

## Norway 'anti-troll' site makes you read before commenting

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The NRKbeta tech website says it get gets the same number of comments after introducing its 'anti-troll' feature

Victims of online "trolling", rejoice. A Norwegian site may have found the key to muzzling malicious commenters on the internet: requiring people to read an article before discussing it.

As an experiment, NRKbeta, a media and technology subsidiary of

public broadcaster NRK, has since mid-February required viewers to correctly answer three questions about articles before being able to comment on them.

"Generally, we see that many read only the headline and a few lines before rushing into the [comments](#) section to participate in the debate," NRKbeta editor Marius Arnesen told AFP on Thursday.

"By asking three questions from the text, we ensure that the discussion starts around a common knowledge base," he added.

The method is a way of raising the level of debate but also of taming inflammatory reactions.

"If you've been annoyed by something in the article, you're forced to pause, think a little, and read the article if you haven't already done so," Arnesen said.

"We therefore hope to take the edge off when you are furious in the comment section," he added.

The experiment is still too new to draw any definitive conclusions, according to Arnesen.

But the number of comments seems to have remained more or less the same and the returns of regular readers are generally positive, he said.

"Laudable initiative", an online surfer commented on NRKbeta's website, adding: "Even though my faith in humanity does not go far enough to dissuade me from believing that every debate ends up veering off onto stuff like Adolf Hitler, immigration, rotten politicians, conspiracy theories..."

NRKbeta has yet to find a way to measure the results of its test balloon.

"How do you measure success in these matters?" Arnesen asked. "Is it a success to have fewer comments? More comments? And how do you measure their qualitative improvement?"

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