

# [***Meta Shuts Down Thousands Of Fake China-Based Facebook Accounts Aiming To Polarize U.S. Voters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:69S7-5DW1-JBCM-F0ND-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Length:** 554 words

**Byline:** James Farrell, Forbes Staff

**Highlight:** Meta said on Thursday that it found a network of nearly 4,800 fake Facebook accounts originating from China, potentially designed to polarize U.S. voters.

**Body**

**Topline**

Facebook parent company Meta said Thursday it shut down a network of 4,789 fake Facebook accounts originating from China that were apparently designed to polarize voters ahead of the 2024 election, revealing the latest example of attempted foreign interference in U.S. ***politics*** through social media.

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Attendees visit the Meta booth at the Game Developers Conference 2023 in San Francisco on March 22, 2023. (AP Photo/Jeff Chiu, File)

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**Key Facts**

The accounts were posing as authentic American-based accounts and made posts across multiple platforms, but Meta said in its latestAdversarial Threat Reportit shut down the network before it was able to gain engagement from authentic communities on our apps.

Rather than spread false information, the accounts on Facebook copied and pasted posts on X from politicians on both sides of the political aisle, including former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi( D-Calif.), Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-Fla.) and others.

Meta says it s unclear whether the goal was to build partisan tensions, build audiences among these politicians supporters, or to make the fake accounts sharing authentic content appear more genuine.

Meta also shut down two other smaller networks another Chinese-originated network of 13 fake accounts and seven groups that were targeting India and Tibet by posing as journalists and activists, and a Russian network of six Facebook accounts, one page and three Instagram accounts targeting English-speaking audiences around the world.

**Key Background**

Russia remains the biggest source of so-called coordinated inauthentic behavior campaigns on social media, Meta said in its report. The company claims Russian-based efforts over the past two years have focused almost entirely on influencing public opinion about the Russian war in Ukraine. Still, Thursday s announcement signals the growing influence of Chinese sources in online misinformation and polarization campaigns. It comes just months after Meta removed more than 7,500 inauthentic accounts originating from China, a network dubbed Spamouflage. Ben Nimmo, Meta s global threat intelligence lead, at the time called that campaign the biggest single takedown of a single network we have ever conducted. But the company says that both Spamouflage and this latest campaign have failed to gain any real traction among authentic Facebook users.

**Crucial Quote**

These networks still struggle to build audiences, but they re a warning, Nimmo told the Associated Press Thursday. Foreign threat actors are attempting to reach people across the internet ahead of next year s elections, and we need to remain alert.

**Tangent**

Russia first emerged as a major purveyor of online misinformation through social media in 2016, when the Russian-based Internet Research Agency launched a propaganda campaign involving networks of fake social media accounts designed to influence the U.S. presidential elections that year. The U.S. in 2018 indicted 13 Russian nationals over the campaign as part of Special Counsel Robert Mueller s investigation. The so-called troll farm wasshut down this yearafter its alleged founder, Yevgeny Prigozhin, launched a coup against Vladimir Putin s government with his mercenary Wagner Group.

**Further Reading**

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