

In AI tussle, Twitter restricts number of posts users can read

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Some Twitter users quickly hit the new limit on the number of tweets they could read in a day.

Elon Musk announced Saturday that Twitter would temporarily restrict how many tweets users could read per day, in a move meant to tamp

down on the use of the site's data by artificial intelligence companies.

The platform is limiting verified accounts to reading 10,000 tweets a day. Non-verified users—the free accounts that make up the majority of users—are limited to reading 1,000 tweets per day.

New unverified accounts would be limited to 500 tweets.

The decision was made "to address extreme levels of data scraping" and "system manipulation" by third-party platforms, Musk said in a tweet Saturday afternoon, as some users quickly hit their limits.

"Goodbye Twitter" was a trending topic in the United States following Musk's announcement.

Twitter's billionaire owner did not give a timeline for how long the measures would be in place.

The day before, Musk had announced that it would no longer be possible to read tweets on the site without an account.

Much of the data scraping was coming from firms using it to build their AI models, Musk said, to the point that it was causing traffic issues with the site.

To create AI that can respond in a human-like capacity, many companies feed the programs examples of real-life conversations from social media sites.

"Several hundred organizations (maybe more) were scraping Twitter data extremely aggressively, to the point where it was affecting the real user experience," Musk said.

"Almost every company doing AI, from startups to some of the biggest corporations on Earth, was scraping vast amounts of data," he said.

"It is rather galling to have to bring large numbers of servers online on an emergency basis just to facilitate some AI startup's outrageous valuation."

Twitter is not the only social media giant to have to wrangle with the rapid acceleration of the AI sector.

In mid-June, Reddit raised prices on third-party developers that were using its data and sweeping up conversations posted on its forums.

It proved a controversial move, as many regular users also accessed the site via third-party platforms, and marked a shift from previous arrangements where social media data had generally been provided for free or a small charge.

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