

Jun 13, 2023 - Technology

New Twitter CEO's ad quest faces one big hurdle — the owner's tweets



Ina Fried, author of [Axios Login](#)



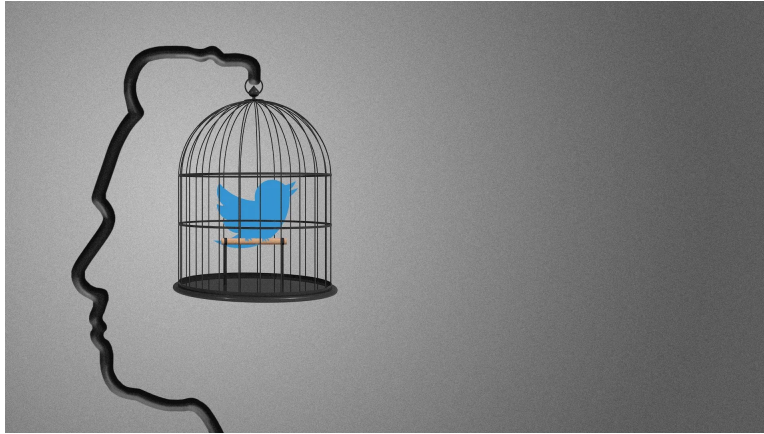


Illustration: Aïda Amer/Axios

[Twitter's new CEO Linda Yaccarino](#) wrote up some inspirational comments for her new staff in an e-mail on Monday, [exhorting them](#) to "reach across aisles, create new partnerships, celebrate new voices, and build something together that can change the world."

Yes, but: The man who hired her, the company's billionaire owner [Elon Musk](#), spent the weekend posting [sophomoric](#) messages that reeked at times of [misogyny](#) and [transphobia](#).

Why it matters: Yaccarino's job is to rescue Twitter's business, but Musk shows no interest in moderating behavior and positions that have helped drive many of the platform's advertisers away.

Details: In addition to several anti-trans tweets and replies, Musk also took pot shots

at Apple, one of the site's biggest advertisers.

- One [tweet](#) suggested that mushrooms could produce a much cheaper augmented reality than Apple's \$3,500 headset, while [another](#) praised augmented reality as amazing by showing a photo illustration of what looks like a weapon targeting screen replacing the head of a stereotypically buxom female sitting in front of a plate of waffles.

Between the lines: [Yaccarino](#), a former NBCUniversal advertising executive, has built her reputation creating environments that advertisers pay a premium for, while Musk is equally known for being unable to stop himself from tweeting, even when [ordered to](#) by federal regulators.

- “I’ll say what I want, and if the consequence of that is losing money, so be it.” He [told CNBC’s David Faber](#) last month.
- Musk has also [spread conspiracy theories](#) and [tweeted comments about George Soros](#) that many [saw as antisemitic](#). He also [repeatedly questioned](#) reports that the suspect in

last month's Allen, Texas was a white supremacist — discounting as "psy-ops" credible reports ([New York Times](#), [Bellingcat](#)) that the suspect had Nazi tattoos and wore a "right wing death squad" patch.

The big picture: It's not just Musk's tweets that are making it tough for Twitter to pitch itself as a platform to large mainstream advertisers. It's not uncommon now on Twitter for large brands to have their promoted posts appear alongside far-right content posted by personalities once banned from the site, per [Media Matters For America](#) .

- The report showed, for example, Amazon and Samsung ads being shown alongside posts from conspiracy theorist Laura Loomer, who had previously been [banned from Twitter](#) for her attacks on Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.). Musk reinstated her.
- Twitter has also changed some of its [policies around hate speech](#), particularly as it relates to transgender people, and seen an [increase in hate speech](#) overall, according to some outside researchers.

Meanwhile, Intuit, which has hosted a

Transgender summit for the past several years, was [called out](#) by LGBTQ rights advocate Alejandra Caraballo, who noted that the company's ad is being shown in close proximity to one of Musk's transphobic tweets.

