Roku pulls InfoWars channel citing complaints from ‘concerned parties’

After an intense social media backlash, Roku has backtracked on its decision to allow the InfoWars channel on its service. In a tweet announcing the move, the streaming platform said that it had taken the decision after hearing from “concerned parties,” and that deletion of the channel should be completed shortly.

After the channel’s presence on the platform came to light, Roku initially sought to justify its decision by saying that it did not “curate or censor based on viewpoint.” While it said that it had policies to prevent content that is “unlawful, incited illegal activities, or violates third-party rights,” it said that InfoWars was not in violation of those policies.

> *After the InfoWars channel became available, we heard from concerned parties and have determined that the channel should be removed from our platform. Deletion from the channel store and platform has begun and will be completed shortly.*
>
> *— Roku (@Roku) January 16, 2019*

In its statement announcing the decision to remove the channel, Roku did not say that InfoWars had now broken any of its rules, as most of the other platforms that have removed the channel have done. It did not clarify whether the “concerned parties” were users, or advertisers who didn’t want their brands displayed next to the InfoWars channel.

InfoWars and its host Alex Jones have now been removed from most major online platforms including Apple’s App Store, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter who each claimed that the channel violated various policies around offensive content. The channel has come under sustained criticism for promoting a number of conspiracy theories including Pizzagate and the idea that the Sandy Hook massacre was faked using paid, “crisis actors.” The families of the victims of the massacre are currently suing the channel for defamation.

https://www.theverge.com/2019/1/16/18184968/roku-bans-infowars-social-media-backlash-concerned-parties