

Elon Musk's plans for Twitter could make its misinformation problems worse | The Conversation

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Elon Musk, the world's richest person, acquired Twitter in a US\$44 billion deal on April 25, 2022, 11 days after announcing his bid for the company. Twitter announced that the public company will become privately held after the acquisition is complete.

In a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission for his initial bid for the company, Musk stated, "I invested in Twitter as I believe in its potential to be the platform for free speech around the globe, and I believe free speech is a societal imperative for a functioning democracy."

As a researcher of social media platforms, I find that Musk's ownership of Twitter and his stated reasons for buying the company raise important issues. Those issues stem from the nature of the social media platform and what sets it apart from others.

What makes Twitter unique

Twitter occupies a unique niche. Its short chunks of text and threading foster real-time conversations among thousands of people, which makes it popular with celebrities, media personalities and politicians alike.

[...]

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