

# Facebook let advertisers place ads to reach 'Jew haters'

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A new AI tool created to help identify certain kinds of substance abuse based on a homeless youth's Facebook posts could provide homeless shelters with vital information to incorporate into each individual's case management plan. Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Facebook allowed advertisements targeted at people who have expressed

interest in anti-Semitic topics such as "jew hater," "how to burn jews" or "History of 'why jews ruin the world,'" Pro Publica reported Thursday.

Pro Publica paid \$30 to reach nearly 2,300 people with these interests through three "promoted posts." It says Facebook approved all three ads within 15 minutes.

After the [news organization](#) contacted the giant social network, Facebook removed the anti-Semitic categories.

Most of Facebook's ads are placed through an automated system that allows marketers to select who they'd like to reach. Facebook says it will explore ways to fix the problem such as limiting the number of fields available or adding more reviews of fields when people create ads.

In a statement to USA TODAY, product management director Rob Leathern said Facebook prohibits attacks based on religion and prohibits advertising that discriminates against people based on their religion.

"However, there are times where content is surfaced on our platform that violates our standards. In this case, we've removed the associated targeting fields in question," he said. "We know we have more work to do, so we're also building new guardrails in our product and review processes to prevent other issues like this from happening in the future."

The Pro Publica report comes at a tense time for Facebook, whose advertising business has been under scrutiny. Last week, Facebook said it discovered approximately \$100,000 ads by [fake accounts](#) likely out of Russia that sought to sow political discord during the 2016 presidential election.

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