

Combating Disinformation Wanes at Social Media Giants | The New York Times

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SAN FRANCISCO — YouTube, like other social media platforms, spent years expanding its efforts to tackle misinformation after the 2016 election. It hired policy experts and content moderators and invested in more technology to limit the reach of false narratives. Not anymore.

Last month, the company, owned by Google, quietly reduced its small team of policy experts in charge of handling misinformation, according to three people with knowledge of the decision. The cuts, part of the reduction of 12,000 employees by Google's parent company, Alphabet, left only one person in charge of misinformation policy worldwide, one of the people said.

The cuts reflect a trend across the industry that threatens to undo many of the safeguards that social media platforms put in place in recent years to ban or tamp down on disinformation — like false claims about the Covid-19 pandemic, the Russian war in Ukraine or the integrity of elections around the world. Twitter, under its new owner, Elon Musk, has [slashed its staff](#), while Meta, which owns Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp, has [shifted its focus and resources](#) to the immersive world of the metaverse.

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