

Hatebook

Facebook's neo-Nazi shopfronts funding far-right extremism





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The Center for Countering Digital Hate is a not-for-profit NGO that seeks to disrupt the architecture of online hate and misinformation.

Digital technology has changed forever the way we communicate, build relationships, share knowledge, set social standards, and negotiate and assert our society's values.

Digital spaces have been colonised and their unique dynamics exploited by fringe movements that instrumentalise hate and misinformation. These movements are opportunistic, agile and confident in exerting influence and persuading people.

Over time these actors, advocating diverse causes - from anti-feminism to ethnic nationalism to denial of scientific consensus - have formed a Digital Counter Enlightenment. Their trolling, disinformation and skilled advocacy of their causes has resocialised the offline world for the worse.

The Center's work combines both analysis and active disruption of these networks. CCDH's solutions seek to increase the economic, political and social costs of all parts of the infrastructure - the actors, systems and culture - that support, and often profit from hate and misinformation.



The rising threat demands more concerted and innovative approaches. Coalition for a Safer Web is a non-partisan, not-for-profit advocacy organization whose mission is, inter alia, to promote new public-private partnerships to facilitate the expeditious removal of extremist and terrorist incitement and instruction content from social media platforms. Additionally, Coalition for a Safer Web is dedicated to restricting extremists' access to internet infrastructure support companies vital to their dark and deep web operations.



1 Introduction

It is a sign of the impunity with which modern Fascists radicalize, recruit and finance on Facebook and Instagram that they feel comfortable using the platforms to sell branded merchandise, as though they were mainstream brands. This report shows they freely promote clothing featuring swastikas, the Nazi SS Death's Head symbol and slogans like "Fascist All Star" and "Support your local Einsatzkommando".

Popular and mainstream brands are unlikely to be aware that their advertisements appear next to extreme Neo-Nazi material on Facebook and Instagram, especially as they have been reassured that countermeasures are in place. Governments will be appalled that their counter-extremism efforts are being undermined so openly.

Facebook was told about this specific problem two years ago but failed to take action.1 The scale of their inaction means it would not be unreasonable to conclude that it "knows and intends" that they its platforms are used for such purposes. Instead, it has allowed the development of a network of over forty Fascist and Neo-Nazi Facebook pages and Instagram accounts, with a total of 80,000 followers, hawking merchandise. This Fascist finance network is intimately linked with two violent Neo--Nazi extremist movements operating out of Ukraine: Azov Battalion and Misanthropic Division. Both groups have sought to export their ideology to Western countries, gain followers and incite violence. Azov Battalion, a neo-Nazi paramilitary force, has offered to host and train US members of the violent Rise Above Movement.² Misanthropic Division - closelu affiliated with Azov influenced domestic extremists in the US

and the UK who were charged with terrorist offences.³

This network poses a credible threat to national and international security. We are working to notify governments of this thread and mainstream brands about the mishandling of their advertising spend. We are sure Chanel, for example, will not be delighted to find their advert placed next to an advert for merchandise proclaiming "Kyle [Rittenhouse] was right".





Other tech giants must act too. The network our researchers identified is coordinated on Telegram, an encrypted messaging app. Many of the storefronts are powered by mainstream Web service providers, like Wix, GoDaddy, Wordpress, PayPal and Western Union.

Facebook builds and controls the social and economic infrastructure of our digital public sphere. Its platform, and the machine learning algorithms which shape it, not only shape how we talk and engage with one another, they shape what products and ideas we are exposed to, and the tools we have to organize and reach other citizens. Facebook must accept that this infrastructure is no longer simply private, no longer merely a concern for Facebook's annual profit, it is the infrastructure of democracy. That power must come with responsibilities. What this report shows is that time and again, Facebook fails to exercise its responsibilities, not because it lacks the knowledge, ability or technology, but because it lacks the will.

And remember this: CCDH and CSW should be the last order of defence, not the first. Even if Facebook acts to remove this material after we release this report, it is too late. It has already allowed extremists to design, test and execute a finance solution for their activities. Its failure to act underscores the hypocrisy

of its public claims to support racial and social justice movements, such as Black Lives Matter, while allowing Neo-Nazis to act with impunity. The chasm between the company's claims and actions, their willingness to act and their defence of their bottom line, is much too great for the safety of our societies.

This systematic abdication of responsibility sheds light on critical questions.

Can we afford to allow Facebook to fail time and time again to exercise responsibility? After all, Mark Zuckerberg has quipped, "in a lot of ways Facebook is more like a government than a traditional company." Would we allow a government to behave like this, without oversight?

Should such a powerful company be allowed to always act in its private rather than the public interest? And, if not, what social, legislative and regulatory tools do we have and what do we need in order to change that?

These are the defining questions of our time. How we answer them will shape the future of our democracies.

Imran Ahmed

Chief Executive Officer
Center for Countering Digital Hate



Our nation confronts a grave and present danger from the torrent of violent extremist incitement on social media platforms. A toxic brew of extremist groups from the fringes of the political spectrum are hijacking and weaponizing the web to incite racial and religious bigotry and violence like never before - aided by technological infirmities and the abject dishonesty of mainstream social media companies, the ability of extremist groups to evade feeble firewalls, and the prevalence of web-based extremist super-spreaders such as community boards and mobile applications. And they thrive by availing themselves of the customary tools of digital trade to hawk branded extremist merchandise. All of this contributes to a web-based global safe haven for individuals and groups to recruit, plot, incite, and execute acts of extremist terror on par with radical Islamic terrorist organizations.

Major social media companies have taken it upon themselves to self-censor content based on widely divergent policies while failing in the most fundamental way to adequately protect their users and citizens around the world from the potential of violent attacks.

Moreover, mobile applications such as Telegram serve as global sanctuaries from which white supremacist groups such as Atomwaffen Azov Battalion and Misanthropic Division can grow and thrive. They are aided and abetted by the failure of governments and multinational corporations on which they depend to exist to compel these mobile applications to cease serving as digital hide-outs and mobile market places to raise funds needed to execute their operations.

The European Union and several constituent nations, notably Germany, France, and the UK have adopted (or are

in the process of adopting) tough new restrictions holding social media companies accountable for their failure to sanitize their platforms from extremist content. However, the US remains a global outlier. Neither the Trump Administration or Congress have mustered the will to repeal the seminal content immunity from social media platforms accorded under Section 230 of the 1996 Communications Decency Act. It is this failure which prompted the Coalition for a Safer Web to unveil a proposal to create a new independent Social Media Standards Board, which would independently monitor compliance by social media companies of their pledges to de-platform extremist content.

Because the business model of mainstream social media is totally dependent on ad revenue, there is no financial or legal incentive for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, or Instagram to submit to independent oversight and accountability. They assert a mere moral obligation to engage in wishy washy content moderation. They cling to Section 230 as the Holy Grail, with good reason – without Section 230's content immunity their financial models would be subject to attack for failing to protect their customers from harm.

This outdated and undeserving immunity enables the social media ecosystem to avoid legal accountability as accomplices to incitement and violence. This is no way to run a railroad because we, the passengers, are the victims. The American people deserve better!

Meanwhile, as we disclose in this report, extremist groups have devised ingenious work arounds to evade accountability including promoting and marketing Neo Nazi/white supremacist



merchandise assisted by supporting web communications and hosting channels.

Although this report focuses on the merchandising of branded neo-Nazi and white supremacist merchandise, virtually every extremist group we monitor have profited from the digital sale to willing buyers of illegally acquired arms, ammunition, survival and field manuals, steroids, bogus Covid cures, and Nazi-era beer hall music -- which the Coalition for a Safer Web has documented in previous reports.

Without access to consumer financial technology – notably credit card and payment processors – enabled and readily accessible to seller and buyer on

Facebook, Telegram, and other sites, this trade enabling tyranny could be dramatically curtailed.

Ending this profit from hate is essential.

I want to especially thank our Senior Vice President for Content Moderation, Eric Feinberg, for his excellent research which contributed to this report and our gratitude to our partners at the Center for Countering Digital Hate for their leadership.

Ambassador Marc Ginsberg

President
Coalition for a Safer Web





2 Summary

- Far-right extremists are using Facebook and Instagram, which is owned by Facebook, to reach new audiences and generate revenue from sales of neo-Nazi merchandise.
- These extremists are using the encrypted messaging app Telegram to organise their efforts on mainstream platforms, process payments and spread propaganda.
- A number of other firms including Wix, Wordpress, GoDaddy, PayPal and Western Union are currently supporting the network through web hosting or payment processing.
- Across all platforms, this rightwing extremist network comprises 61 accounts with a total of 112,181 followers.
 Facebook and Instagram supply the majority of this network's followers: 17,975 and 62,069 followers respectively. Telegram accounts supply 30,076 followers and YouTube 2,061.
- Every part of this network promotes far-right extremism, communicated with the symbols and slogans of white supremacism and neo-Nazism.
- Many elements of this network are connected to two Ukrainian groups aiming to spread their farright extremism worldwide: Azov Battalion and Misanthropic Division.
- Azov Battalion is a Ukrainian nationalist paramilitary that

- promotes a neo-Nazi ideology that is known to have fostered links with neo-Nazi groups in the US and other countries.
- Misanthropic Division is a smaller group now largely incorporated into Azov Battalion that promotes a nihilistic form of neo-Nazism known to have influenced farright extremists charged with terror offences in the US and UK.
- The most influential element of the network is Walknvt, a retailer of neo-Nazi clothing that was first identified and flagged to Facebook by the Counter Extremism Project (CEP) in November 2018, but is still operating a number of accounts on both Instagram and Facebook today.
- This is part of a wider failure on Facebook's part: there are another three far-right groups identified by the CEP still operating on the platform.
- These failures are inflicting "brand damage" on businesses whose adverts appear next to extreme neo-Nazi material in news feeds on Facebook and Instagram.
- Facebook, Instagram and the other firms we have identified as offering support to this network must act now to uproot it and set in place processes to block previously identified and new right-wing extremist groups from using the platform in future.





