Twitter bans ‘misleading’ ads about climate change

Twitter levied a new ban today on “misleading” advertisements “that contradict the scientific consensus on climate change.”

“We believe that climate denialism shouldn’t be monetized on Twitter, and that misrepresentative ads shouldn’t detract from important conversations about the climate crisis,” the company said in a blog post today.

“Misrepresentative ads shouldn’t detract from important conversations about the climate crisis”
Its decisions about what’s legit content in regard to climate change will be guided by “authoritative sources,” it says, including the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The IPCC has published a couple of landmark reports on the crisis over the past few months that break down what needs to be done to adapt to the changes that are already unfolding as well as how to avert even more severe consequences in the future, like intensifying weather disasters and ferocious wildfire seasons.

Twitter also said that it will soon share more details about how it plans to “add reliable, authoritative context” about climate change on its platform. Those conversations have gotten much louder over the past year, according to the company. Talk about “sustainability” on the platform has grown by over 150 percent since 2021, Twitter says. Discussions on “decarbonization,” aka getting rid of greenhouse gas emissions that come from burning fossil fuels, are also up 50 percent. Other environmental conversations are heating up, too. Chatter about reducing waste grew by more than 100 percent over the same time period.

Twitter’s new announcement is also part of a broader social media saga to stop lies about climate change. Other companies have made similar commitments, with varying success.

Google made a commitment in October 2021 to stop allowing ads that feature climate denial or that monetize climate misinformation. Even so, a report published soon after the new policy went into effect found that Google was still placing ads on climate-denying content. Google told *The Verge* at the time that it reviewed the content and decided to take “appropriate enforcement actions.” Facebook has also come under fire for failing to label climate misinformation despite its policy on flagging such content. Another report about the platform published last November also found a sharp rise in interactions with posts from Facebook pages and groups focused on spreading climate misinformation.

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