

A Global Guide to State-Sponsored Trolling | Bloomberg

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Bloomberg investigative reporters join several researchers this week in publishing recent findings on the influence of governments and political parties in social media manipulation worldwide.

Only a few years after Twitter and Facebook were celebrated as the spark for democratic movements worldwide, states and their proxies are hatching new forms of digitally enabled suppression that were unthinkable before the age of the social media giants, according to evidence collected from computer sleuths, researchers and documents across more than a dozen countries.

Combining virtual hate mobs, surveillance, misinformation, anonymous threats, and the invasion of victims' privacy, states and political parties around the globe have created an increasingly aggressive online playbook that is difficult for the platforms to detect or counter.

[...]

Social media companies such as Facebook and Twitter are struggling to counter the significant resources and ingenuity that national governments and others are investing to manipulate their platforms. Millions of fake accounts game the companies' algorithms, manipulating what users see, while technologies such as location spoofing can make centrally controlled accounts appear to be posts by armies of real people.

Twitter reportedly [suspended](#) 70 million fake and malicious accounts in May and June. The company says it has taken preventive measures to address trolling and that any form of malicious automation is a violation of Twitter rules. Facebook announced this week that it will begin removing misinformation that serves to incite violence, and a spokesman said it has invested in more effective ways to fight fake accounts. "We enforce these policies whether the responsible party is

acting individually, as part of a company, or acting on behalf of a government,” a Facebook spokesman said.

Source: [A Global Guide to State-Sponsored Trolling Bloomberg](#)