibal Lecter in Silence of the Lambs (played by Anthony Hopkins pictured) and Norman Bates in Psycho

In another post on [Quora](#), Mr Wells lists questions to consider by someone who thinks they display psychopathic traits.

They include: 'Do you lie to get what you want?' 'Do you fake emotions?' and 'Do you think yourself superior to others?'

Perhaps demonstrating a grandiose notion of his self-worth, Mr Wells added: 'Comment your answers below and I will say what I think you have.'

However, there is no way of knowing whether he is a psychopath as he says, or someone who has cleverly concocted answers to display some of the more obvious traits associated with the mental disorder.

HOW EVIL ARE YOU? TEST REVEALS WHETHER YOU HAVE MACHIAVELLIAN TRAITS OR SHOWN SIGNS OF PSYCHOPATHY

A quiz recently swept the internet that claims to tell you just how 'evil' you are.

It measures Machiavellian, narcissistic and psychopathic traits to tell you whether you are 'occasionally vile' or 'decidedly dastardly' for example.

The [quiz](#) was created by BBC Future and inspired by questionnaires developed by psychologists Delroy Paulhus and Daniel Jones.

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The quiz tells users just how 'evil' they are by asking a series of personality questions. The title page of the quiz is shown above. It measures Machiavellian, narcissistic and psychopathic traits to tell users whether they are 'occasionally vile' or 'decidedly dastardly' for example

It measures the personality traits described as the 'dark triad.'

Machiavellianism is characterised by manipulation and exploitation of others, a cynical disregard for morality, and a focus on self-interest and deception.

Fictional character Frank Underwood, in House of Cards is a good example of a Machiavellian person, for example.

Narcissism is characterised by grandiosity, pride, egotism, and a lack of empathy and could perhaps be exemplified by the character Miranda Priestly in The Devil Wears Prada.

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To do the quiz, users measure their own 'dark side' by answering questions about their Machiavellianism, narcissistic and psychopathic tendencies, (examples shown) by either agreeing or disagreeing with statements such as: 'I use clever manipulation to get my way' and 'I hate being the centre of attention'

Psychopathy is characterised by enduring antisocial behaviour, impulsivity, selfishness, callousness, and remorselessness.

Famous psychopaths in films include Hannibal Lecter in Silence of the Lambs and Norman Bates in Psycho.

While extreme versions of these traits are sometimes associated with murderers, experts believe a combination of the 'dark' traits may help people succeed in life and reach a position of wealth and power, for example.

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At the end of three pages of questions users receive a result, which while the creators warn shouldn't be considered a scientific measure of their personality, gives them an insight into their behaviour. The 'dark triad' results are shown on slider bars (pictured)

To complete the quiz, users measure their own 'dark side' by answering questions about their Machiavellianism, narcissistic and psychopathic tendencies, by either agreeing or disagreeing with statements such as: 'I use clever manipulation to get my way' and 'I hate being the centre of attention.'

At the end of three pages of questions - which take less than five minutes to complete - users receive a result.

The creators warn that the test shouldn't be considered a scientific measure of a person's personality, but instead give them an insight into it.

Results include 'infrequently vile' - where someone mostly puts others before themselves - and 'moderately nefarious'.



[BestBoy2](#), Dreamland, United States, about a minute ago

You could go to the WH since plenty of them there.

0

0

Click to rate



[charlie](#), Merseyside, 2 minutes ago

Wonder if Tony Blair has taken the test, although he doesn't need towe have known all along .

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Click to rate



[stingray76182](#), Fort Worth, United States, 13 minutes ago
We have one in the White House

[9](#)

[30](#)

Click to rate



[delsina363](#), Boston, United States, 17 minutes ago
My ex-husband. You need look no further.

[4](#)

[8](#)

Click to rate



[Makana](#), Tavernier, United States, 18 minutes ago
Failed hedge fund manager and pharmaceutical CEO Martin Shkreli comes to mind.

[2](#)

[16](#)

Click to rate



[JohnnyKreese](#), London, United Kingdom, 20 minutes ago
Every other person is one these days. Since the 50's we've created a social and economical system that breeds them and exalts them.

[4](#)

[29](#)

Click to rate



[Maedusa](#), Glasgow, United Kingdom, 26 minutes ago
Can I have Mr Wells' phone number please??

[3](#)

[6](#)

Click to rate



[tikilights](#), Laguna Hills, United States, 28 minutes ago
Fits Obama to a T. Displays false emotions during national tragedies, grand sense of self when he said his presidency would cure the planet, is reported to be very harsh and superior to others in private but portrays charm in public.

[24](#)

[46](#)

Click to rate

[britabroad](#), toronto, Canada, 21 minutes ago
That would describe many leading politicians

[2](#)

[19](#)

Click to rate

[Foots](#), New York, United States, 17 minutes ago
And there is the sign of a stupid person, anything they are told, they some how equates it to Obama, and pretend bush was never president!

[18](#)

[5](#)

Click to rate

[LondonMan](#), London, United Kingdom, 29 minutes ago
Blair is a classic example of lack of empathy and manipulation you can almost see him trying not laugh when he is lying and he is like a salesman.

