

# Reddit: The Heart Of The Internet [B1]

Da un semplice forum a uno dei siti più popolari e controversi: questo social network è stato il palcoscenico di alcune delle battaglie più famose nella storia di Internet.

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Reddit is an online platform with over a hundred million daily active users. Describing itself as “the heart of the internet,” the platform, launched in 2005, has become one of the ten most visited websites. A place where people connect over common interests, it has been both influential and, at times, controversial. It has **triggered** acts of political and social activism that have influenced real-world events, including a financial market **upheaval** in 2021.

## RISING VALUE

Reddit was founded in 2005 by University of Virginia graduates Steve Huffman and Alexis Ohanian. The pair sold the platform to Condé Nast a year later for an **undisclosed** sum of between \$10 and \$20 million. In 2008, the platform introduced subreddits: communities focused on specific interests. A year on, it introduced Ask Me Anything forums, where users can ask famous people questions. Past participants include Bill Gates, Barack Obama and Elon Musk. Now **headquartered in** San Francisco, California, the platform is valued at around \$20 billion.

## MORE ABOUT SUBREDDITS

If Reddit is the heart of the internet, then subreddits are the heart of Reddit. The online platform has over one hundred thousand active subreddits, with the most popular ones exploring aspects of humour, **gaming**, movies, music and world news. Users **submit** relevant content in the form of text posts, links, images and videos, comment on posts, and participate in conversations. They can also **rank** content, by **upvoting or downvoting** posts and comments, so influencing their visibility. The content with the

most upvotes appears prominently in subreddits, and potentially on Reddit's homepage.

## MISINFORMATION

Like many platforms, Reddit has often been accused of spreading extremist views and misinformation in the guise of free speech. In 2015, it began banning hate-based subreddits. In 2021, one of its subreddits, r/wallstreetbets, was at the centre of a financial controversy, after its users orchestrated a coordinated acquisition of stock belonging to the US retailer GameStop. This caused what is known as a 'short squeeze', which cost hedge funds billions of dollars in losses. The controversy was the subject of Ben Mezrich's book The Antisocial Network (2021) and the 2023 movie Dumb Money.

## IT'S HUMAN

Today, Reddit uses AI to help with moderation and user safety. Despite previous controversy, it continues to soar in popularity. "Reddit works because it's human," co-founder Steve Huffman wrote in a recent Reddit post: "It's one of the few places online where real people share real opinions. That authenticity is what gives Reddit its value."

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# Glossary

- **misinformation** = disinformazione
- **in the guise of** = con il pretesto di
- **free speech** = libertà d'espressione
- **soar** = crescere, impennarsi
- **upheaval** = sconvolgimento
- **undisclosed** = non rivelata
- **headquartered in** = con sede a
- **rank** = classificare
- **retailer** = rivenditore
- **stock** = azioni
- **triggered** = scatenare
- **gaming** = videogiochi
- **submit** = inviare, caricare
- **upvoting or downvoting** = votare a favore o contro
- **banning** = vietare
- **spreading** = diffondere
- **hedge funds** = fondi speculativi
- **AI** = intelligenza artificiale