

WhatsApp limits message forwarding to fight 'fake news'

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Facebook-owned mobile messaging platform WhatsApp announced Monday it was restricting how many times any given message can be forwarded in an effort to boost privacy and security.

In July, WhatsApp rolled out safeguards in India that included limiting the number of users to whom a message can be forwarded. It also ran newspaper ads to raise awareness about fake news.

That [decision](#) followed threats by the Indian government to take action after crazed mobs butchered more than 20 people accused of child kidnapping and other crimes in viral, widely-circulated WhatsApp messages.

WhatsApp said its latest move to extend the restrictions to all users came after a six-month review of user feedback.

"The forward limit significantly reduced forwarded messages around the world," read a company statement about a test run of the forwarding limit.

"Starting today, all users on the latest versions of WhatsApp can now forward to only five chats at once, which will help keep WhatsApp focused on private messaging with close contacts."

Previously, users could forward any given message up to 20 times on the app.

"We'll continue to listen to user feedback about their experience, and over time, look for new ways of addressing [viral content](#)," the WhatsApp statement read.

Founded in 2009 and purchased by Facebook in 2014, WhatsApp said that in early 2018 it had more than 1.5 billion users who exchanged 65 billion messages per day.

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