

Twitter and Facebook labels on Trump's posts won't save democracy | The Washington Post

By Geoffrey A. Fowler

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It was the equivalent of Big Tech slapping the “PARENTAL ADVISORY” labels from album covers on the president of the United States.

President Trump tweeted that America's election was being stolen, and Twitter put labels over his lies over a dozen times and counting. “This tweet is disputed and might be misleading,” it warned.

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Facebook joined in, flagging Trump posts with the line: “Ballot counting will continue for days or weeks.”

Were the labels a win for democracy? They were a win for Twitter and Facebook public relations, which got to look just responsive enough to avoid being blamed for botching another election.

But as tech products, the labels were too little, too late. There's scant evidence that labels make a lick of difference to viewers. Moreover, they didn't stop the flow of toxic election content on social media. That's because social media's business model is toxic content.

[...]

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