

## **A Pursuit of Meaning**

Elon Musk's rebranding of Twitter to X is a move that will take some getting used to, but I like it. The changes are consistent with his initial reasons for buying the company—to pursue meaning rather than profit and to protect free speech online. To discard the brand recognition associated with Twitter was a risky business move, but so was the purchase of Twitter in the first place.

Instagram's endeavor to compete with X using Threads seems to be an attempt to capitalize on the newly fragmented identity of X. Although well timed, Threads came across as blatantly imitative, which contributed to its short-lived popularity. X will be successful. The company continues to stumble uphill as the app's engineers and managers test new forms of media sharing and as creators are able to turn a profit from their time on the app. X will continue to see record-high usage for these reasons and because of all the free attention it has garnered from the media. Any potential competitors will have a giant to contend with.

—*Dominic Sousa, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, finance*

## **How to Ruin a Company**

Mr. Musk's rebranding of Twitter to X is the best decision he could make to ruin a company. Since its inception in 2006, Twitter has been building its brand recognition. By changing the name, Mr. Musk has undone 17 years of brand recognition and caused the platform's decline.

According to Fortune magazine, Musk's rebranding of Twitter has cost the company anywhere from \$4 billion to \$20 billion in brand value. The actual value of the company has declined as well. Twitter is now valued at \$15 billion to \$20 billion, a drastic drop from the \$44 billion Mr. Musk paid to acquire it.

Since the rebranding, X has seen a decline in posts and users. The average number of tweets has decreased by 25% and the user base has dropped by 3.9%. Mr. Musk is single-handedly killing the platform. The rebranding of Twitter was a foolish move that will continue to affect the company negatively moving forward.

—*Grant Holland, Baylor University, management*

## **Twitter Will Never Die**

My favorite horror-film trope is when, no matter how many times a hero tries to kill the monster, it just won't die. This trope has come to life in Elon Musk's attempt to rebrand Twitter to X. Everywhere I go, people still call it Twitter. People still send tweets. They don't call it X. They don't "x" things. And they never will because despite Mr. Musk's best efforts, he just can't kill the brand Twitter built.

Unless X is able to establish a brand stronger than Twitter's legacy, it will continually be plagued by Twitter's zombie. This doesn't mean, however, that it will be easy for other social-media companies to claim dominance. Just like spinoff film franchises are always compared with the original, Threads and other platforms will live in Twitter's shadow.

The days of short-message-based social media are over. It died when Mr. Musk changed Twitter. A new monster has emerged for my generation: short-video platforms such as TikTok. Except this monster isn't a zombie. It's very much alive.

—*Jacob Ward, University of Utah, finance*