The other side: While Twitter's advertising remains down substantially from a year ago, a number of large brands [remain as advertisers](#), including several large technology companies.

- Twitter has also remained a popular spot for media companies looking for direct response, such as newsletter sign-ups and subscriptions.

What to watch: Whether these advertisers will face increasing scrutiny from both customers and employees for continuing to support a platform and CEO whose values seem to contradict the companies'.

(Advertisers that take stands perceived as more progressive can also face [blowback from conservatives](#).)

What they're saying: Intuit told Axios that their advertising should not have appeared alongside Musk's tweet.

- "Diversity, equity, and inclusion are

foundational to our company and explicit in our values," the company told Axios. "We are strong allies and supporters of those who identify as transgender or nonbinary. We have advertising principles in support of company values and this ad should not have appeared where it did."

- Twitter did not respond to a request for comment, nor did representatives of Apple, Amazon and Samsung.

Go deeper: [Big tech still advertising on Twitter despite rise in hate speech](#)



Go deeper

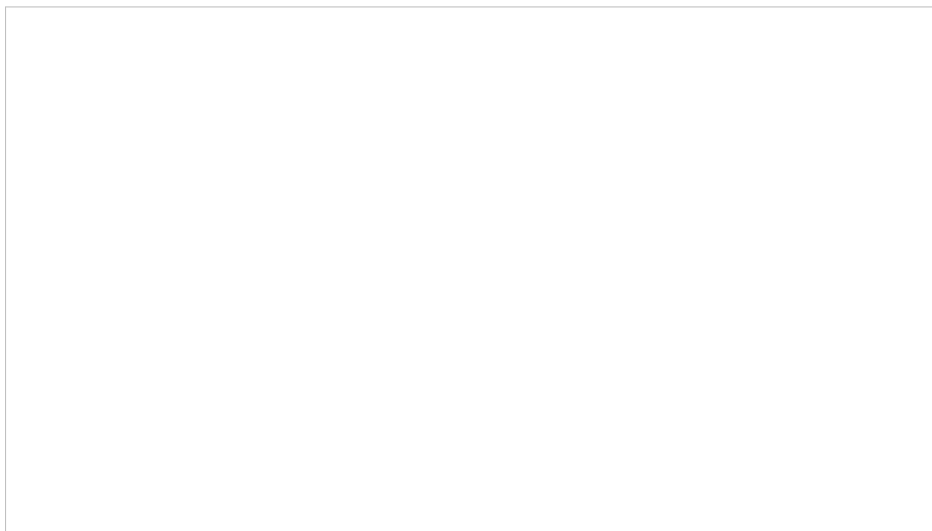


Jacob Knutson
32 mins ago - Politics & Policy

Pittsburgh synagogue
gunman found guilty in

• •• •• •••

worst antisemitic attack in U.S. history



A memorial for the victims of the mass shooting at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh in October 2018. Photo: Jeff Swensen/Getty Images

The gunman who killed 11 people and injured 6 others during a mass shooting at a [Pittsburgh synagogue in 2018](#) was found guilty of 63 criminal counts, including hate crimes resulting in death, by a Pennsylvania jury on Friday, [AP](#) reports.

The big picture: The shooting at the Tree of Life synagogue marked the deadliest attack on Jews in U.S. history, and Friday's verdict brings the harrowing case closer to a close.

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April Rubin
3 hours ago - Health

