

# X, formerly Twitter, strips headlines from news story links to improve their look

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X, the platform formerly known as Twitter, has stopped showing headlines for links posted on the site, after site owner Elon Musk said it would make posts look better. Links posted on Twitter now appear as the image included in the article, as well as text in the left-hand corner of the image noting the domain of the link. If users want to visit the page, they must click the image, but it only appears slightly different to how images uploaded to the site appear. The change was made on Wednesday for iOS and desktop users. The new appearance appeared not to apply to advertisement links. The move to remove headlines had been in the works since August. Following Fortune reports about the planned change, Musk tweeted: "This is coming from me directly. Will greatly improve the esthetics." X has become increasingly hostile for news organisations to use since Musk took over nearly one year ago. While never a major source of traffic for many news sites, the platform is used by most media organisations and reporters in news sharing and gathering, but reports suggest traffic has declined from Twitter since the takeover. In recent months, NPR and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) have pulled back on using the site. The ABC blamed toxic interactions on X, and better engagement on other platforms. In response, Musk accused the organisation of censorship. In August, X briefly appeared to put a five-second delay on loading links to news sites and rivals to X including Reuters, the New York Times, Instagram and Blue Sky. Musk tweeted this week that he "almost never reads legacy news anymore" and said the X algorithm was optimised against links to ensure people stay on the site as long as possible. "Best thing is to post content in long form on this platform," he said. The Financial Times reported last week that X's CEO Linda Yaccarino, is set to meet with the banks that financed \$13bn of Musk's purchase of Twitter last year, to explain the plan to revive the company after advertisers fled the service. Last month Musk had threatened to sue the Anti-Defamation League over lost revenue, saying advertisers were pressured to drop ads by the US civil rights group, which he claimed was trying to shut down his company by "falsely accusing it and me of being antisemitic". In a statement on Wednesday, the ADL stood by its research that X and other platforms have serious issues with antisemites and extremists, but noted X's "stated intent over the last few weeks to address antisemitism and hate on the platform." The ADL said the allegation that it "somehow orchestrated a boycott of X or caused billions of dollars of losses to the company or is 'pulling the strings' for other advertisers is false." Musk thanked the ADL in response for "clarifying that you support advertising on X" and also for buying advertising on the platform. Comment has been sought from X. • This article was amended on 6 October 2023. It was Fortune that first reported on the change to headline formats, not Forbes as an earlier version said.