3 The extremists using Facebook to build and fund a dangerous far-right international

The online network of far-right social media accounts exposed by this report is underpinned by an internationally influential offline network of far-right extremists operating out of Ukraine.

This offline network is using Facebook and Instagram to reach new audiences for its dangerous ideology, forge links with far-right groups worldwide and generate funding for its activities. Alarmingly, this network has already found some success: we know that domestic violent extremists arrested in the UK and the US in the last year took inspiration from them.

This section examines the three most influential groups in this network and their ideology: Azov Battalion, Misanthropic Division and Wotanjugend.

Azov Battalion

Originally a volunteer militia, Azov Battalion was officially incorporated into the National Guard of Ukraine during Russia's annexation of Crimea.⁴ Fighting against pro-Russian



forces, some of which also possess a neo-Nazi ideology, Azov views itself as a successor to a historical Ukrainian nationalist movement that allied with the Nazis to fight the Soviets.

The Azov Battallion is known to promote a neo-Nazi ideology, and has adopted the "Wolfsangel" and "Black Sun" symbols used by the Nazi SS as elements of its official insignia.⁵ The regiment's first commander was the far-

right nationalist Andriy Biletsky, who led neo-Nazi organisations Social-National Assembly and Patriot of Ukraine.⁶

Like a number of other actors in the region, not least pro-Russian forces carrying out an illegal occupation, the Azov Battalion has been accused of war crimes. Reports published by the Office of the UNited Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) have connected the regiment to mass looting, unlawful detention and torture.⁷

Drawing on the history of the Spanish Civil War and the slick propaganda videos of extremist groups like ISIS, Azov Battalion has actively recruited "foreign fighters" that share its ideology.8 The Soufan Center estimates that fifteen foreign fighters serving with Ukrainian forces travelled from the US. while ten travelled from the UK. In total, the Center estimates 3,879 foreign fighters have joined the Ukrainian side in the conflict, primarily from Russia and other Eastern European countries.9 An investigation by Bellingcat found that Azov had actively promoted participation in Ukraine's war with Russia as "an opportunity for American right-wingers to acquire combat and other practical experience to be deployed later within the United States after returning home."10

Concerns over Azov's role in recruiting and training far-right extremists led Congress to ban US arms from reaching the group in 2018.¹¹



Misanthropic Division

Misanthropic Division is so called because of its nihilistic brand of neo-Nazism. A manifesto released by the "Misanthropic Division



International" in 2015 stated that it was "composed with [sic] people who refuse this repugnant modern world" and declared "a cry of hatred towards human weakness".¹²

Like Azov Division, Misanthropic
Division, and features the SS Death's
Head on its "war flag".¹³ It also shares
Azov Battalion's use of Nordic symbols
and mythology favored by the Nazis,
occasionally using the slogan "Killing for
Wotan", the Norse god.¹⁴ Misanthropic
Division is also closely linked to
"National Socialist Black Metal" music,
sometimes calling itself a "Black Metal
Brotherhood".¹⁵

Misanthropic Division is also known to share Azov's neo-Nazi ideology. Its manifesto published in 2015 explicitly describes the group as "a NS [National Socialist] Brotherhood exclusive to european and eurodescendent men", adding that "the main purpose of NS is the Ubermensch, deprived of weakness, defunct and ugliness." In the same year, members of the group were reported to have desecrated a Holocaust memorial in Kiev, posting videos of the incident to social media. 17

Misanthropic Division's leading members are reported to have formed part of the "Right Sector" of the Euromaidan protests against the government of the time's decision to pursue closer ties with Russia instead of the European Union. 18 Following the annexation of Crimea and the outbreak of civil war with pro-Russian separatists within Ukraine, members of Misanthropic Division

formed a close relationship with the Azov Battalion. Misanthropic Division's 2015 manifesto states that its "main purpose" is "immediate support" for the military actions of Azov, and the group's Telegram channel has posted a series of military engagements it claims to have taken part in during Russia's annexation of Crimea.¹⁹

At least one member of Misanthropic Division has claimed to operate a network of cells throughout Europe, cooperating with "like-minded" groups.²⁰ This is corroborated by research from the UK anti-fascist organisation Hope Not Hate, which established that the Italian fascist Francesco Fontana was actively recruiting members of the UK far-right for the group, estimating that two or three had gone to fight alongside neo-Nazi forces in Ukraine.²¹



More recently, at least two far-right extremists with links to Misanthropic Division have been apprehended and charged with terror offences. In the US, Jarrett William Smith, a former Army Specialist who pleaded guilty to distributing instructions for making explosives over social media, is known to have expressed his admiration for



Misanthropic Division.²² There have been calls to monitor individuals linked to Misanthropic Division using US counterterror legislation.²³

In the UK, a neo-Nazi named Andrew Dymock is currently on trial accused of twelve terror offences after police found him in possession of a range of extremist material including clothing and flags linked to Misanthropic Division.²⁴

Now deleted messages from the Misanthropic Division Telegram channel claim that the group is no longer involved in paramilitary operations and is "just [an] on-line Telegram channel", but other recent messages show serving paramilitaries wearing Misanthropic Division symbols.²⁵ Recent arrests of extremists possessing Misanthropic Division material and the activity outlined in this report show it is still influencing far-right activists and raising funds.

Wotanjugend

Wotanjugend is neo-Nazi movement that promotes "National Socialist Black Metal" music. It is based in Ukraine and is known to have ties to individuals in Azov Battalion.

An investigation by journalists at Bellingcat found that the Wotanjugend movement was founded by Alexy Levkin, frontman of the National Socialist Black Metal band M8L8TH, so named to include the numeric code "88" which stands for "Heil Hitler". 26 Established in Russia but now based in Ukraine, Bellingcat identified Wotanjugend as "part of the country's far-right Azov movement". 27

Levkin has described Wotanjugend as "a mini-university for supporters of rightwing ideology" with aspirations of building a fascist international. Bellingcat reports that he met with members of the Rise Above Movement (RAM), a violent white supremacist group from the US. He has praised a number of far-right terrorists, including Anders Breivik and the Christchurch shooter Brenton Tarrant, as heroes.²⁸







4 Facebook hosts shopfronts for neo-Nazi merchandise that funds extremists

Facebook is offering far-right extremists linked to Azov Battalion, Misanthropic Divison and other neo-Nazi groups a "shopfront" that gives them access to mainstream audiences and a place to advertise neo-Nazi merchandise that helps finance their activities.

Sales of merchandise from these shopfront accounts on Facebook and Instagram are driving the revenue that powers a deeper network that has 113,000 followers across platforms including Telegram.

In this section of our report, we set out the structure of these far-right networks reaching into Facebook and Instagram, give examples of the neo-Nazi merchandise they sell there and explain how they are linked to violent extremist groups.

Typically, each network of accounts uses a Telegram channel to organise its efforts on other platforms and share its most extreme content, taking advantage of Telegram's refusal to act against extremist material on its platform.

In contrast, accounts on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube are used as "shopfronts" to advertise neo-Nazi merchandise to the widest possible audience, typically directing would-be customers back to an "endpoint" on Telegram, email or a website to complete transactions.

The networks examined in this section are made up of a number of components including Telegram channels, Facebook

Pages and Instagram accounts, as well as the websites and email addresses that they use to process sales of merchandise. Three of the networks we examine maintain small YouTube channels.

Each of these components has been placed into one of the following four categories:

- Promoters are external accounts that promote a network and the products it sells.
- Operators are accounts identified as the controllers of a network, where the operator is not identical with an account being used as a shopfront or endpoint.
- Shopfronts are the Facebook, Instagram or Telegram accounts used to advertise the merchandise that a network has for sale.
- Endpoints are the websites, email addresses and social media accounts used to conduct sales transactions. Shopfronts direct would-be customers to endpoints.

Where relevant, we have marked where elements of a network have been removed by a social media platform.

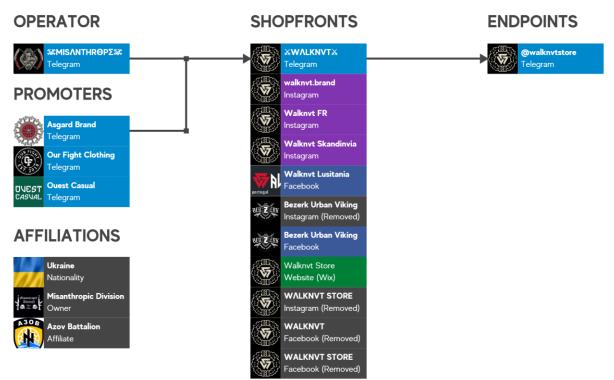
None of the networks we started investigating in July have been removed in their entirety.

