**Companies Pull Facebook Ads Over Violent Content**

By [AP / Sarah Skidmore](http://techland.time.com/author/timeassociatedpress/)May 30, 2013

Facebook Inc. lost more than a dozen advertisers, some just temporarily, after a campaign drew attention to pages on the social network that promoted violence against women.

Women, Action and the Media launched the campaign last week to get Facebook to end hate speech on its website and urged advertisers to pull their support. The content included pages that had grisly photos and mottos that encouraged rape, abuse and other violence against women.

The campaign elicited more than 5,000 emails to Facebook advertisers and more than 60,000 posts on Twitter from supporters. Women, Action and the Media said that 15 companies agreed to pull advertising over the matter. Two of the biggest, Nissan and Zipcar, say they will resume advertising on the social network because of steps Facebook is taking to fix the problem.

Facebook [said Tuesday](http://techland.time.com/2013/05/29/facebook-pressured-to-take-action-on-violence-against-women/) that its systems failed to work effectively to identify and remove the hate speech, and it is working to take such content down. The company said it would review its guidelines, update training for employees and increase accountability for those who post such matter. It also said it would work more closely with women’s groups.

“We need to do better – and we will,” Marne Levine, Facebook’s vice president of global public police said in a statement online.

Facebook is trying to draw more major corporations to the social network, hoping to show that their ads there are as effective as those on television or other mainstream media. The company said Wednesday that it could not comment on its relationships with advertisers or on what chunk of their advertising revenue these companies represent.

The offensive material on Facebook included items such as a photo of a woman laying prone at the bottom of a staircase with the words “Next time don’t get pregnant” and the photo of a semi-naked woman passed out on the floor with the words “Roofies” above her and “No response doesn’t necessarily mean no” below her.

Women, Action and the Media’s Executive Director Jaclyn Friedman said that concern had been building for several years about misogynistic content online but her group decided to try a different approach by reaching out to both advertisers and Facebook.

“We are thrilled with the commitment (Facebook) made,” Friedman said. “It’s about stepping up and being the industry leader that they already are.”

The companies that stopped their ads included a number of smaller companies, such as website hosting company WestHost. Company spokesman Jake Neeley said the company was unaware of the issue until a client saw its ads next to a “less-than appealing” page. WestHost said it has received support on Twitter for removing its Facebook ads.

Major corporations responded too. Automaker Nissan temporarily halted its ads in the United Kingdom. The Japanese car maker said Wednesday that is satisfied with the positive steps Facebook has taken to address the issues and will resume advertising and continue to monitor the issue closely.

Zipcar also said that it was working with Facebook over the past week to address the issue and halted ads during that time. The car-sharing service, a unit of Avis Budget Group Inc., said Wednesday that it is pleased to see the company is taking steps to revise its policies.

Read more: <http://techland.time.com/2013/05/30/companies-pull-facebook-ads-over-violent-content/#ixzz2VBH6PJ1V>