

Big Brother Bird? Twitter Introduces ‘Birdwatch,’ ‘Community-Driven Approach’ to Verification

On Monday, Twitter launched a pilot program for Birdwatch, its new “community-driven approach” to combat misleading information on its platform. Birdwatch allows users to add notes to tweets they believe are false.

Today we’re introducing @Birdwatch, a community-driven approach to addressing misleading information. And we want your help. (1/3)

– Twitter Support (@TwitterSupport) January 25, 2021

Birdwatch in essence allows users to flag tweets they believe are inappropriate or misleading and add their own spin or commentary to those tweets.

Twitter users were quick to respond to the announcement with their input about the new feature, one pointing out the resemblance to dystopian novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and another noting that he was “proudly ineligible to work for Big Brother Bird.”

Twitters new BirdWatch program bears an eerie resemblance to George Orwells 1984.

– .Squawk. (@CaptainSquib) January 25, 2021

*I’m proudly ineligible to work for Big Brother Bird.
@birdwatch*

– Eric Sammons (@EricRSammons) January 25, 2021

Keith Coleman, vice president of product at Twitter, noted in the news release about Birdwatch that the social media giant is aware of its potential problems: "We know there are a number of challenges toward building a community-driven system like this, from making it resistant to manipulation attempts to ensuring it isn't dominated by a simple majority or biased based on its distribution of contributors," he wrote.

The new program continues the efforts of platforms such as Twitter and Facebook to control, and sometimes censor, information posted there. This follows Twitter's permanent suspension of former President Donald J. Trump's account and the exodus of some conservatives to other, less restrictive platforms such as MeWe and Parler, which itself has been suspended from the Amazon, Apple and Google platforms for allegedly violating terms of service. {eoa}