A full list of all accounts studied is available as an appendix at the end of this report.









Walknyt is one of the oldest and best developed networks using Facebook and Instagram to promote the sale of neo-Nazi merchandise, and has clear links to Misanthropic Division.

Walknvt's core Facebook page was established in April 2016, and is part of a network of eight Facebook and Instagram accounts with a total of 10,000 followers. While Walknvt operates a website displaying all of its items for sale, since at least 6 June the network and its website have been directing would-be customers to make transactions through its "walknvtstore" Telegram account.²⁹ It is unclear whether this is because Walknvt's website, which runs on the Wix platform, can no longer access payment platforms, because of the extra security offered by Telegram or because conducting transactions directly offers an opportunity to recruit and radicalise customers. Archived versions of the Walknyt site show that it

has suffered previous temporary outages in processing website payments.³⁰

Walknvt appears to be operated by members of Misanthropic Division. The "Misanthrope" Telegram channel which is dedicated to promoting the organisation has described Walknvt as "our channel", and has promoted Walknvt's products.³¹ Accordingly, the Walknvt website contains "Misanthrope" in its title, and posts to Walknvt's main Facebook page carry the joint branding "WALKNVT STORE/MD.IV.ISI.ON".³²

The network's dedicated "Misanthrope" Telegram channel serves to promote Misanthropic Division's ideology and its supposed military record. One post sets out the official symbols of the group, including its "war flag" featuring AK-47 rifles and the SS Death's Head.³³ Other posts set out the group's ideology and history.³⁴



Walknvt's links to Misanthropic Division are reinforced by its sale of t-shirts and patches bearing the Misanthropic Division's name and logo.³⁵ The group also sells items featuring neo-Nazi iconography including the Black Sun, the SS Death's Head and images of Adolf Hitler himself.³⁶ One t-shirt bears the message "support your local Einsatzkommando", referring to the Nazi soldiers whose mission was to exterminate Jews and other minorities.³⁷ Walknyt claims to ship worldwide, with the exception of Belarus and Russia, and maintains accounts focused on France, Scandinavia and the US.

The network includes an account called "Bezerk Urban Viking". Transparency records show that the Facebook page for this account was originally called "Walknvt Viking Brand", and posts show it was selling products identical to those being sold by Walknvt today. The accounts appear to have fallen out of use in September 2019.

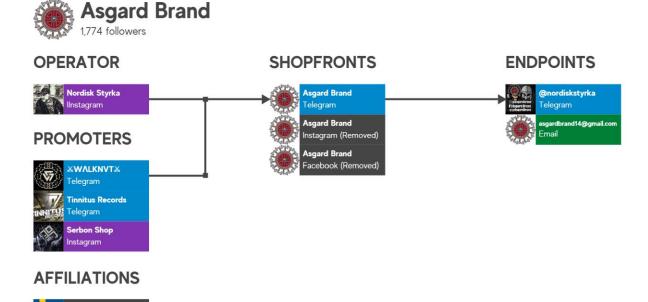
In early September, Facebook removed Walknvt's most popular accounts, but left others intact. Walknvt has since opened a new "Walknvt Brand" account on Instagram, which is also owned by Facebook, and continued to promote its products to 654 followers. Walknvt was able to resume its operations so quickly in part because it had directed followers to Telegram, where they were able to receive new instructions on where to view its products.³⁸

In another sign of its neo-Nazi ideology, Walknyt registered its web address under the name "Rahowa88", a compound of a neo-Nazi abbreviation meaning "Racial Holy War" and the "88" code meaning "Heil Hitler".³⁹









Asgard Brand's neo-Nazi sympathies and nationality are made clear in an early post featuring Swedish flags and the message "Big thanks people" followed by two 'Eight Ball' emojis, a widely recognised neo-Nazi code that uses the eighth letter of the alphabet to communicate an acronym for "Heil Hitler".⁴⁰



While Asgard Brand sells some products featuring neo-Nazi imagery in the form of the SS Black Sun symbol, most items focus on white supremacist imagery and slogans. ⁴¹ One t-shirt features white men poised to attack caricatured Muslims, with the slogan "Angry Europeans -

White Rex Against Tolerance".⁴² Other items bear the supremacist slogans "fight for your people, defend Europe", "White Lives Matter" and "The North Race".⁴³



Many of Asgard Brand's products are from a Swiss brand called White Rex whose biography echoes the ideology of Misanthropic Division in stating that it "encourages all Europeans to embrace the warrior spirit of their ancestors, and fight back against the modern world." The White Rex website links to a now-defunct Facebook page, suggesting that it is now dependent on accounts like Asgard Brand for promotion and sales.

Asgard Brand operates accounts on both Facebook and Instagram where it had



 \square

been allowed to amass 992 followers in total despite its use of the neo-Nazi Black Sun symbol and codes such as "88". ⁴⁶ Facebook has since removed Asgard's Page, but left its Instagram accounts intact. Unlike some other neo-Nazi networks, Asgard Brand encourages sales enquiries over direct message on Instagram, although transactions appear to be made using either an email address or a Telegram account in the name of Patrick Svensson. ⁴⁷

The Walknvt network has promoted Asgard Brand, and in return been promoted by Asgard Brand.⁴⁸ Tinnitus Records has also promoted Asgard to its followers.⁴⁹ One Instagram post from January also indicates that Asgard Brand was selling Walknvt products before focusing exclusively on products from White Rex.⁵⁰

Asgard Brand recently used Instagram to promote a leaflet design featuring Kyle Rittenhouse, the teenager under investigation for shooting dead two Black Lives Matter protesters, with the message "Kyle was right". The leaflets are branded "International Conservative

Community", referring to a new Telegram channel that appears to be a front for the US Rise Above Movement, a neo-Nazi movement with links to Azov Battalion.⁵²





16





AFFILIATIONS



ENDPOINTS



Asgard Store has a major presence on Instagram, where it has 5,157 followers and sells products featuring the logo of Wotanjugend, a Ukrainian neo-Nazi cult reported to venerate the far-right terrorist Anders Breivik and Adolf Hitler himself.53

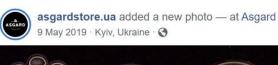
The group's Facebook page advertises products featuring overt neo-Nazi imagery, including the SS Death's Head and Black Sun symbols, partially obscured to avoid algorithmic detection.⁵⁴ Other products feature the

name and logo of Ukraine's neo-Nazi Azov Battalion.55

Unlike other neo-Nazi businesses profiled in this report, Asgard Store maintains a physical shopfront in Kiev, as well offering mail orders for addresses in Ukraine over direct message on both Facebook and Instagram.⁵⁶ The website used by Asgard Store as its username, asgardstore.ua, does not exist and has not been archived.









MARCH 12



Ukraine Nationality



Website (GoDaddy)







Our Fight Clothing nstagram (Removed)

Our Fight Clothing Co. promotes itself primarily through a private Instagram account. Its website shows it is a reseller of Walknyt branded merchandise. including items that feature the SS Black Sun and promote Misanthropic Division's ideology.⁵⁷ In return, Our Fight has been promoted by Walknvt's main Telegram account.58

Our Fight's domain was purchased from GoDaddy.⁵⁹ Examination of the site's

source code shows that many of the sites assets are hosted by wsimg.com, an image hosting platform owned by GoDaddu.60

Our Fight's Telegram channel has promoted the Rise Above Movement (RAM), a US neo-Nazi group that is known to have visited Ukraine to meet members of Azov Battalion. 61



Walknyt Store- Walknyt Fitted Hat \$18.00

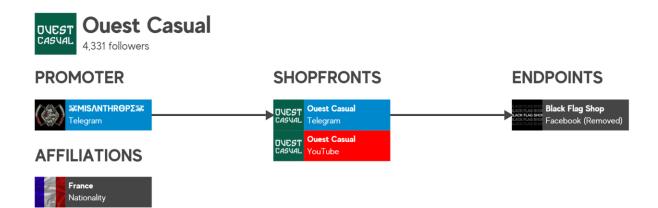


Walknyt Store - I Want You Damned

\$25.99 \$23.99 You save \$2.00 (8%)







Ouest Casual (West Casual) is a French Telegram channel with 3,910 members which protes neo-Nazi ideology. One of the channel's posts, shared by the Walknvt-linked "ΜΙΣΛΝΤΗΚΘΡΣ " Telegram channel, features a photo of guns and ammunition in front of a flag bearing the logo "Misanthropic Division France", with the caption "photo sent by a former French volunteer engaged on the Ukrainian front".62

As well as promoting Walknvt products featuring neo-Nazi and Misanthropic Division imagery, Ouest Casual has promoted a brand called "Black Flag Shop" that was until recently operating on Facebook.⁶³ Black Flag Shop offered a number of neo-Nazi products including t-shirts with the slogans "fascist all star"

and "Paris fascist action", as well as a hat featuring the SS Death's Head and Black Sun symbols that reads "sea, sun & fascism".⁶⁴

Ouest Casual's close relationship with Black Flag Shop is suggested by its use of a 'promo code' that entitles customers to free stickers with every purchase.⁶⁵ Transactions with Black Flag Shop are made by email and by private message on Facebook.

