

Twitter restores ability to block unwanted followers

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Twitter has restored the ability to block unwanted followers from peering at posts, quickly reversing a policy change that triggered a barrage of criticism

Twitter on Thursday restored the ability to block unwanted followers from peering at posts, quickly reversing a policy change that triggered a barrage of criticism.

"Earlier today, we made a change to the way the 'block' function of Twitter works," Twitter's Michael Sippey said in a blog post late

Thursday in California.

"We have decided to revert the change after receiving feedback from many [users](#) – we never want to introduce features at the cost of users feeling less safe. Any blocks you had previously instituted are still in effect."

The turn-around came just hours after the San Francisco-based company modified its blocking mechanism so that users would not be able to see unwanted followers who would still be able to re-tweet, like, or peer at messages in public accounts of people who block them.

The move was met with criticism by many who worried about being harassed by stalkers or abusers.

The tactic came with what Twitter portrayed as the advantage of not alerting unwanted followers to being blocked.

Prior to the update, a blocked Twitter user was barred from seeing the person's account or posts, with those shut out made aware of what was taking place.

Reasoning given by Twitter for the change included mitigating rage of people who learn they are blocked and the reality that public posts at the globally popular one-to-many text messaging service are just that, public.

People using an #RestoreTheBlock hashtag rained vitriol on Twitter for turning a block list into a mute switch.

"We made #RestoreTheBlock happen," Katie Collins tweeted with the Twitter handle @GrIRedBalloon, thanking users of the service who "mobilized the troops."

Twitter wisely thanked users for their passionate feedback, while contending that the block list change was well-intended and well-reasoned.

"In reverting this change to the block function, users will once again be able to tell that they've been blocked," Sippey said.

"We believe this is not ideal, largely due to the retaliation against blocking users by blocked users (and sometimes their friends) that often occurs."

He added that Twitter will continue to explore features intended to protect users from abuse or retaliation.

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