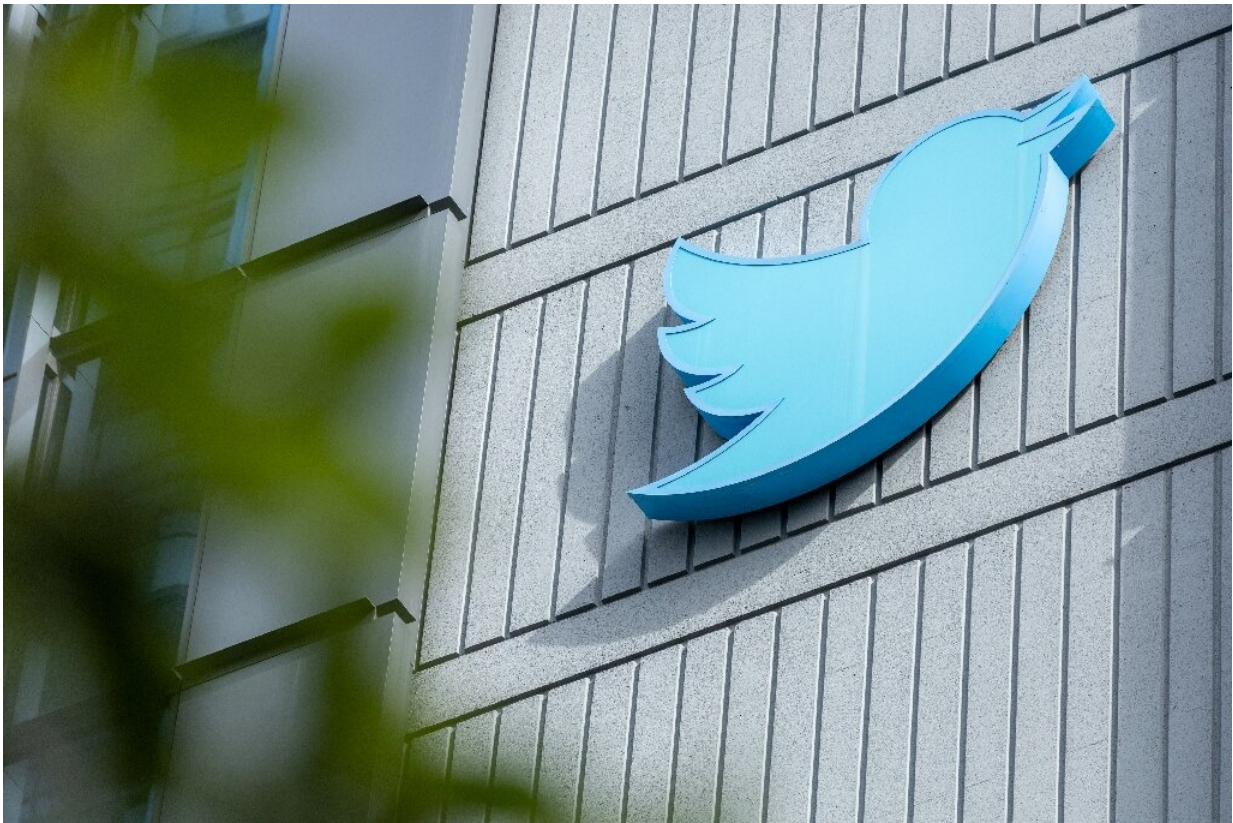


Twitter mass layoffs begin as Musk launches overhaul

November 4 2022, by Julie JAMMOT



Twitter employees have been bracing for bad news since Elon Musk completed his acquisition and quickly set about dissolving its board and firing top managers.

Thousands of Twitter employees were ordered to stay home Friday to await a bracing round of layoffs that could see half of the payroll axed as

new owner Elon Musk launches his major overhaul of the company.

A company-wide email seen by AFP said Twitter employees would receive word on their future at the company via email at the start of business Friday, California time.

The cull is part of Musk's push to find ways to pay for the mammoth \$44 billion deal for which he took on billions of dollars in debt and sold \$15.5 billion worth of Tesla shares, his electric car company.

Musk, the Tesla and SpaceX chief, has been scrambling to find new ways for Twitter to make money after his mammoth buyout, including an idea to charge users \$8 a month for verified accounts.

The moves would help overcome the potential loss of advertisers, Twitter's main source of revenue, with many of the world's top brands putting their ad buys on hold, spooked by Musk's well-known disdain for content moderation.

The mercurial tycoon on Friday complained on Twitter of a "massive drop in revenue" that he blamed on "activist groups" that were pressuring advertisers.

"We did everything we could to appease the activists. Extremely messed up! They're trying to destroy [free speech](#) in America," he added.

This appeared to refer to Musk's recent meeting with civil rights groups in which he heard concerns that Twitter would open the floodgates to hate speech.

In an effort to soothe nerves, Musk had vowed that Twitter will not become a "free-for-all hellscape", but his pledge was quickly followed by a tweet relaying a [conspiracy theory](#) about an assault on the husband

of the US House Speaker.

Though extremely influential with opinion-makers and celebrities, the California company has long struggled to generate profit and has failed to keep pace with Facebook, Instagram and TikTok in gaining new users.

"In an effort to place Twitter on a healthy path, we will go through the difficult process of reducing our global workforce," the company email said.

The email did not give a number but the Washington Post and New York Times reported that about half of Twitter's 7,500 employees—mostly based in San Francisco—will be let go.

'Return home'

The company said that in order to "ensure the safety" of employees and [sensitive data](#), the main offices would remain closed and all badge access suspended.

"Those on the way to the office should turn around and return home," the email added.

It also said that those still employed at the company would find out on their company email, while those shown the door would get notice on their personal email.

Some workers had already begun to learn their fates and took to Twitter to say goodbye to colleagues.

"Spoiler Alert: I do not have a job," tweeted ex-employee Blake Herzinger as others reported losing access to company servers and [email](#) accounts.

Twitter employees have been bracing for this kind of bad news since Musk completed his acquisition late last week and quickly set about dissolving its board and firing its [chief executive](#) and top managers.

Late on Thursday, a group of five Twitter employees who had already been fired filed a class action complaint against the [company](#) on the grounds that they had not been given the required 60-day notice period as required by law.

The lawsuit references the US Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act, which provides workers a right to advance notice in cases of mass layoffs or plant closings.

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