A video recently uploaded to Ouest Casual's YouTube channel advertises their participation in a knife fighting tournament in Ukraine alongside members of Azov Battalion, Misanthropic Division and Wotanjugend.⁶⁶













Midgård Records is another brand promoted by Walknvt's main channel that has promoted Walknvt in return.⁶⁷ Midgård primarily sells neo-Nazi music from bands such as Skrewdriver, but also sells clothing featuring the logo of the Nazi SA, the SS Black Sun symbol and the slogan "keep it white".⁶⁸

One promotional message in Midgård's Telegram channel offers a promotional

code for a free gift with the purchase of an album from the neo-Nazi band Whitelaw which an image of the British fascist Oswald Mosley.⁶⁹

Midgård Records ships worldwide, offering direct website payments using Visa or Mastercard, as well as an option to pay using Bitcoin. The Midgård Records website is hosted by one.com.⁷⁰



T-87 Pluton Svea - SA Black

Det finns ingen beskrivning för denna produkt ännu.



T-06 Rac'n'roll

Det finns ingen beskrivning för denna produkt







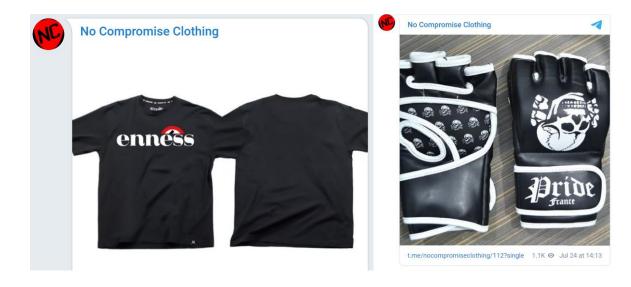






No Compromise Clothing has been promoted by Walknvt, and takes orders for items including boxing gloves featuring the SS Death's Head and over Telegram.⁷¹ One post on 20 April, Hitler's

birthday, reads "Our boss has his birthday today and that means a sunny day. In honor of the day, only German quality and just t-shirts. Plus, all orders coming today without postage!"⁷²









Serbon Shop is another neo-Nazi retailer promoted by the Walknvt account whose Instagram account promotes products featuring the SS Black Sun symbol and the swastika, as well as products produced by Asgard Brand.⁷³ Serbon's Telegram account reveals a wider range of products, such as masks featuring the white power symbol.⁷⁴

According to Serbon Shop's Instagram biography, the account was established in 2017, although the earliest posts in the network are from 2020. This may be explained by the profile picture of the "Serbon Srbija" Telegram account that handles the network's transactions, which features the logo of a brand called "White City Slavic Company" that may have been Serbon Shop's predecessor.⁷⁵











Tinnitus Records is a US-based outlet that ships neo-Nazi music worldwide, and is one of the brands promoted by Walknvt.⁷⁶ Albums promoted on the front page of Tinnitus Records' website include one featuring the SS Death's Head logo and another depicting white supremacists murdering a black man and a member of the Jewish Defence League.⁷⁷

Tinnitus also advertises neo-Nazi merchandise on its Instagram account, recently posting to announce the sale of a t-shirt reading "support your local Einsatzkommando".⁷⁸

Source code for the Tinnitus Records website shows that it is being hosted by Wordpress.

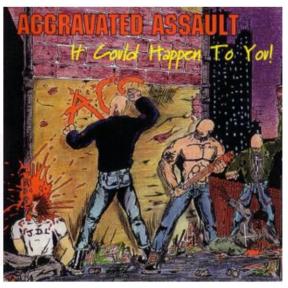








Aggressive Force – Same \$14.00



Aggravated Assault – It Could Happen To You! \$14.00





@UrbanRageOrder



PROMOTER SHOPFRONTS ENDPOINTS





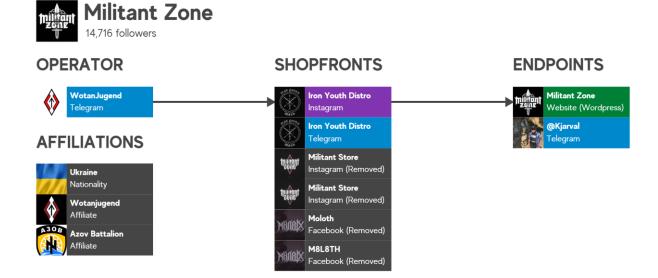


Another account promoted by Walknvt, Urban Rage Streetwear operates a private Instagram account to help advertise its products, which include tshirts bearing the slogans "white lives matter - stop white genocide".⁷⁹ Urban Rage takes orders by email and Telegram, and says it accepts payment by bank transfer or PayPal.⁸⁰









Militant Zone is a retail outlet for the neo-Nazi "Wotanjugend" movement and its stable of "National Socialist Black Metal" bands. Many items for sale on the Militant Zone website feature Nazi symbols such as the Wolfsangel and images of the "Sieg Heil" salute.⁸¹ Source code for the Militant Zone website suggests that it is being hosted by Wordpress.

During the course of writing this report, Facebook removed the majority of this network's accounts, but left intact an Instagram account named "Iron Youth Distro" that states it is affiliated with Militant Zone and sells many of the same products. 82 Iron Youth Distro directs customers to a Telegram account in the name of "Kyryll Kjarval".







iron.youth_distro

Follow



• •

29 posts

1,270 followers

1,803 following

IRON YOUTH DISTRO

Книги, мерч, музыка и дух тёмного времени иаДоставка по всей Украине и миру

X Militant Zone/Plomin/Орієнтир

🖁 Одесса, Ул. Канатная, 6

****+380993032833

t.me/ironyouthdstr







iron.youth_distro #M8L8tH - The Pagan Front - мерч группы с ретроспективной отсылкой к культовой международной формации Темного Искусства ТРГ. Легенды минувших десятилетий!

Доступна вся размерная сетка (S-XXL) - 350 UAH.

#ukraine #blackmetal #thepaganfront #paganfront #M8L8TH #militant_zone

iron.youth_distro • Follow

Odessa, Ukraine

12w



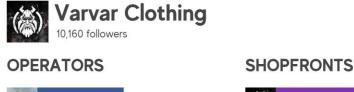














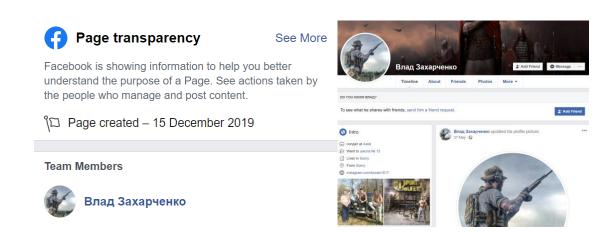
VARVAR Clothing
Telegram

ENDPOINTS

A308 Azov Battalion
Affiliate

Ukraine

Varvar Clothing does not sell products that feature neo-Nazi or white supremacist themes, but does promote the neo-Nazi Azov Battalion.⁸³ Transparency data for the retailer's Facebook page reveals that it is operated by a member of Azov named Vlad Zakharchenko.⁸⁴











ENDPOINTS

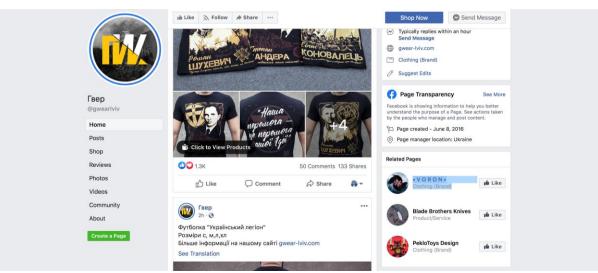


Voron sells a number of items featuring neo-Nazi symbolism including Swastika patterns and the SS Black Sun.⁸⁵ In the course of our research, we found that Facebook's algorithms were promoting

the Voron page by featuring it on the "Related Pages" section of other pages selling far-right merchandise.















SHOPFRONTS

ENDPOINTS

Website (hosteurope



administrator S. Raack warning, "Prohibited or indexed articles, be they sound carriers or other items, are not available from us. Asking is pointless! If an article has been banned or indexed in the meantime, we will no longer deliver it!"

The Opos Records website is hosted by the German provider hosteurope.de.⁸⁷

Opos Records carefully curates its presence on Instagram to avoid the use of overt neo-Nazi imagery or rhetoric and preserve access to its 4,462 followers on the platform. However, its website offers a range of products featuring Nazi imagery including the "Übermensch" and the slogan "N Socialist Soundsystem".⁸⁶

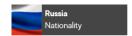
Transactions with Opos are conducted by bank transfer, with the site's





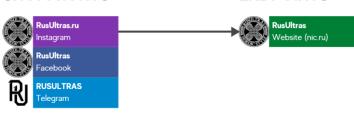






SHOPFRONTS

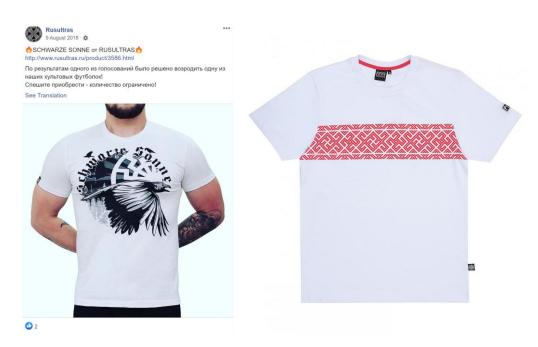
ENDPOINTS



RusUltras does not promote products with obvious neo-Nazi symbolism on Instagram, to ensure it maintains access to its 13,700 followers on the platform. However, its website offers a number of products featuring swastikas and other Nazi symbolism.⁸⁸ RusUltras is less cautious on Facebook, where it has

advertised products featuring the SS Black Sun symbol.⁸⁹

The Rusultras website is hosted by the Russian provider nic.ru.⁹⁰ Sales are made in cash, using the Russian payment service provider QIWI or using a bank card.⁹¹





