

Facebook paid Republican strategy firm to malign TikTok | The Washington Post

By Taylor Lorenz and Drew Harwell

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Facebook parent company Meta is paying one of the biggest Republican consulting firms in the country to orchestrate a nationwide campaign seeking to turn the public against TikTok.

The campaign includes placing op-eds and letters to the editor in major regional news outlets, promoting dubious stories about alleged TikTok trends that actually originated on Facebook, and pushing to draw political reporters and local politicians into helping take down its biggest competitor. These bare-knuckle tactics, long commonplace in the world of politics, have become increasingly noticeable within a tech industry where companies vie for cultural relevance and come at a time when Facebook is under pressure to win back young users.

Employees with the firm, Targeted Victory, worked to undermine TikTok through a nationwide media and lobbying campaign portraying the fast-growing app, owned by the Beijing-based company ByteDance, as a danger to American children and society, according to internal emails shared with The Washington Post.

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