
From: [REDACTED]@fb.com]
Sent: 3/16/2021 11:17:59 PM
To: Slavitt, Andrew M. EOP/WHO [REDACTED]
CC: Flaherty, Rob EOP/WHO [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: You are hiding the ball

Thanks Andy, and apologies for the delay in getting back. We are absolutely invested in getting you the specific information needed to successfully manage the vaccine rollout. We want to share information with you that we trust is statistically significant and derived from sound analysis, so that it can actually be helpful. The information cited in the WaPo article over the weekend was leaked and was not vetted internally to understand how accurate it is or the ramifications that could result from it. But I understand your point regarding how we communicate, and that we need to share information with you in a way that prioritizes what we are seeing in as close to real time as possible. I'd like to set up a conversation with our research leads to walk your team through ongoing research we are currently conducting and our approach; and then we can prioritize sharing results as quickly as possible.

Moreover, the data we sent on Friday and will continue to send throughout the year represents the information we are using internally to shape our own thinking on this content — we believe this data addresses many of the questions that have been posed (because it has been so helpful to guide our own internal efforts). We'd appreciate the opportunity to go through it in detail with whomever is interested on your team.

I know you're extremely busy. If it's ever helpful to connect by phone instead of over email I am at [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Slavitt, Andrew M. EOP/WHO <[REDACTED]>
Date: Monday, March 15, 2021 at 7:11 PM
To: [REDACTED]@fb.com>
Cc: Flaherty, Rob EOP/WHO <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: You are hiding the ball

[REDACTED]

I appreciate being copied on the note. It would nice to establish trust. I do feel like relative to others, interactions with Facebook are not straightforward and the problems are worse — like you are trying to meet a minimum hurdle instead of trying to solve the problem and we have to ask you precise questions and even then we get highly scrubbed party line answers. We have urgency and don't sense it from you all. 100% of the questions I asked have never been answered and weeks have gone by.

Internally we have been considering our options on what to do about it.

Regards,

Andy

Sent from my iPhone

On Mar 15, 2021, at 6:42 PM, [REDACTED]@fb.com> wrote:

Thanks, Rob. Called and left you a message earlier. I understand why you'd read the WaPo piece and come away feeling like we are not leveling with you. The piece inflated unconfirmed and leaked work that's being done by a small team. It's exploratory work and is not close to being a finalized work product - in fact the team that briefed you (including me) wasn't aware of the work at the time we briefed you. This was not a "massive study" as depicted by the Post - this was a small team experimenting with applying a relatively new system to COVID19 content. At any given time, there are many research projects similar to this being conducted by data scientists across the platform --as we've discussed, we're working hard to understand and address this type of content. Our definition of vaccine hesitancy is evolving - it is not a mature concept. This is early work and we have not gone through the kind of quality assurance we'd usually do before sharing the learnings externally. The data that leaked and was reported on should not be interpreted to be anything more than one of many efforts underway to better inform how we tackle this problem. As we develop them further, we will definitely keep you updated.

We obviously have work to do to gain your trust. You mention that you are not trying to play "gotcha" with us—I appreciate the approach you are taking to continued discussions. We are also working to get you useful information that's on the level. That's my job and I take it seriously—I'll continue to do it to the best of my ability, and I'll expect you to hold me accountable.

If interested, I can schedule time to give you more context on how this work is done and why we wouldn't include it in a briefing.

From: Flaherty, Rob EOP/WHO <[REDACTED]>
Date: Monday, March 15, 2021 at 1:10 PM
To: [REDACTED]@fb.com>
Cc: Slavitt, Andrew M. EOP/WHO <[REDACTED]>
Subject: RE: You are hiding the ball

I don't think this is a misunderstanding, [REDACTED]. I've been asking you guys pretty directly, over a series of conversations, for a clear accounting of the biggest issues you are seeing on your platform when it comes to vaccine hesitancy, and the degree to which borderline content—as you define it—is playing a role. I've also been asking for what actions you have been taking to mitigate it as part of your "lockdown"—which in our first conversation, was said to be in response to concerns over borderline content, in our 1:1 convo you said was not out of any kind of concern over borderline content, and in our third conversation never even came up.

You said you would commit to us that you'd level with us. I am seeing in the press that you have data on the impact of borderline content, and its overlap with various communities. I have asked for this point blank, and got, instead, an overview of how the algorithm works, with a pivot to a conversation about profile frames, and a 45-minute meeting that seemed to provide you with more insights than it provided us.

I am not trying to play "gotcha" with you. We are gravely concerned that your service is one of the top drivers of vaccine hesitancy—period. I will also be the first to acknowledge that borderline content offers no easy solutions. But we want to know that you're trying, we want to know how we can help, and we want to know that you're not playing a shell game with us when we ask you what is going on.

This would all be a lot easier if you would just be straight with us.

From: [REDACTED]@fb.com>
Sent: Monday, March 15, 2021 10:22 AM
To: Flaherty, Rob EOP/WHO <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Slavitt, Andrew M. EOP/WHO <[REDACTED]>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: You are hiding the ball

Thanks Rob—I think there is a misunderstanding on what this story is covering with respect to research that's happening—I will call to clear up. Certainly not hiding the ball.

Also flagging our announcement that went live this morning—this is the announcement I mentioned on Friday's call.

[>>>https://about.fb.com/news/2021/03/mark-zuckerberg-announces-facebooks-plans-to-help-get-people-vaccinated-against-covid-19/](https://about.fb.com/news/2021/03/mark-zuckerberg-announces-facebooks-plans-to-help-get-people-vaccinated-against-covid-19/)<<<;;

From: Flaherty, Rob EOP/WHO <[REDACTED]>
Date: Sunday, March 14, 2021 at 11:13 PM
To: [REDACTED]@fb.com>
Cc: Stavitt, Andrew M. EOP/WHO <[REDACTED]>
Subject: You are hiding the ball [REDACTED]

[>>>https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2021/03/14/facebook-vaccine-hesistancy-qanon/](https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2021/03/14/facebook-vaccine-hesistancy-qanon/)<<<;;

Sent from my iPhone