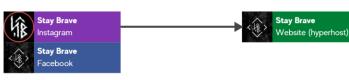




Ukraine Nationality

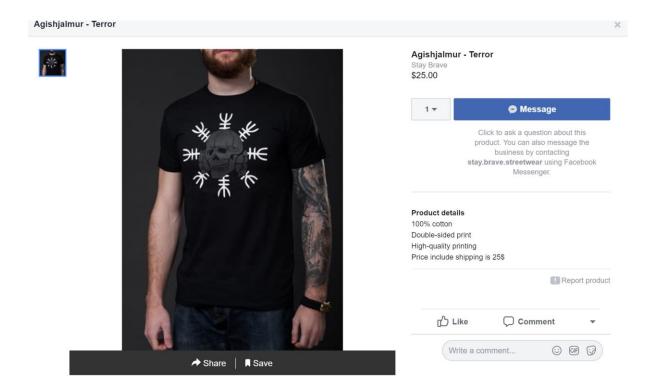
SHOPFRONTS

ENDPOINTS



Stay Brave Streetwear sells clothing featuring neo-Nazi imagery both on its website and directly on Facebook using the retail tools available to pages. One item for sale on Facebook features the SS Death's Head symbol.⁹² Other designs on the brand's website feature slogans such as "white lives matter" underlined with the barrel of a machine gun.⁹³

Stay Brave operates a website hosted by a Ukrainian company called Hyperhost.ua, but it directs would-be customers to "write us email or Instagram direct" to place orders. ⁹⁴ Its website states that payments are processed by Western Union. ⁹⁵





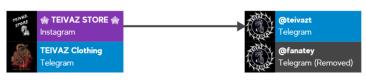






SHOPFRONTS

ENDPOINTS



Posts to Teivaz Clothing's Instagram show that it sells products bearing the SS Black Sun symbol and slogans such as "white lives matter". 96 One early post also features the wolfsangel symbol of Avoz Battalion, the Nazi Imperial Eagle

and the number 88, a neo-Nazi code meaning "Heil Hitler".⁹⁷

Teivaz instructs would-be customers to contact it directly over private message on Instagram or Telegram.





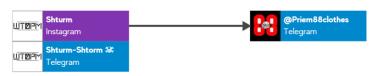






SHOPFRONTS

ENDPOINTS

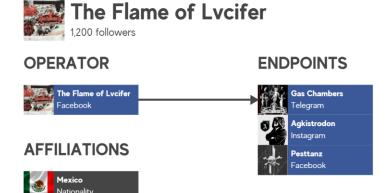


Shturm x Storm uses Instagram to advertise products featuring the slogan "White Lives Matter", the SS Death's Head symbol and the swastika. Orders are processed by a Telegram account named "clothes88ua" whose profile picture features the numeric code "88" for "Heil Hitler", the SS symbol and the SS Death's Head.⁹⁸



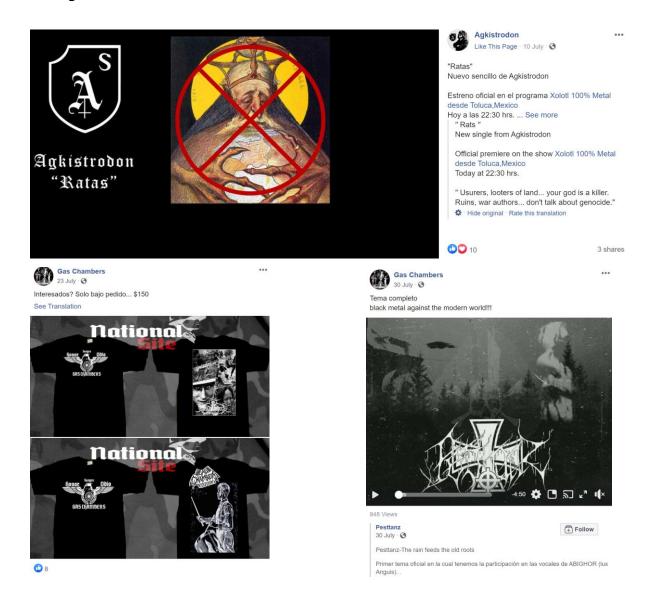






The Flame of Lvcifer is a record label based in Mexico that releases records from bands using neo-Nazi imagery. One of the bands, named "Gas Chambers", sells merchandise featuring the SS Black Sun symbol, while another called

"Agkistrodon" released a record called "Rats" featuring classical antisemitic imagery depicting the Rothschilds controlling the world with the message "don't talk about genocide". 99





5 Facebook failed to act on far-right extremism two years ago

In November 2018, the Counter Extremism Project (CEP) catalogued a series of Facebook pages and groups that contravened the platform's prohibition on hate speech. One of those pages was Walknvt, which forms the heart of the network of neo-Nazi accounts we identify in the previous section.

Our own review of the forty pages and groups they highlighted has revealed that another three with a total of 1,381 followers continued to operate and share extreme right-wing material after publication of the CEP's report.

One of these, American Defense Records, was removed in November 2020 before this report's publication.

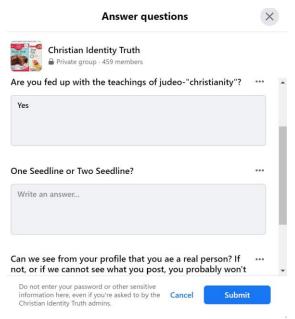


American Defense Records

The Counter Extremism Project identified this page as "a skinhead record company that has released music from several neo-Nazi bands". Despite being marked as "removed" at the time the CEP's report was published, the same page with an identical "page created" date of 18 August 2017 was allowed to return to the platform. The new page vowed to "release music that is banned" and advertises records featuring "Celtic cross" white supremacist symbol. 101

Christian Identity Truth

Entry to the group is restricted, but the questions posed to applicants seeking to join the group reveal its belief in the "two seedlines" doctrine of white supremacist Christian Identity theology. This doctrine posits that only white people descended from Adam and Eve, while Jews were descended from the "serpent seed".¹⁰²





The American Institute of Theology

This page also promotes white supremacist Christian Identity theology, and the CEP found it to be affiliated with Kingdom Identity Ministries who claim Jews are descended from Satan. Its racist ideology in posts claiming that Muslims "[hate] Europeans, Christians, Buddhists, Jews, atheists" and a graphic misquoting Jesus to imply he supported the deportation of foreigners with the label "Christ on Ethno State". 103





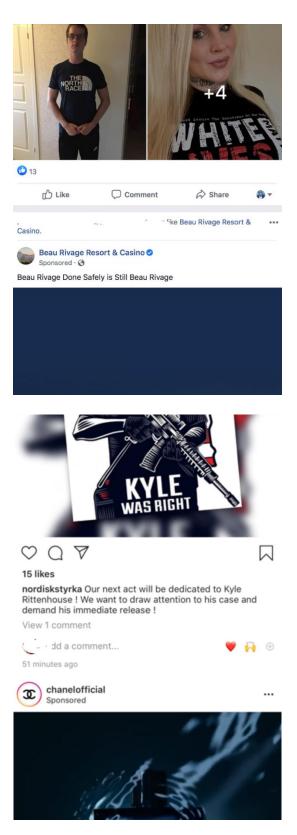
6 Facebook is damaging brands by placing their ads next to neo-Nazi material

Facebook's business model is built on selling brands access to its users in the form of advertising. These adverts try to capture a fraction of the user's attention by appearing between the posts they see in their news feed.

But by allowing far-right extremists to build networks on its platform, Facebook is charging brands only to display their adverts next to extreme neo-Nazi content that is damaging to any selfrespecting brand's reputation.

In the course of our research, we identified adverts from the following brands that were placed next to posts from right-wing extremist groups:

- Door Dash
- Smash Burger
- Under Armour
- Aleve US
- Beau Rivage Casino
- GoDaddy
- Carvana
- Oreo Cookies
- Mulan by Disney
- Google Ads
- Chanel
- Spotify





The problem also extends to political campaigning, with posts from the campaigns of both Donald Trump and Joe Biden appearing next to posts from neo-Nazi brands.



Remarkably, an advert placed by
Facebook itself appeared next to a post
from Walknvt, the brand most closely
affiliated with the extremist
Misanthropic Division group. This
occurred after Facebook had taken
action against a limited number of
Walknvt pages and was a result of the
platform's failure to prevent Walknvt
from making a new Instagram account.



Records of all relevant adverts are included in an appendix at the end of this report.





7 Big Tech must withdraw its support for this far-right network

This report lays bare the extent to which Big Tech is supporting an international far-right network that is profiting from its access to over 160,000 users on mainstream platforms.

Facebook bears the greatest responsibility for this, as its failure to enforce its own policies on hate speech, even when presented with clear evidence from the Counter Extremism Project, have allowed these networks to grow unchecked.

Uprooting the network

Facebook must ensure that all of the Instagram and Facebook accounts identified in this report are removed, and be prepared to share what information it has with the authorities and experts like the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism where extremist groups may have profited.