[5](#)

[28](#)

Click to rate

[Ted](#), Wrexham, United Kingdom, 30 minutes ago
People who are initially gushingly friendly in a way that is a little OTT. Time often shows that their apparent warmth is shallow and short lived. I've also noticed that men who are given to public displays of affection or public statements of love for their partners seem to be prone to be being abusive out of the public eye? Nothing scientific just what I have observed after more than a few years on this planet.

[5](#)

[32](#)

Click to rate

[LondonMan](#), London, United Kingdom, 31 minutes ago
Watched a documentary on Channel 5 about this the other week. These people are a danger to society.

[1](#)

[16](#)

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How Did Elon Musk get involved in so many dirty schemes?

‘Elon Musk is a Lying Scumbag’ say critics!

It is, now, well known that all of Elon Musk's companies would not exist, today, if not for White House kick-backs and West Wing mandated steam-rolling of his competitors, in order to protect his loose relationship with morality.

The many news article about how Musk has based his whole career on getting handed taxpayer cash, as Payola, in exchange for his partners funding political campaigns, are published around the world.

While Musk may be a con-artist, carpet bagger and public funds thief, one has to wonder if his ability to convincingly lie is incumbent to his nature.

Is he like all of those zillions of guys that you see on that TV show: “**48 Hours**”? You know, the ones who meet the girl, her family says “he is wonderful”, his co-workers say he “was the nicest guy”. His neighbor says he “wouldn't hurt a fly”... and you always find out he cut off her head, ate her liver and chopped her into sausage. Is he like that? Always smiling, but hiding a meat cleaver behind the smile?

Musk has taken nearly two decades to sell only as many cars as a “real” car company sells in two weeks? He says he had to “figure out” how to build a car, so that is why it took so long. Is that true? Why did he spend so long, on something so rudimentary, only to have it turn out to be “**the official car of douchebags and assholes**”?

In those two decades, he has spent more money on those few cars than other real car companies spent on 10 cars. He says his run of the mill car was “so hard to build” and that was why it was \$118,000.00 over budget **PER CAR**, at the time he applied for federal emergency cash. Was it really hard to build or was he siphoning money out to political campaigns?

He says the car is “Totally different” but it is the same electric car layout that electric cars have had since the 1800's. The Nissan Leaf and all of the other famous car company electric cars did not have any of the problems, delays or issues that Musk always has. Is he lying or just an idiot?

Critics say that Tesla was created to war-profiteer Afghan lithium that his campaign financier partners had inside deals with Russian mobsters for. They say that Solar City was created to accept kick-backs from Steven Chu at the Department of Energy and that Space X was created so Musk's partners, at spy agency IN-Q-Tel, could profit off of public surveillance systems.

Musk says “no”, in spite of millions of pages of evidence to the contrary. Is he lying?

Bernie Tse, and about 18 Tesla employees, worked for Elon Musk to create a battery sales division, but that fell apart when massive amounts of federal reports emerged, in 2006 and 2007 that proved that Tesla partner: Panasonic, was involved in bribes, crime, dumping, killing workers with poison chemicals and other crimes. At the same time, Elon Musk saw reports that confirmed that his lithium ion would blow up spontaneously, catch on fire when stressed by a car, exude toxic fumes that cause cancer, liver damage, cellular breakdown and fetal mutation and that you had to invade Afghanistan and Bolivia to get the lithium. Even, today, as Tesla's, hover-boards, and numerous lithium ion devices, explode regularly, Musk says there is “no problem” with lithium ion. Is he lying?

The Department of Energy documents filed by Elon Musk, to get taxpayer cash have over 100 things that Musk promised, in writing, that turned out to never have happened and/or never been true. Did he lie..or just have a few typos?

His numerous divorces and break-ups have resulted in people, who knew him intimately, saying he was a “fraud and a “liar”.

His co-founders at Tesla sued him saying he was a “liar” and a “scam artist”.

His investors have said, in lawsuits, that he is a “liar” and a “fraud”.

Erick Strickland, the head of the highway safety agency, was confronted with covering up the DRAMATIC number of safety issues known about the Tesla. He quit the next day. What doesn't Musk quit?

In a recent article about Musk and Space X, with a cover photo depicting Musk in the company of rats, his own employees are quoted calling him a “liar”.

There are hundreds and hundreds of news articles describing different things that Musk has lied about.

Is Musk really a liar? Is he a scumbag Silicon Valley misogynist laboring under another facade of self-deluded privilege and narcissistic self-promoting elitism?

While Musk's partner: Google, gladly spins out Musk's “Look-at-me” self glorification press hype on a daily basis, is Musk telling the truth in those wild-eyed pronouncements?

In his latest press hype: Musk now wants to build a haven for the 1%, On Mars, much like his peer: Vinohd Khosla tried to build a haven for 1%-ers on a public beach, he took over, in Half Moon Bay, California.

We can only pray that Musk will go to Mars as soon as possible. Ideally, tomorrow...and stay there!