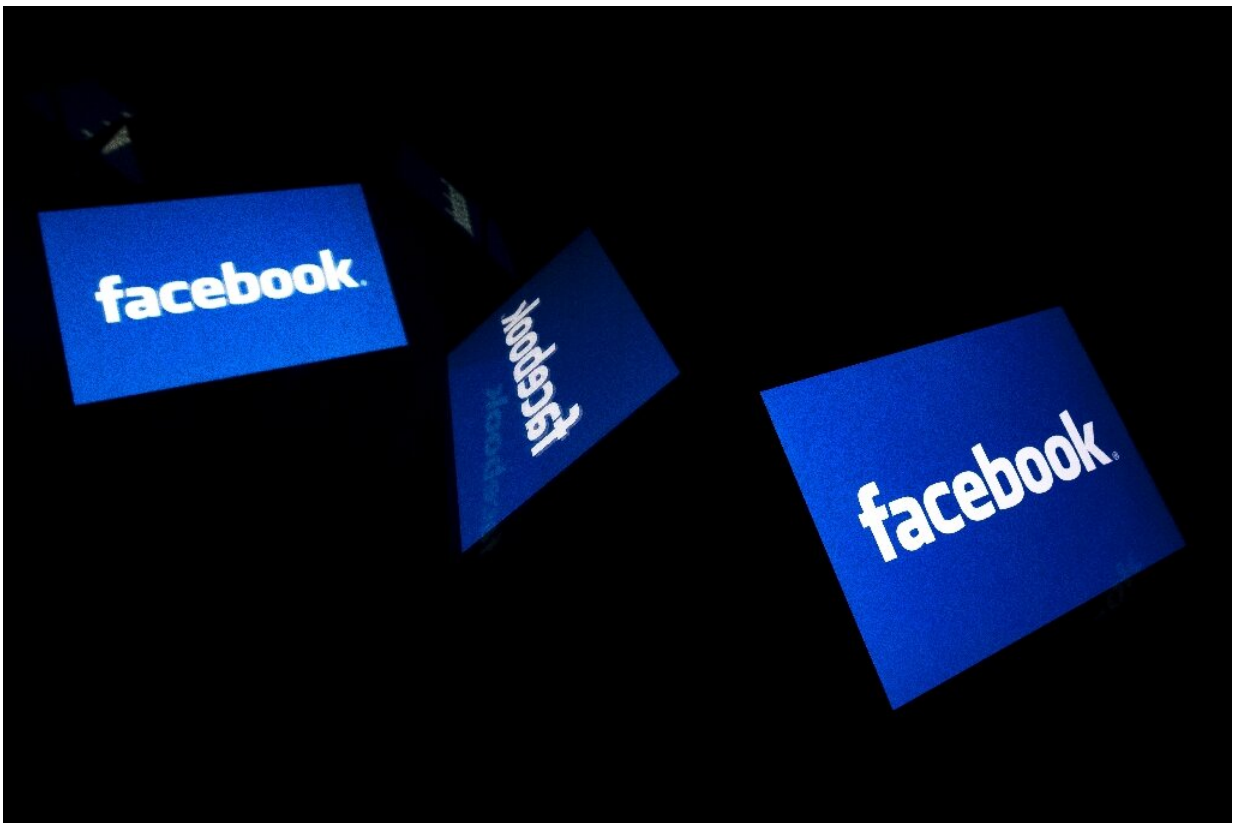


Facebook letting advertisers sow climate denialism: analysis

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Facebook is allowing climate misinformation ads to proliferate despite claiming it is committed to rooting out the problem, a new report by a

think tank said Thursday.

InfluenceMap used the platform's own data to identify 51 ads denying the link between [human activity](#) and climate change that were viewed a total of eight million times over the first half of 2020.

This was despite the fact that Facebook bans false ads, and stated as recently as September that it is "committed to tackling climate change through our global operations."

Out of the 51 ads identified, only one was removed by the social media giant while the rest were allowed to run for the entirety of their scheduled campaign.

Two ran until the end of September.

Reacting to the new report, US Senator Elizabeth Warren told the think tank: "InfluenceMap's devastating report reinforces and reveals how Facebook lets climate deniers spread dangerous junk to millions of people.

"We have repeatedly asked Facebook to close the loopholes that allow misinformation to run rampant on its platform, but its leadership would rather make a quick buck while our planet burns, sea levels rise, and communities – disproportionately Black and Brown – suffer."

Warren was among four Senators from the Democratic party who wrote to the platform in July asking that it "close the loopholes that let climate disinformation spread on their platforms."

The report found that four well known conservative US groups were behind the bulk of the advertising, and received funding from donor-advised trusts that allow them to conceal the source of the income.

A total of nine advertisers identified in the report collectively spent \$42,000 for the 51 ads reaching eight million views.

The disinformation was most likely to be seen by men over 55 in rural US states, with the highest views in Texas and Wyoming.

The most common strategy was to attack the credibility of climate science, for example by claiming there isn't widespread consensus on the issue.

The second most common strategy involved casting doubt that [greenhouse gases](#) released by burning fossil fuels was the cause of [climate change](#).

Ads that targeted people over 55 tended to target the credibility of the science, while those aimed at younger audiences contested the future impacts of global warming.

Facebook launched a Climate Science Information Center last month to tackle [climate](#) misinformation. But it did not say whether this new initiative would link the misleading ads to information by trusted sources, like the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

The study was conducted using publicly available data from Facebook's Ad Library.

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