The same applies to the major web hosting platforms that are supporting some of the retail websites underpinning these networks. GoDaddy, Wix, Wordpress, PayPal and Western Union must all ensure that they are not enabling neo-Nazi groups to profit and spread hate.

Preventing its return

Facebook failed to remove Walknvt, the core of this neo-Nazi network, two years ago. It has failed again in the last month when it removed some of its elements but allowed others to remain intact and new accounts with the same name and branding to spring up.

This must never happen again. Facebook must take responsibility for maintaining a list of extremist groups banned, working in collaboration with experts in the field, and proactively check that they have not gained a new foothold on its platforms.

Increasing transparency

This report raises serious concerns over whether Facebook can be trusted to act on right-wing extremism when it is found on its platforms. To restore trust, Facebook should release monthly reports with details of far-right extremist groups removed from its properties. It should also make a commitment to ensure those reports are shared with all relevant national and international organisations.

Facebook's internal processes should also be made more transparent, starting with a clear and explicit statement of its policy on far-right extremism. Building on that foundation, it should publish a clear account of how its systems for detecting and removing far-right extremism work, including the role of automated systems

Working with advertisers

Based on Facebook's past transgressions and lack of transparency, it is incumbent on the digital advertising industry to deploy its considerable financial leverage over Facebook and Instagram to compel Facebook to act. The unacceptable prevalence of branded extremist merchandise – often legitimated by multinational brand



adverts – represent a transparent challenge to the advertising industry's new Global Alliance for Responsible Media (GARM) to prove it can walk the walk, not merely talk the talk, by demanding Facebook act against its profiting from hate.

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Appendix: Neo-Nazi accounts identified in this report

Account Name	Grouping	Platform	Nationality	Current
American Defense Records	American Defense Records	Facebook	US	Removed
<u>Asgard Brand</u>	Asgard Brand	Facebook	Sweden	Removed
Asgard Brand	Asgard Brand	Email	Sweden	N/A
Asgard Brand	Asgard Brand	Telegram	Sweden	301
Asgard-brand	Asgard Brand	Instagram	Sweden	Removed
<u>nordiskstyrka</u>	Asgard Brand	Instagram	Sweden	761
Patrick Svensson	Asgard Brand	Telegram	Sweden	N/A
asgardstore.ua	Asgard Store	Instagram	Ukraine	5,157
<u>Asgardstore.ua</u>	Asgard Store	Telegram	Ukraine	270
asgardstore.ua	Asgard Store	Facebook	Ukraine	269
Christian Identity Truth	Christian Identity Truth	Facebook	US	459
<u>Agkistrodon</u>	Flame of Lvcifer	Facebook	Mexico	225
<u>Gas Chambers</u>	Flame of Lvcifer	Facebook	Mexico	686
<u>Pesttanz</u>	Flame of Lvcifer	Facebook	Mexico	160
The Flame of Lycifer Records	Flame of Lvcifer	Facebook	Mexico	129
& distro				
<u>Midgård For a brighter</u> tomorrow	Midgård Records	Website	Sweden	N/A
Midgård Records	Midgård Records	Telegram	Sweden	752
IRON YOUTH DISTRO	Militant Zone	Instagram	Ukraine	1,268
<u>Iron Youth Distro</u>	Militant Zone	Telegram	Ukraine	144
Kyryll Kjarval	Militant Zone	Telegram	Ukraine	N/A
M8L8TH	Militant Zone	Facebook	Ukraine	Removed
Militant Store	Militant Zone	Instagram	Ukraine	Removed
Militant Zone Militant Black Metal	Militant Zone	Website	Ukraine	N/A
<u>Militant.zone</u>	Militant Zone	Facebook	Ukraine	Removed
Moloth	Militant Zone	Facebook	Ukraine	Removed
<u>WotanJugend</u>	Militant Zone	Telegram	Ukraine	14,716
No Compromise Clothing	No Compromise Clothing	Email	Finland	N/A

Safer Web



No Compromise Clothing	No Compromise Clothing	Telegram	Finland	195
ONE PEOPLE ONE STRUGGLE	Opos Records	YouTube	Germany	1,640
<u>Opos Records</u>	Opos Records	Website	Germany	N/A
OPOS RECORDS	Opos Records	Instagram	Germany	4,430
OPOS RECORDS (offiziell)	Opos Records	Telegram	Germany	3,136
Black Flag Shop	Ouest Casual	Facebook	France	Removed
<u>Ouest Casual</u>	Ouest Casual	Telegram	France	3,910
<u>Ouest Casual</u>	Ouest Casual	YouTube	France	421
Our Fight Clothing Co.	Our Fight Clothing Co	Telegram	Ukraine	728
Our Fight Clothing Co Home	Our Fight Clothing Co	Website	Ukraine	N/A
OurFight_5	Our Fight Clothing Co	Instagram	Ukraine	Removed
OurFightClothing Co	Our Fight Clothing Co	YouTube	Ukraine	Removed
<u>RusUltras</u>	RUSULTRAS	Website	Russia	N/A
RUSULTRAS	RUSULTRAS	Telegram	Russia	214
Rusultras	RUSULTRAS	Facebook	Russia	113
RUSULTRAS.RU	RUSULTRAS	Instagram	Russia	13,728
Serbon Shop	Serbon Shop	Instagram	Serbia	2,189
Serbon Shop	Serbon Shop	Telegram	Serbia	346
Serbon Srbija	Serbon Shop	Telegram	Serbia	N/A
<u>clothes88ua</u>	Shturm	Telegram	Ukraine	N/A
<u>Shturm</u>	Shturm	Instagram	Ukraine	400
Shturm-Shtorm 🔯	Shturm	Telegram	Ukraine	44
X Aggressive clothing brand	Stay Brave Streetwear	Instagram	Ukraine	15,111
Stay Brave	Stay Brave Streetwear	Facebook	Ukraine	643
Stay Brave – Aggressive clothing company	Stay Brave Streetwear	Website	Ukraine	N/A
TEIVAZ STORE	Teivaz Clothing	Instagram	Ukraine	3,941
<u>TEIVAZ</u>	Teivaz Clothing	Telegram	Ukraine	N/A
TEIVAZ Clothing	Teivaz Clothing	Telegram	Ukraine	Deleted
<u>Teivaz Clothing</u>	Teivaz Clothing	Telegram	Ukraine	519
The American Institute of Theology	The American Institute of Theology	Facebook	US	391
<u>Tinnitus Records</u>	Tinnitus Records	Telegram	US	388
	Tinnitus Records	Instagram		66
<u>Tinnitus Records</u>	HIIIIIIUS RECUIUS	IIIISIayiaiii	0.0	00





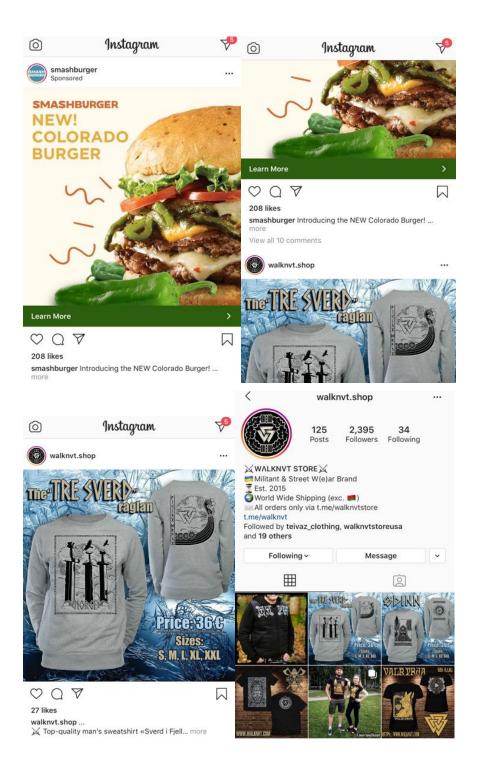
Walknvt Lusitania WALKNVT STORE	Walknvt Walknvt	Facebook Facebook	Ukraine	11 Removed
Walknvt FR cp	Walknyt	Instagram		489
WalkNvt	Walknyt	Instagram		105
WALKNVT	Walknvt	Instagram	Hkraino	704
Misanthrope Walknvt Store Kuiv	Walknvt	Website	Ukraine	N/A
Berzerk Urban Viking	Walknvt	Instagram		Removed
Berzerk Urban Viking	Walknvt	Facebook		1,504
₩\lknvt\\	Walknvt	Telegram	Ukraine	2,994
₩\(\text{NVT STORE}\)	Walknvt	Instagram		Removed
<u></u> ΜΙΣΛΝΤΗΡΟΡΣ Δ ΜΙ	Walknvt	Telegram	Ukraine	868
	Voron	Instagram		6,552
	Voron	Facebook		10,519
X UA	.,			10 =15
	Varvar Clothing	Instagram	Ukraine	6,963
Влад Захарченко	Varvar Clothing	Facebook	Ukraine	N/A
<u>Varvar Varvar</u>	Varvar Clothing	Facebook	Ukraine	1,739
Сильних Духом)				
Varvar Clothing (Одяг Для	Varvar Clothing	Facebook	Ukraine	810
<u>Varvar clothing</u>	Varvar Clothing	Facebook	Ukraine	301
VARVAR Clothing	Varvar Clothing	Telegram	Ukraine	347
<u>Urban Rage Streetwear</u>	Urban Rage Streetwear	Instagram	Hungary	115
<u>Urban Rage Streetwear</u>	Urban Rage Streetwear	Telegram	Hungary	204
<u>Urban Rage Streetwear</u>	Urban Rage Streetwear	Email	Hungary	N/A
<u>Geri Kufi</u>	Urban Rage Streetwear	Telegram	Hungary	N/A
<u>Tinnitus Records - Tinnitus</u> <u>Records</u>	Tinnitus Records	Website	US	N/A





