



Twitter UK
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twitter.com

13 December 2017

*Damian Collins MP
Chair, Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA*

By email

Dear Mr. Collins,

As I noted in my previous correspondence dated 24 November 2017, in addition to your requests, we have also been contacted by the Electoral Commission in connection with their investigation into campaign activity during the EU Referendum.

In response to the Commission's request for information concerning Russian-funded campaign activity conducted during the regulated period for the June 2016 EU Referendum (15 April to 23 June 2016), Twitter reviewed referendum-related advertising on our platform during the relevant time period.

Among the accounts that we have previously identified as likely funded from Russian sources, we have thus far identified one account—@RT_com—which promoted referendum-related content during the regulated period. @RT_com spent a total \$469,900 in advertising on our platform in 2016, with \$44,615.87 of that amount devoted to ads that were served users in the UK. Only \$1,031.99 of that amount was spent on six referendum-related ads during the regulated period. I have provided a list of the Tweets in the attached appendix.

Advertising on Twitter generally takes the form of promoted Tweets, which advertisers purchase to reach new groups of users or spark engagement from their existing followers. Promoted Tweets are clearly labelled as "promoted" when an advertiser pays for their placement on Twitter. Advertisers can post promoted Tweets through a self-service model on the Twitter platform or through account managers, who manage relationships with advertising partners.

With regard to future activity by Russian-funded accounts, on 26 October 2017, Twitter announced that it would no longer accept advertisements from RT and Sputnik and will donate the \$1.9 million that RT had spent globally on advertising on Twitter to academic research into elections and



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civil engagement. That decision was based on a retrospective review that we initiated in the aftermath of the 2016 U.S. Presidential Elections and following the [U.S. intelligence community's conclusion](#) that both RT and Sputnik have attempted to interfere with the election on behalf of the Russian government. Accordingly, @RT_com will not be eligible to use Twitter's promoted products in the future.

Twitter is continuing its review and will update your committee if and when we identify additional relevant information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nick Pickles". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Nick Pickles

Head of Public Policy
Twitter UK



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APPENDIX

@RT_com Tweets promoted during the regulated period.

Tweet ID	Text
745561409660944384	#BREXIT: EU in or EU out? Together or apart? Follow RT's special coverage June 23 https://t.co/OcfW7ISvdT https://t.co/Q6Kr0oB5Ag
745943875043287040	#BrexitOrNot? Together or apart? Follow RT special coverage! https://t.co/OcfW7ISvdT https://t.co/794G22BGfc
745960413670432768	#BrexitOrNot? Together or apart? Follow RT special coverage! https://t.co/OcfW7ISvdT https://t.co/UQeuATelyp
746315885871194112	UK Decides: Goodbye EU. Follow RT's special coverage on #Brexit https://t.co/OcfW7ISvdT https://t.co/X8ool8E8nm
746316061830569984	UK Decides: Goodbye EU. Follow RT's special coverage on #Brexit https://t.co/OcfW7ISvdT https://t.co/KdpruFLqZd
746316227774013441	UK Decides: Goodbye EU. Follow RT's special coverage on #Brexit https://t.co/OcfW7ISvdT https://t.co/L4GfzOyXH3