

# Elon Musk's X back online after global outage

Publication Date: 2023-12-21

Author: Emily Dugan

Section: Technology

Tags: X, Internet, Elon Musk, Blogging, Social media, Digital media, news

Article URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2023/dec/21/elon-musk-x-back-online-after-global-outage>



The social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter, has been restored after a global outage on Thursday. The problem reportedly began after 5am UK time and its cause is not yet known. Thousands of users reported that they were unable to access the site properly. The website Downtdetector, which tracks online outages, logged more than 30,000 reports about the site and app between 5am and 7am in the UK and more than 260,000 in the US over the same timeframe, with most being registered between 5.30am and 6.30am. Users on X were unable to view posts, instead receiving a "Welcome to X!" message. Users of X Pro, formerly Tweetdeck, had a message that said "Waiting for posts". Elon Musk took over the platform in a \$44bn (£33.6bn) deal last autumn. Under the hashtag #TwitterDown, users with access shared memes about the outage, many imagining the Facebook co-founder Mark Zuckerberg celebrating. NetBlocks, a company that monitors internet disruption, said X had experienced a "significant international outage" with timelines not loading and posts failing. It said the incident was not related to "country-level internet disruptions or filtering". Since the takeover by Musk, attempts to contact X's press team are met with automatic replies. Initially, these were in the form of a poo emoji but on Thursday the auto response read: "Busy now, please check back later". The site has had multiple glitches since the billionaire businessman took over in October 2022. The workforce was cut from 7,500 to about 2,000 within six months of Musk's arrival. Engineers responsible for fixing and preventing service outages were among the thousands of employees who lost their jobs. One former engineer who resigned soon after the initial round of redundancies at the company said they quit because they would have been "on call constantly with little support for an indeterminate amount of time on several additional complex systems I had no experience in". Warnings about the standard of X's IT infrastructure precede Musk's takeover. In July 2022, the former head of security at then-Twitter, Peiter "Mudge" Zatko, filed a whistleblower complaint alleging "extreme, egregious deficiencies by Twitter in every area of his mandate". The complaint claimed there was an incident in spring 2021 when a shutdown looked imminent that could have left the platform offline for "weeks, months or permanently".