



Sandberg: Facebook ‘Proactively’ Censoring ‘Conservative News’ – ‘We Should Have Done This Earlier’

Photo of Christian Datoc

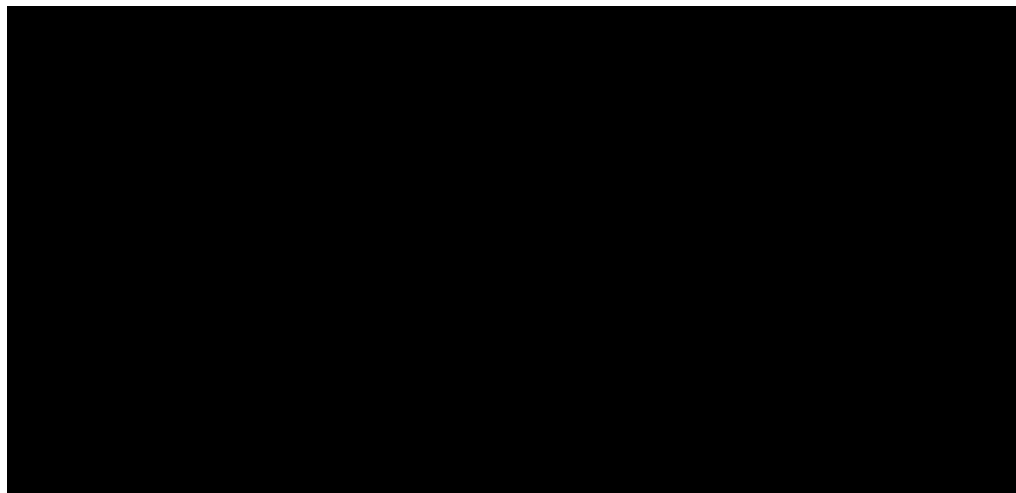
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Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg told NBC’s Savannah Guthrie that the social media company is doubling down on efforts to censor and eliminate the economic incentives behind fake news.

“The first thing we’re doing is we’re going after fake accounts. People think of fake news as politically motivated, and a lot of it is, but even more of it is economically motivated,” she explained in an interview that ran on Friday’s broadcast of “Today.” “People want to write outlandish headlines so you click so they make money. So we’re going after the economic incentive.”

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Sandberg also said they're "working with third-party fact checkers," and highlighted a pre-2018 election "partnership with the AP in all 50 states."

Facebook will "proactively have feet on the ground looking for Conservative news, marking it and reducing distribution."

"We should have done this earlier," Sandberg claimed. "We are as focused as we know how to be now, and I think taking very assertive steps in all of these areas."



Free speech cannot be sacrificed to strike Conservative news

BY SANDEEP GOPALAN, OPINION CONTRIBUTOR —

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Free speech cannot be sacrificed to strike fake news

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Is fake news a real problem or a phantom menace?

President Trump has railed against fake news, tweeting about it at least 140 times, conferring international cult status upon the term. Governments in countries as diverse as Ireland, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Malaysia, the Philippines and India have taken legal action purportedly in an attempt to combat fake news. The impetus for these actions escalated after revelations about Russian attempts to influence elections in the United States and France by orchestrating the spread of fake news through social media.

So are politicians in these countries really motivated by the urge to promote truth? Or are these laws aimed at censoring the media?

Sandberg's comments come just days before CEO Mark Zuckerberg is set to testify before the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

First, what is “fake news”? There is no commonly understood definition. The Malaysian Anti-Fake News Act 2018 defines fake news as “any news, information, data and reports, which is or are wholly or partly false, whether in the form of features, visuals or audio recordings or in any other form capable of suggesting words or ideas.” In other words, the definition focuses purely on the accuracy of information without any concern for the intention of the news producer.

