

A new leader for Twitter: Can Yaccarino restore advertiser confidence?

Article

The news: After nearly seven extremely turbulent months with **Elon Musk** at the helm of the company, **Twitter** has a new CEO. **Linda Yaccarino**, who tendered her resignation as the head of advertising at **NBCUniversal** where she worked for 11 years on the same day as the announcement, will take over as head of the struggling social media platform.

Why Yaccarino? It's no secret that Twitter's ad revenues have gone through a serious decline under Musk's leadership. The platform has quickly descended into a haven for scams, harmful content, misinformation and a far-right tilt that has scared advertisers off.

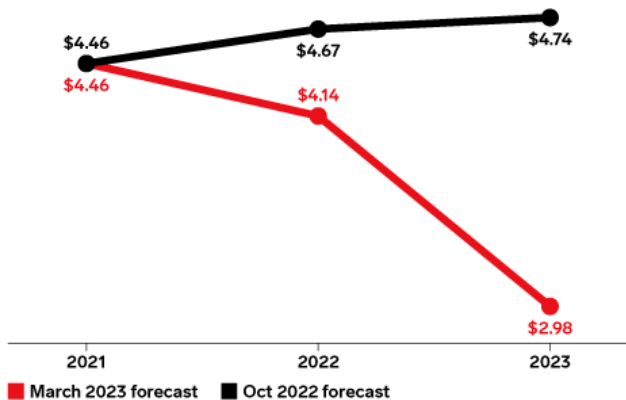
- Yaccarino's over 10 years of experience at a legacy media organization is surely an attempt to reassure and bring some advertisers back to the table, and she will likely bring existing relationships along with her.
- While Yaccarino's career has been spent working in network television, an industry that's similarly seeing an ad spend decline, she was a major force behind pushing NBCU to invest in **Peacock**, and led the charge for a more diverse ad measurement market after **Nielsen** had its accreditation suspended—a move that's since been followed by nearly the entire TV industry.
- That track record makes Yaccarino a technology-forward pick; someone with existing relationships with major advertisers who's able to help stagnant ad systems evolve.

A doomed job: Yaccarino may be able to restore *some* advertiser confidence to Twitter, but the question is how much and how long it can last. With the company's ad revenues long in decline, she has an uphill battle ahead.

- For one, Musk will still be heavily involved in Twitter. In an announcement, Musk said Yaccarino will oversee “business operations” while he focuses on “product design & new technology.” The translation is that erratic service changes will likely continue, and the impulse-driven Musk will hover over Yaccarino's every move.
- It's not like Twitter's ad problems began with Musk: The platform has never managed to fully figure out its ad business, hovering in a third tier of social media platforms in terms of spending with figures falling year after year. Under Musk, we've slashed our Twitter ad forecast twice, most recently from \$4.74 billion down to \$2.98 billion.

How Has Our Worldwide Twitter Ad Revenue Forecast Changed?

billions, 2021-2023



Note: paid advertising only; includes advertising that appears on desktop and laptop computers as well as mobile phones, tablets, and other internet-connected devices, and includes all the various formats of advertising on those platforms; net ad revenues after companies pay traffic acquisition costs (TAC) to partner sites; excludes payments to influencers or other creators to produce sponsored content; includes branded content amplified as paid media

Source: eMarketer, March 2023

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- Yaccarino’s hiring has signs of the same issues: Resigning on the same day she was appointed CEO, Musk’s close involvement, and his insistence on pushing his fabled “everything app” “X” feel consistent with the chaos since Musk’s takeover.

Our take: While Yaccarino could bring some of her long-held advertising relationships and knowhow with her, it’s unlikely that she can steer Twitter back on course. Musk is still heavily involved, after all, and recent developments like [Tucker Carlson bringing his show to the platform](#) may push Twitter closer to reflecting Musk’s ideological preferences but doesn’t create something advertisers want to back.