Appendix: Examples of brand damage

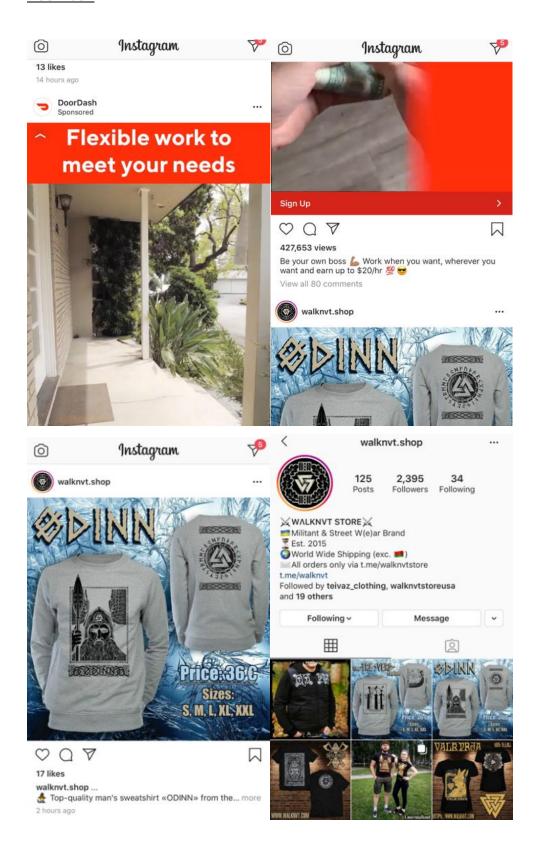
Smash Burger





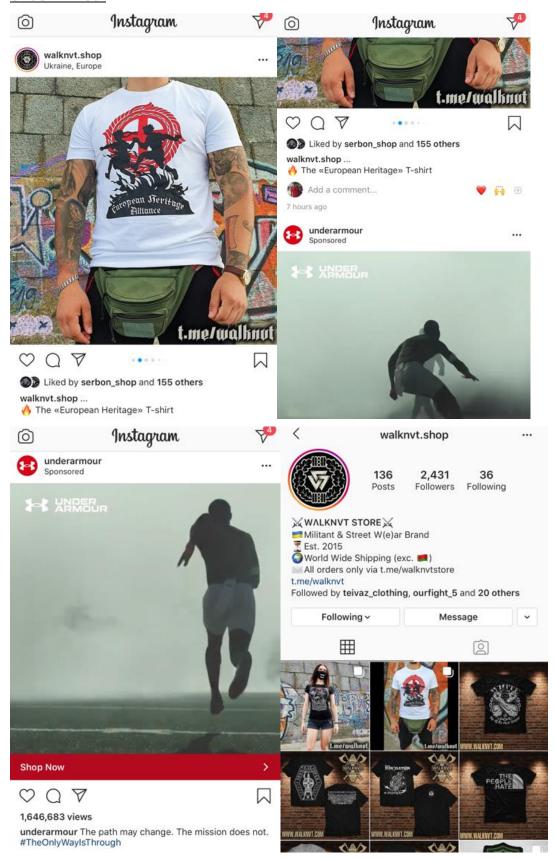


DoorDash



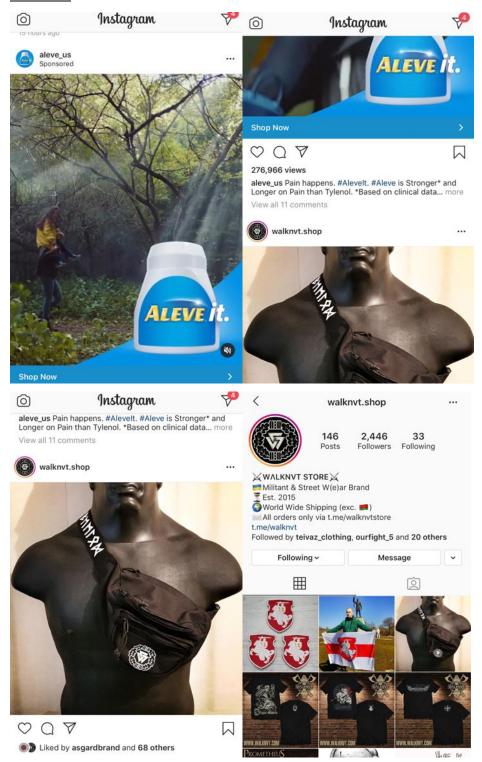


Under Armour

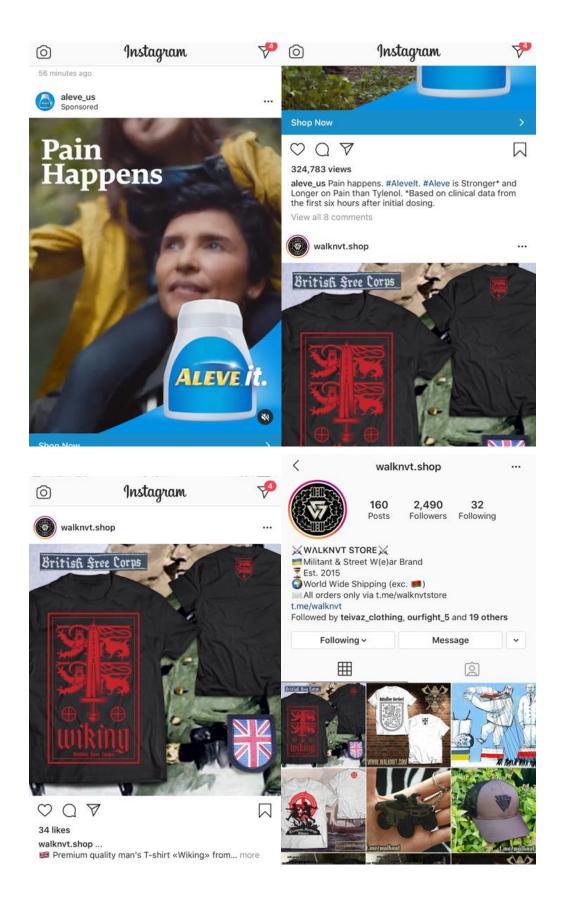




Aleve US



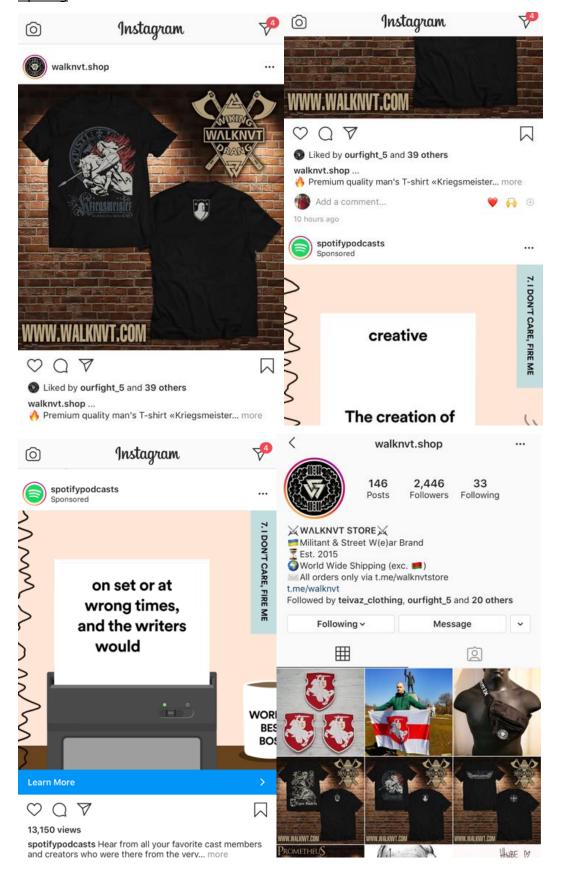








Spotify







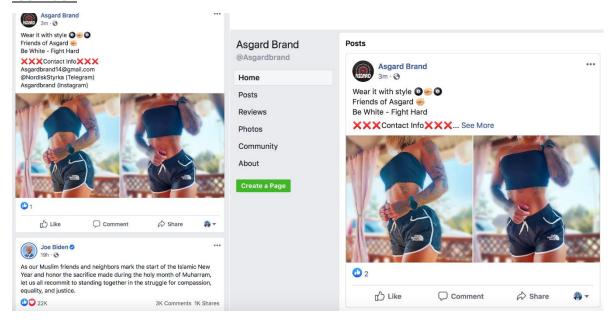
Donald Trump







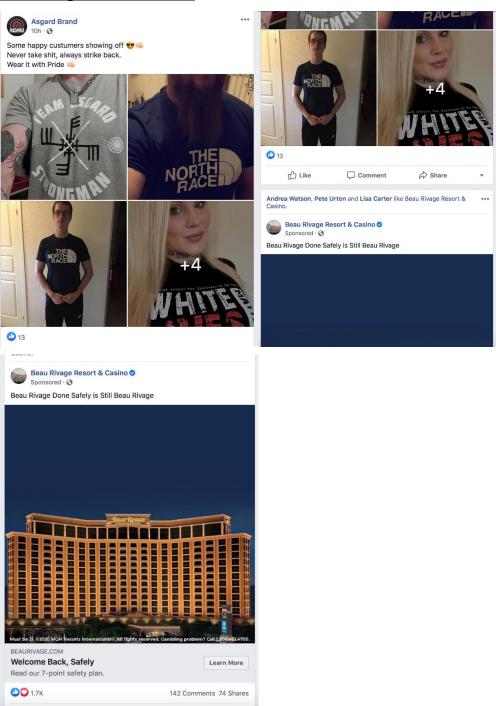
Joe Biden







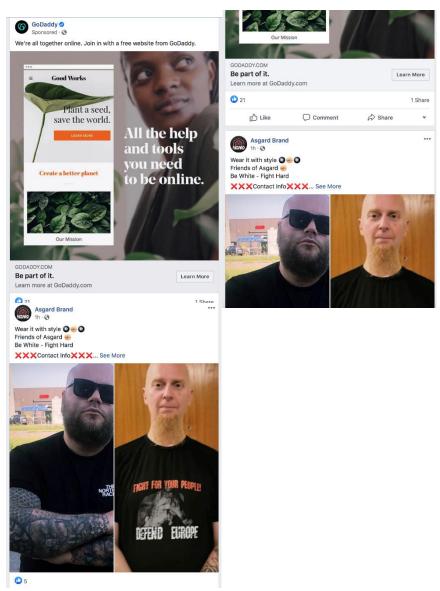
Beau Rivage Resort & Casino





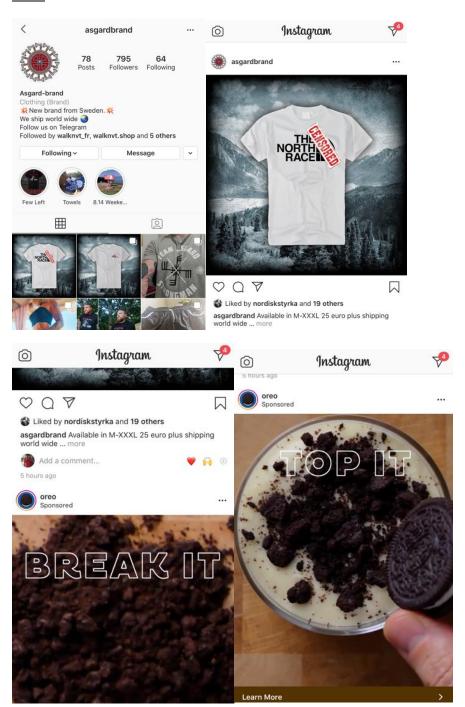


GoDaddy





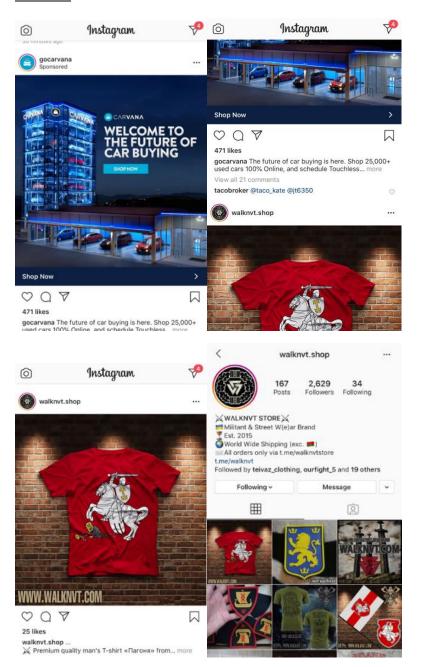
<u>Oreo</u>





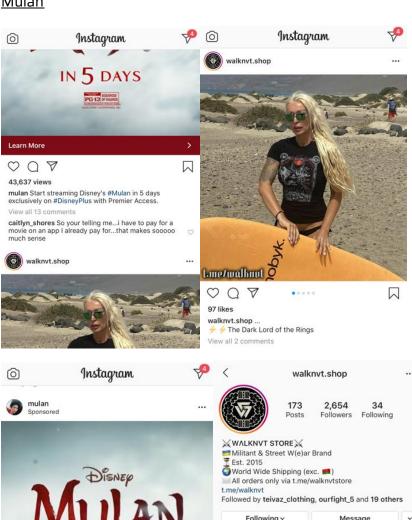


<u>Carvana</u>





<u>Mulan</u>

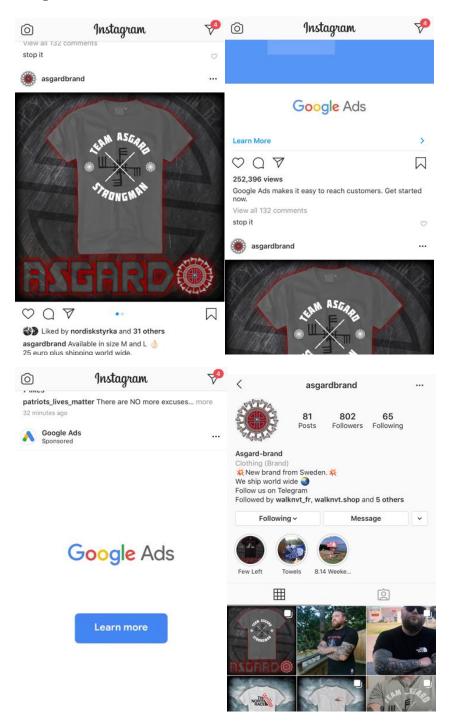






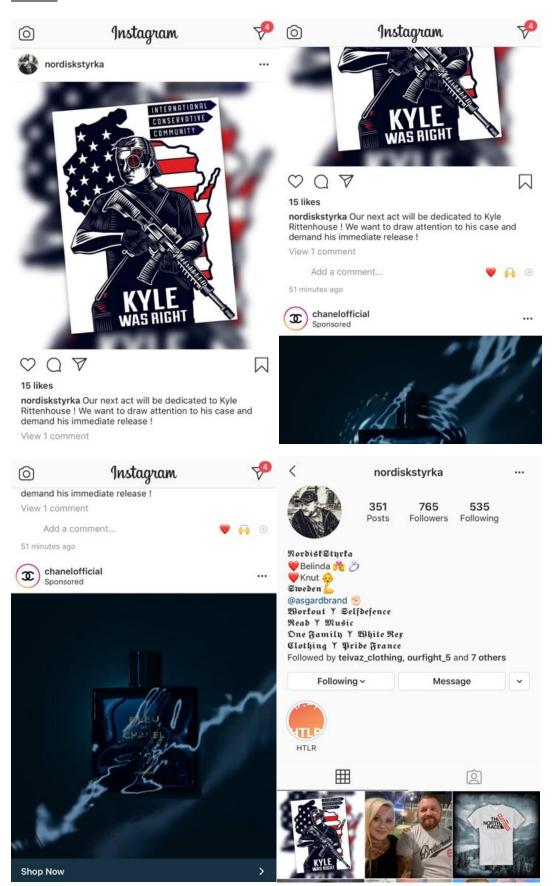


