



SOCIAL MEDIA: Arbiter of Truth?

CONTEXT

National Research Group (NRG), one of the world's most respected research and polling companies, providing data and insights to a wide range of Fortune 500 companies, conducted the first major poll on how attitudes are changing on the key issue of social media censorship, in the wake of Trump's executive order targeting social media companies. The poll was fielded May 29th - 30th 2020, among a nationally representative sample of 1006 Americans aged 18+.

3 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

- 1

When it comes to the 2020 elections, the majority of Americans (3 in 4) are concerned about the threat of misinformation on social media.
- 2

Nearly 2 in 3 Americans believe social media companies are justified in fact checking posts of politicians on their sites and informing users.
- 3

More than half of Americans believe that social media is biased but are divided on whether Twitter's actions constitute censorship.

Impact on the Elections 2020

CONCERNS ABOUT MISINFORMATION OUTWEIGH CONCERNS ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA CENSORSHIP

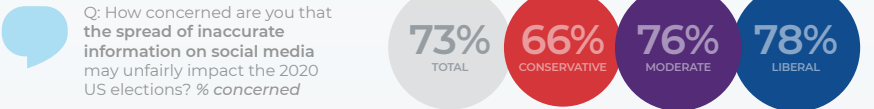
BIGGEST THREAT: INACCURATE INFO

The perceived threat to society of false statements by politicians via social media outweighs the threat of censorship, by nearly twofold.

Q: Which of the following do you view as a greater threat to our society?



Still, ideological lines hold true. A majority of **Conservatives (58%)** say the risk of censorship is the bigger threat, while a larger majority of **Liberals (80%)** say the threat of politicians making potentially false statements on social media is greater.



FACT CHECKING CONCERNS HALF OF AMERICANS



Conservatives perceive both issues—inaccurate information spread on social media, and fact checking—to be equally threatening to the election.

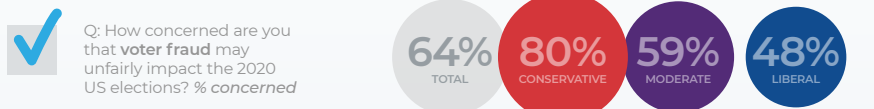
66% are concerned about the impact of inaccurate information spread on social media

67% are concerned about fact checking / the removal of potentially inaccurate information by social media companies.



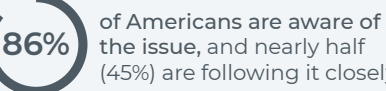
VOTER FRAUD IS A MAINSTREAM CONCERN

Voter fraud, the topic of the president's tweets that were flagged by Twitter, is a widespread concern leading into the 2020 elections among 64% of Americans, led by **80% Conservatives**.



Trump vs. Twitter

THE DEBATE LEANS IN TWITTER'S FAVOR



WHO SUPPORTS FACT CHECKING LABELS

The majority of Americans (54%) support Twitter's decision to add fact checking labels to two of President Trump's tweets suggesting that mail-in election ballots will be substantially fraudulent.



WHO SUPPORTS TWITTER

Those who believe social media companies are unbiased toward Liberals or Conservatives are likely to support Twitter's position (69%).

WHO OPPOSES TWITTER

26% say they oppose Twitter's decision, with opposition highest among Conservatives (44%).

WHO SUPPORTS THE EXECUTIVE ORDER

1 in 3 supports President Trump's decision to sign an executive order attempting to curtail the power of large social media companies.

Support is highest among Conservatives (62%), though nearly 1 in 4 Conservatives (23%) say they oppose the executive order.



WHO OPPOSES THE EXECUTIVE ORDER

Nearly half of Americans (48%) say they oppose the president's decision to issue an executive order, with opposition highest among Liberals (73%).

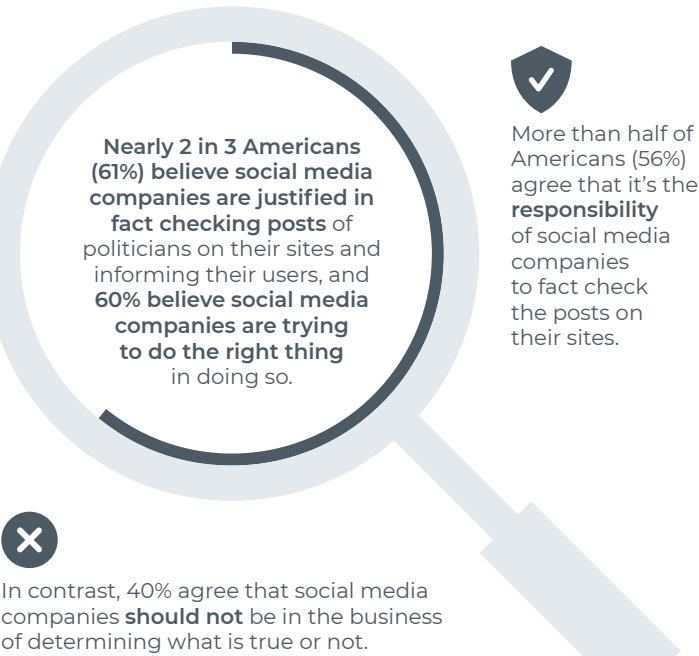


Social Networks & Information

THE IDEOLOGICAL DIVIDE ON SOCIAL MEDIA BIAS AND ISSUES OF CENSORSHIP

IN THE RIGHT

The majority of Americans believe social media companies have good intentions and are justified to act.



Q: How much do you agree or disagree with the following?

Social media companies are justified in fact checking posts of politicians on their sites and informing their users



Social media companies are trying to do the right thing by labeling potentially inaccurate information



It's the responsibility of social media companies to fact check the posts on their sites



IN THE WRONG

More than half (54%) of Americans believe social media companies are biased, but are divided on whether Twitter's actions constitute censorship.



59% of Conservatives believe that social media companies are biased in favor of Liberals, and yet 44% of Conservatives still agree that social media companies are justified in fact checking posts of politicians, and that it's the responsibility of social media companies to fact check posts on their sites.

62% of Liberals feel social media companies are not biased. About 1 in 4 Liberals (24%) feel they are biased towards Liberals.

Overall, 41% of Americans agree that Twitter's actions in this case are a form of censorship, compared to 35% who disagree. Views are split along ideological lines:



Q: How much do you agree or disagree with the following?

Twitter's actions in this case are a form of censorship



Concerned that social media companies are overstepping their bounds in cases like this



Social media companies should not be in the business of determining what is true or not

