

Should Social Media Platforms Do More to Prohibit Harmful Speech?

Yes

*Here are some of the reasons people might argue that social media companies **should** do more to prohibit harmful speech.*

Ethics

While the ultimate goal of most social media companies is to turn a profit, they have an ethical obligation to act responsibly and account for the potential impact of the content that appears on their site. They should want to ensure that their platforms are not used to spread hate speech, misinformation, or other forms of harmful content.

Fostering safe communities

Many people spend as much (or more) time socializing online as they do offline and find value in building community on social media. Keeping social media platforms free of hurtful or harmful speech can help ensure that they remain a space where users can feel safe and comfortable.

Preventing government regulation

Media companies often choose to impose restrictions on themselves to avoid public scrutiny and possible government intervention. Recently, social media companies have been blamed for things like increasing social polarization, spreading disinformation, and encouraging self-harm. By imposing more limitations on content, companies try to demonstrate that they can deal with these issues on their own and don't need the government to intervene or regulate them.

Reputation

Social media platforms need to attract a large number of users, investors, and advertisers in order to make money, so they want to appear as trustworthy places that people can use safely and securely. By limiting the content that appears on their platforms and demonstrating their commitment to protecting users, companies can develop a positive reputation that could lead to increased business success.

Speed of spread

Because content on social media spreads so quickly and can reach so many people, it is necessary to place more restrictions on online speech than we do on offline speech. These restrictions can help slow the spread of content that can potentially cause serious harm (e.g. medical disinformation) when people are exposed to it on a large scale.

Read More

- [Social media platforms need to do more to censor hate speech](#) | The Queen's Journal
- [Watch: Facebook calls for increased content regulation in Canada](#) | Global News
- [Social Media Companies Should Self-Regulate. Now](#) | Harvard Business Review