

# *Fake Trump, Bush, Tesla storm Twitter after verification shake-up*

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**Fake Twitter accounts explode across the platform after Elon Musk scraps verification policies.**

New York, November 12 (RHC)-- Fake Twitter accounts are exploding across the platform after Elon Musk scrapped the site's verification policies as trolls impersonate famous figures and companies including the billionaire's carmaker Tesla.

The flood of impersonator accounts, including fake profiles for former United States President George W Bush and NBA star LeBron James, follows Musk's decision to offer the platform's blue check mark to any user for a \$7.99 monthly subscription, instead of verified accounts that are of public interest.

An account impersonating former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair retweeted the post, adding: "Same tbh." Trolls also impersonated prominent sports figures including Los Angeles Lakers forward James, with his fake profile announcing he had requested a transfer to another team.

Fake profiles also sprung up of former US President Donald Trump and Japanese computer games giant Nintendo, which posted an image of its iconic character Mario holding up his middle finger to the camera. While the Bush, Blair, Trump, Nintendo and James accounts were later suspended, other impostor accounts remained live on Friday, including a fake Tesla profile, which tweeted the "breaking" news that a "second Tesla has hit the World Trade Center."

Musk, who purchased Twitter last month for \$44 billion, wrote on Twitter late on Thursday that in the future "accounts engaged in parody must include 'parody' in their name, not just in bio." "To be more precise, accounts doing parody impersonations. Basically, tricking people is not ok," he tweeted.

The Twitter mayhem is likely to add to advertisers' concerns about the future of the influential social media platform under Musk's leadership. Large advertisers including General Motors, Audi and General Mills have suspended ads on the platform as they await clarity on changes to the site's moderation policies.

The flood of fake profiles also comes after the United States Federal Trade Commission on Thursday said it was watching Twitter with "deep concern" after a number of top privacy and compliance executives quit, raising questions about the company's ability to comply with regulatory orders.

Under Twitter's old verification system, famous users and accounts considered to be of public interest could apply for a checkmark to verify their identity free of charge. Musk criticised the rules, introduced initially to prevent accounts from impersonating public figures, as a "lords and peasants system" and has cast the sweeping changes he has ushered in as a way to democratise the platform.

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