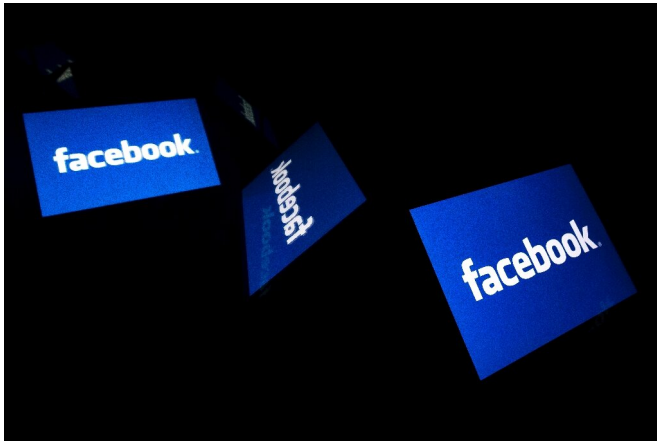


Facebook to stop news headline changes from advertisers

16 September 2019



Facebook says advertisers will be blocked from altering headlines of shared news stories amid concerns about manipulation

Facebook said Monday it is working to stop advertisers from changing headlines in links to news stories after concerns raised by a British political party's altering of one such link.

The leading social network confirmed the internal effort in the face of concerns over a BBC [headline](#) altered in an ad to evidently change the tone of an article about British government spending on education.

"We are working to put safeguards in place by the end of the year to ensure publishers have control over the way their headlines appear in advertisements," Facebook said in response to an AFP inquiry.

The [new policy](#) came over complaints that advertisers might be able to deceptively modify the content in [news stories](#) shared on the huge social network.

A recent Conservative Party Facebook ad "seems

to have altered the headline of a BBC News article on an education spending announcement to make the government appear more generous than it is being," British fact-checking charity organization Full Fact said in an online post.

The fact-check group said the altered headline was "misleading" by making the funding "seem comparatively much larger than it really is."

Facebook and other internet firms have been under pressure to prevent their online platforms from being used to for deception or social manipulation, particularly regarding political issues.

Ads that appear crafted to deceive are typically removed from Facebook, but remain for as long as seven years in the social network's ad library.

The move comes with Facebook acting on several fronts to curb efforts to manipulate content and opinion on political issues.

Stealth campaigns linked to Russia that used online social networks and other platforms were tailored to sway voters ahead of the 2016 presidential election that put Donald Trump in the White House.

The social network last month tightened rules for political ad spending in US elections, notably by requiring more information about who is paying for campaign messages.

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