

# X gives free blue check to big follower accounts

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Blue ticks return, for some -- Elon Musk's blue tick next to his name on a smartphone in 2023.

Users with big followings will receive a free subscription to X, formerly Twitter—and the platform's famous blue check, the company said in

another policy U-turn.

Before Musk, the blue check mark was used as a verification system for major accounts including celebrities, institutions and journalists.

But Musk saw the system as unfair to regular users and overhauled the blue checks so that they went only to paying subscribers, which meant thousands of holders were stripped of the feature.

Late Wednesday, some users were surprised and even angry to find the blue tick reinstated.

A message from the platform explained that they were given free subscriptions because they were an "influential member" of X.

The site added that it "reserves the right to cancel the complimentary subscription in its sole discretion."

Musk said last week that "going forward, all X accounts with over 2,500 verified subscriber followers will get Premium features for free and accounts with over 5,000 will get Premium+ for free."

Premium or Premium+ perks include reduced ads and higher placement in the platform's feeds, as well as access to Grok, X's AI chatbot.

Some users who received the blue check saw it as a bid by Musk to revitalize the struggling platform.

"Translation: Pay \$8? Kidding. Help me. But don't say anything too free speechy about me or my Garbage Tower of Babel," actor Jeffrey Wright, who received an unsolicited check, said in a post on X.

Since Musk bought Twitter for \$44 billion in 2022, the platform's

advertising business has collapsed as marketers soured on his leadership and the mass firings at the company that gutted content moderation.

X on Tuesday named company veteran Kylie McRoberts as the new head of safety in an effort to shore up income from advertising, still the site's main source of revenue.

According to most industry-accepted metrics, X has lost users since Musk took ownership, but the company says activity on the site has grown.

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