Facebook Releases Coordinated Inauthentic Behavior Report for September 2020

Facebook released its Coordinated Inauthentic Behavior Report for September 2020, along with some bonus coverage of activity in the first few days of October.

Head of security policy Nathaniel Gleicher provided some color in a Newsroom post, writing, “Two of the networks we’re sharing today engaged primarily in commenting on content—relying on real people, not automation—to create the perception of widespread support of their narratives by leaving comments on posts by media entities and public figures. Other campaigns—like the ones from Russia (that we removed in late September)—focused on tricking unwitting freelance journalists into writing on behalf of these operations.”

He added. “Deceptive campaigns like these raise a particularly complex challenge by blurring the line between healthy public debate and manipulation. Our teams will continue to find, remove and expose these coordinated manipulation campaigns, but we know that these threats extend beyond our platform, and no single organization can tackle them alone. That’s why it’s critical that we, as a society, have a broader discussion about what is acceptable political advocacy and take steps to deter people from crossing the line.”

In early October, Facebook removed 200 accounts, 55 pages and 76 Instagram accounts that originated in the U.S. and focused on domestic audiences, as well as Botswana and Kenya.

Fake accounts were used to comment on other people’s content, with people posing as individuals on both sides of the

political spectrum in the U.S.

Gleicher wrote, “We began our investigation after public reporting about some elements of this activity by The Washington Post. Although the people behind this network attempted to conceal their identities and coordination, our investigation linked this activity to Rally Forge, a U.S. marketing firm working on behalf of Turning Point USA and Inclusive Conservation Group. Rally Forge is now banned from Facebook. We are continuing to investigate all linked networks, and we will take action as appropriate if we determine that they are engaged in deceptive behavior.”

About 373,000 accounts followed one or more of the pages, and some 22,000 people followed at least one of the Instagram accounts. This network spent around $973,000 on ads on the two platforms, paid for in dollars.

Examples of content from the removed pages and accounts follow:

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Another network removed early this month consisted of 17 pages, 50 accounts and six Instagram accounts engaged in domestic-focused activity from the country where they originated, Myanmar.

The individuals behind this network posted primarily in Burmese about local news and current events, and Facebook's investigation found links to members of the Myanmar military.

Some 538,000 accounts followed at least one of the pages, while around 800 people followed one or more of the Instagram accounts. About $1,850 was spent on Facebook ads, paid for in dollars.

Examples of content from the removed pages and accounts follow:

Page Name: Peopleâ€™s Voice Caption: Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is so smartâ€¦.1) She grasped love from people by blaming illegal Bangali problem originated from Military government and U Thien Sein government and by participating in 2015 general elections without a single Muslim candidate. But after the election, she appointed Muslim lawyer U Ko Ni as chairman of Constitutional amendment Committee â€“ an important position â€“ under the pretext of constitution amendment. (Yes! Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is so smartâ€¦.) 2) She grasped love from people by proclaming to upgrade the outdated education system while blaming the failure of the system at the time of U Thien Sein government. But rumors came out that Daw Su has improved education system by allowing matriculation passing rate to 50 percent with â€˜Moderation Systemâ€™. (Yes! Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is so smartâ€¦.) â€¦.Facebook

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