Google Ads





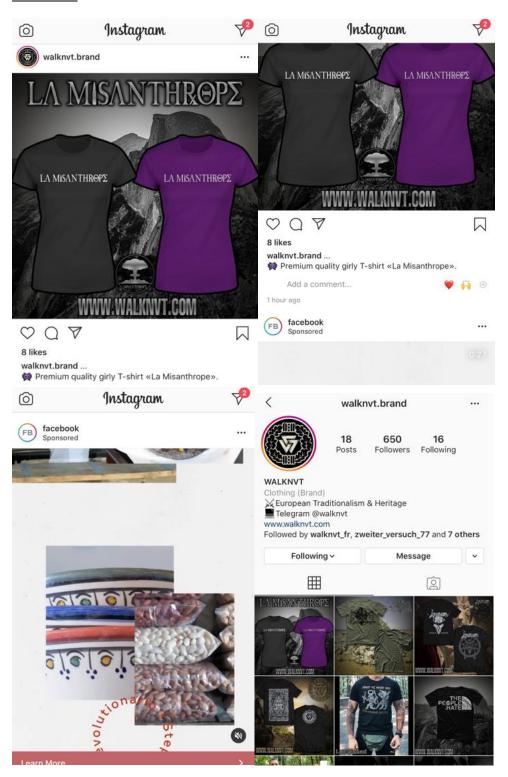
Chanel







<u>Facebook</u>





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⁴ The Telegraph, 11 August 2014, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/ukraine/11025137/Ukraine-crisis-the-neo-Nazi-brigade-fighting-pro-Russian-separatists.html

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² Radio Free Europe, 14 November 2018, https://www.rferl.org/a/azov-ukraine-s-most-prominent-ultranationalist-group-sets-its-sights-on-u-s-europe/29600564.html

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¹¹ The Hill, 27 March 2018, https://thehill.com/policy/defense/380483-congress-bans-arms-to-controversial-ukrainian-militia-linked-to-neo-nazis

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