Don’t Weep for Parler as Amazon, Apple and Google Pull the Plug



Parler has been completely isolated. The social media platform, which bills itself as a right-wing alternative to Facebook and Twitter, has been dropped by both Google and Apple’s app marketplaces as well as its online host, Amazon Web Services.

Without the mobile ecosystem’s core distribution channels, capitalizing off a flow of new users from mainstream platforms that have banned President Donald Trump will be much harder—but not impossible.

Amazon, Apple and Google each ruled that Parler, by failing to properly moderate user-generated content on its platform, violated its terms of service and terminated their respective relationships. Parler was removed from the app stores this weekend, and went fully offline at 3 a.m. Eastern time today, Jan. 11.

While Parler may find a new provider to host its traffic in

the coming days, it will have to do much more to appease Apple and Google, which said the app's owners must keep threats, violence and illegal activity off its platform.

Tech firms are not the only ones out of the Parler business

Parler isn't the first free speech-oriented app to be cut off by distributors. Gab, a similar site, was removed from the Google Play Store for violating its policies against hate speech in 2017, and Apple rejected its application to appear on its App Store. It was also dropped by web host GoDaddy in 2018 after the company learned the perpetrator of the Pittsburgh synagogue massacre regularly posted on the site. Microsoft Azure, PayPal, Stripe and Medium all severed business ties to Gab at one point or another. But despite this treatment—what it fashioned as censorship—Gab lives on.

In the wake of Wednesday's deadly insurrection on the Capitol, in which pro-Trump rioters stormed Congress and murdered a police officer in an attempt to disrupt the presidential certification process, Parler was seen as a primary organizing ground for the raid. Apple pointed out that "threats of violence and illegal activity" were routinely allowed on the app.

The tech giants weren't the only ones to drop Parler. "Every vendor, from text message services to email providers to our lawyers, all ditched us too, on the same day," Parler CEO John Matze told Fox News on Sunday. That's right—even their lawyers left them.

What should've been Parler's big moment

The irony of the entire ordeal is that Parler should be enjoying a big week. With Twitter banning Trump on Friday evening and purging hundreds of conspiratorial, far-right accounts in the days since the insurrection—and Facebook, Snapchat and Twitch all suspending Trump's accounts until

after he leaves office on Jan. 20—Parler was already attracting users who saw these moves as overreach by all-powerful tech giants. It rose to No. 1 in Apple's App Store on Saturday.

Gab was also thriving last weekend, profiting from Parler's erasure. "So imagine 10% of the United States all visited your website over the course of three days," Gab's official account tweeted Sunday night. "That's what we are dealing with right now. Be patient, we made big progress today."

How much this isolation will hurt Parler is unclear. The platform does not yet carry ads, but it's been temporarily halted at a time of major growth, and its future discoverability has been stifled since it cannot appear on major app marketplaces. Even users who have downloaded the mobile app will not be able to update it once the service returns because of its app store ban.

The shift toward moderation

Continue Reading

Pages: 1 2

Recommended articles
https://www.adweek.com/media/dont-weep-for-parler-amazon-apple-google-pull-plug/