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Elon Musk Takes Aim at Reddit

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By **Martha McHardy**
US News Reporter

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Elon Musk has taken aim at [Reddit](#) after some of the site's moderators introduced a ban on links to X, formerly [Twitter](#), in protest over his alleged Nazi salute during an event for President Donald Trump's inauguration.

Newsweek has contacted Reddit for comment via email.

Why It Matters

It comes after the billionaire and self-proclaimed "free speech absolutist" took aim at Wikipedia after the online encyclopedia's 2023-4 annual report showed 29 percent of its budget had been spent on "equity" and "safety & inclusion."

Reddit drives significant traffic to X, particularly for discussions related to trending topics on the platform, so a ban on X links on Reddit could significantly impact Musk's company.

What To Know

Musk took aim at Reddit when one X user claimed the website was "anti-free speech" after he said he was banned from the "comics" subreddit for denying that the tech mogul did a Nazi salute at Trump's inauguration.

"Reddit continues to be anti-free speech," Cedric Hohnstadt said on X. "I just got a lifetime ban from the 'comics' subreddit. Yesterday, I posted a humor comic that got over 5,400 upvotes. Then I noticed that there was a pinned post from the moderators saying that comics linked from X could no longer be shared because Musk gave a Nazi salute. I commented saying no he didn't. The moderator accused me of being pro-Nazi, banned me permanently for life, and deleted all my past posts from the 'comics' subreddit. But somehow [Elon Musk](#) is the totalitarian?" The post has been viewed 3.7 million times.

"This is insane," Musk responded.





Elon Musk gestures while speaking at an indoor Presidential Inauguration parade event in Washington D.C. on January 20, 2025 **AP**

Musk has been forced to address allegations that he made a Nazi gesture just a day into [Trump's](#) second administration, in which he is serving as head of the newly created advisory Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE).

The moment sparked reactions worldwide, with Russian state TV blurring out the alleged salute. In Russia, there are strict laws against Nazi symbols. Meanwhile, an image of Musk making the salute was projected onto [Tesla's](#) Gigafactory in Berlin on Monday alongside the words "Heil Tesla," while a space exhibit prominently featuring Musk was [removed from a museum in Germany](#).

Musk has dismissed the accusations, calling them an attempt at "dirty tricks." He has previously denied that he is antisemitic or that he is politically aligned with Nazism or fascism. The Anti-Defamation League (ADL), which combats antisemitism, said Musk's gesture was not a Nazi salute.

Nonetheless, according to [BBC](#) News, more than 100 Reddit communities have banned users from posting links to X in protest at Musk's actions.

Some of the largest subreddits enforcing the ban include r/NBA, a basketball community with 15 million members; r/TwoXChromosomes, a female-focused forum with 14 million members; and r/NFL, an American football community with 12 million members. Subreddits are almost always run by fans.

X has not commented, but Reddit has stressed there is no sitewide ban on X links, telling *Newsweek* in a statement it "has a longstanding commitment to freedom of speech and freedom of association."

What People Are Saying

A spokesperson for Reddit told *Newsweek*: "Reddit Inc. has no ban on X links—there are still [plenty](#) of X links on Reddit. Reddit Inc. also has no ban against the particular user mentioned in the X post.

"Notably, many Reddit communities also prohibit Reddit links. Reddit has a long-standing commitment to freedom of speech and freedom of association. We have over 100,000 active communities across a wide range of topics. Any user is free to join, create, or moderate their own community."

The spokesperson also noted that individual communities have the freedom to establish their own rules. They said that many subreddits already restrict social media links when they are not relevant to the content, such as r/EarthPorn, which is dedicated solely to nature photography, or r/AskReddit, which only allows text-

based questions.

What Happens Next

The impact of the ban on X is currently unclear, but it could reduce the amount of traffic directed to Musk's platform.

If the embargo continues, it could escalate tensions between the government and tech companies.

Update 1/31/25, 12:44 a.m. ET: This article has been updated with a comment from Reddit.

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Martha McHardy

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Martha McHardy is a U.S. News reporter based in London, U.K. Her focus is on U.S. politics and society. She ... [read more](#)

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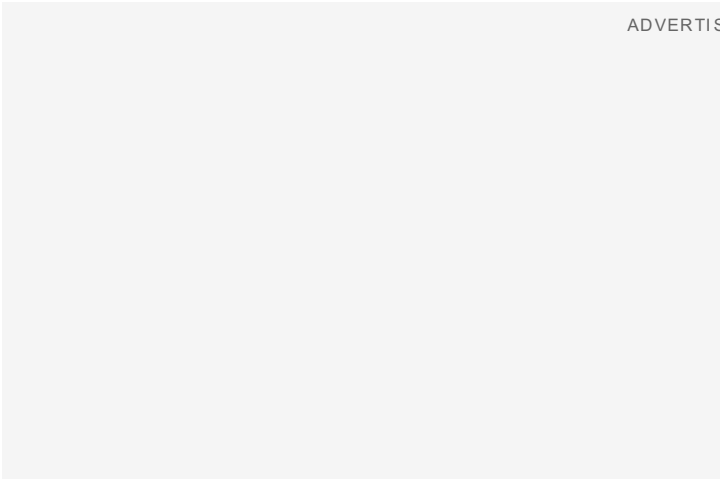
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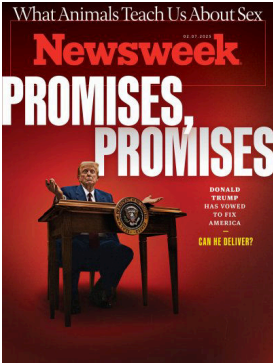
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