

CNN blocks access to its Facebook page in Australia

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On Thursday, Australian users trying to navigate to CNN's Facebook page received a message that the content was restricted.

Australia's High Court upheld a ruling earlier this month that held media

companies responsible for user comments on a story, opening them to potential prosecution under the country's heavy defamation laws.

The US-based news operation said on Wednesday it had asked Facebook to help publishers disable the comments on their platform in Australia but the tech giant "chose not to do so".

"We are disappointed that Facebook, once again, has failed to ensure its platform is a place for credible journalism and productive dialogue around [current events](#) among its users," a CNN spokesperson said in a statement on the outlet's website.

Facebook announced in March that publishers would be able to turn off comments for specific posts, but has not introduced the page-wide feature sought by CNN.

In a statement, a Facebook spokesperson said: "While it's not our place to provide legal guidance to CNN, we have provided them with the latest information on tools we make available to help publishers manage comments."

The original case was brought by Dylan Voller, an Indigenous former youth detainee who claimed publishers of the Sydney Morning Herald, The Australian, and Sky News were responsible for defamatory user comments posted under stories about him on their public Facebook pages.

The media outlets had argued they were not responsible for the comments' publication but were ultimately unsuccessful in appealing the decision to Australia's top court.

The [court](#) said [media companies](#) could screen or block defamatory comments if they wanted.

Australia's defamation laws are notoriously complex and among the strictest in the world.

The Facebook spokesperson said the company supported mooted legislative reforms and looked forward to "greater clarity and certainty in this area".

Despite walking away from Facebook in Australia, CNN has said it will keep publishing on its own platforms Down Under.

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