BMI metric has caused "historical harm," American Medical Association says

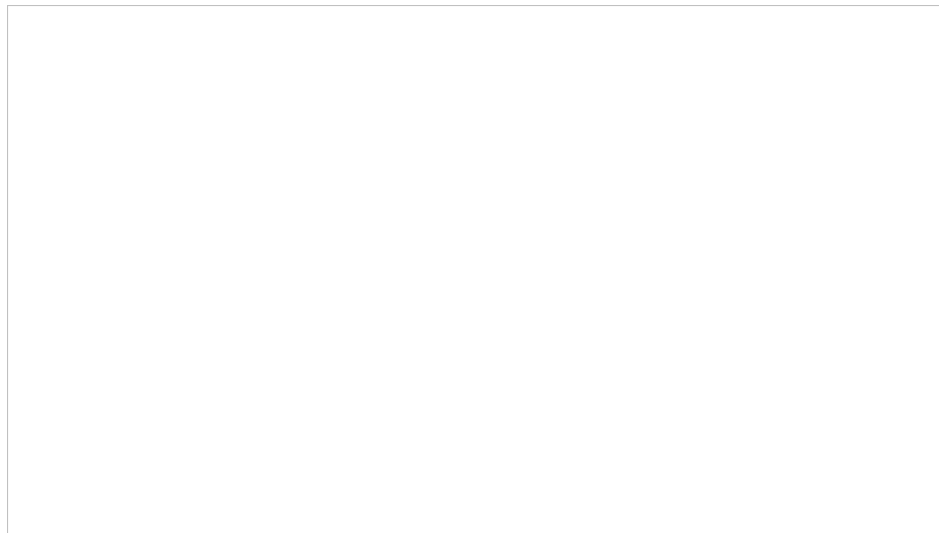


Illustration: Gabriella Turrisi/Axios

The body mass index (BMI) metric has caused "historical harm," including racist exclusion, according to a [new report](#) by the American Medical Association (AMA) Council on Science and Public Health.

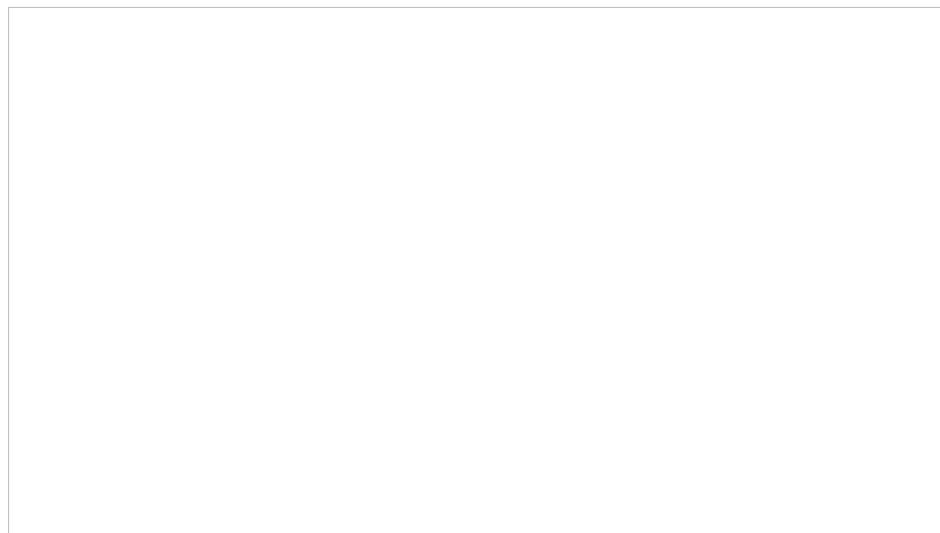
Why it matters: Doctors have long relied on BMI to [measure obesity](#), but it is an imperfect measurement that does not directly assess body fat, the nation's largest medical association said this week.

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Andrew Solender
4 hours ago - Politics & Policy

Trump ally plans renewed push to censure Adam Schiff



Rep. Anna Paulina Luna. Photo: Ricky Carioti/The Washington Post via Getty Images.

[Trump](#)-aligned Rep. [Anna Paulina Luna](#) (R-Fla.), fresh off a [failed effort to censure](#) former House Intelligence Committee Chair [Adam Schiff](#) (D-Calif.), is already planning another run at it.

Why it matters: Luna's effort is part of a [sprawling](#)

[GOP mobilization](#) to defend former President Trump after he was indicted for alleged [mishandling of classified documents](#).

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