

Fake 'Likes' Remain Just a Few Dollars Away, Researchers Say | The New York Times

By Davey Alba

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"A very #MerryChristmas to all," [Margrethe Vestager, Europe's top antitrust enforcer](#), wrote on Facebook last December. Her post attracted 144 "likes."

A few months later, as an experiment, researchers paid a company a few dollars to attract attention to her well wishes. In 30 minutes, the post had 100 more likes. The researchers had similar results on a holiday post on Ms. Vestager's Instagram account and on a Christmas tweet from Vera Jourova, the European Union's justice commissioner.

Companies like Facebook and Twitter are poorly policing automated bots and other methods for manipulating social media platforms, according to a [report released on Friday](#) by researchers from the NATO Strategic Communications Center of Excellence. With a small amount of money, the researchers found, virtually anyone can hire a company to get more likes, comments and clicks.

[...]

Source: [Fake 'Likes' Remain Just a Few Dollars Away, Researchers Say | The New York Times](#)