Facebook, Inc.

Moderator: Brady Glenn
March 18, 2020
10:30 a.m. PT

FINAL EDITED TEXT

OPERATOR: This is Conference # 8368103

Operator: Hello, and welcome to today's Facebook Press Call. There will be prepared remarks and a Q&A to follow. To ask a question after the prepared remarks conclude, please press star one. Now I'd like to turn the call over to Dave Arnold who will kick this off.

Dave Arnold: Thanks, (Megan), and thanks, everybody, for joining the call today. This is Dave Arnold from the Facebook Communications Team. We're hosting this call in order to share some updates on our efforts in response to the coronavirus.

On the call today is Mark Zuckerberg, Founder and CEO of Facebook, and we also have on the line KX Jin who is Facebook's Head of Health. He'll be able to help answer any questions.

Before we start, I just want to reiterate that this call is on the record and there's no embargo, so with that, I will turn it over to Mark.

Mark Zuckerberg: All right. Thanks, Dave, and thanks, everyone, for joining today. All right, so today I want to share a couple of steps – new steps that we're taking to respond to the coronavirus outbreak.

It's something that we've been tracking closely for awhile across the world, but it's, of course, become a little bit more severe of a case in the last couple of weeks, especially in a lot of western countries.

So I figured it would probably make sense to start off with some of the efforts that we've had so far to respond, and then I will get to a couple of the new things that we're announcing today.

So to get started, the top priority and focus for us has been making sure that people can get access to good, authoritative information from trusted health sources. So in order to do that, we've had a program where we partnered with the WHO and CDC and local health and government organizations.

I mean, we basically put a promotion on the top of Instagram and very prominent throughout the Facebook feed linking to the CDC. We've given those organizations as many ad credits as they need to get their messages out and PSAs.

We're – anytime that someone's searching for information on coronavirus, we're inserting a popup that links to authoritative information from those sources, and then one of the things that we're going to talk about today that we're launching is also going to focus on pushing out more authoritative information more broadly across these networks, and I'll come back to that in a minute.

At the same times we're pushing out and focusing on authoritative information, we're also very focused on making sure that misinformation doesn't spread.

And here we've also been able to partner with these organizations, including the WHO, to identify a list of claims that they classify as harmful misinformation, and we've been able to operationalize them – that and remove that and that down under the principle we don't allow content that could cause imminent risk of danger.

Even in the most free-expression, friendly traditions like the United States, you've long had the precedent that you don't allow people to yell fire in a

crowded room, and that – I think it's similar to people spreading dangerous misinformation in the time of an outbreak like this.

So that's part of the reason why we've been very focused on working with the WHO to make sure that we can identify the list of claims that we need to act on quickly and make sure we (take down right). I think that while the response there isn't perfect so far and I guess it's hard to ever be perfect at scale, I think we're -- we've executed on this quite well so far, and I'm proud of that response.

On top of information quality, the other thing that we're seeing is that in the time of a disaster or when people can't be together with their friends and families in person, which we're experiencing basically both of those things right now, people really rely on social and communication services more than at any other times.

So we're certainly seeing some surges in usage of the different services across areas, especially those that are affected, and the teams are hard at work just making sure that all of the services continue to run smoothly during this time because this is clearly a moment where people want make sure they stay connected while everyone is practicing social distancing and following the guidance that the governments are giving on this.

We want to make sure that we can help do our part to alleviate loneliness and help people come together. So just making sure that the services continue to run reliably (whilst seeing) is going to be quite large surges across our services is a big priority for us right now.

We're very focused on the economic response as well. This is not going to just be a major health crisis, it's, I think also going to be a major economic shock, especially to small businesses and businesses that rely on people being able to go out in person and interact with them.

So we're trying to figure out what steps we can take there to help out. Yesterday we announced $100 million (grants) program to support the recovery of 30,000 small businesses in the cities that our employees live and work. I think that that's one step in the direction of what needs to happen, but

we really believe in and focusing on empowering individuals and small businesses.

Small businesses are often not just the backbone of the economy, but the center of a lot of local communities and if that fails, and I think that will have really bad consequences over the long-term coming out of this. So we're continuing to look at things we can do to help with the recovery there.

I want to touch for a moment on the steps that we're taking with our own workforce in order to make sure that we're keeping people safe and doing our part from a public health perspective to stop -- or slow the spread of the virus.

As of a couple of weeks ago, we started working on -- across a lot of Western countries, recommending that everyone moved towards working from home (and of course) the virus has been spreading in East Asia for more than a couple of months now, so we've been -- and we have offices in a lot of countries there as well.

So we've -- we have been working on this for that extended period of time and a lot of our employees been working from home since January.

But in the U.S. and across Europe and now globally, we basically moved everyone to recommending they work from home, except for some -- some really critical functions, keeping the servers running, security, safety for the community, that really can't be done at home.

We're -- this week, we also are moving to basically (making it so that all of our) contingent workforce and our contractors can leave the office and can work from home as well, and -- and that includes the content moderators who (inaudible) on our services.

And part of that -- what we're -- what we're doing is a lot of these folks aren't going to be able to continue the normal work that they do while they're at -- while they're at home, and to make sure that we can -- that we can do our parts not contributing to an economic shock on this.

We're going to make sure that all of those contractors and contingent workers continue getting paid in full for all of their time, even if they're practically not able to do the work that they would have done in the office from home.

I'm happy to take more questions on that in a minute as well, but in general, I've been proud of the tech industry's response on that overall, and I think that a lot of the companies in the tech industry are setting a good example for the rest of businesses around how to act responsibly with their workforce in order to do what we can to slow the spread of this, to make sure that the healthcare system doesn't get overwhelmed.

With that, I want to turn to a couple of new announcements that we're making today. The first fits the theme of encourage more authoritative information, and what we're basically doing is we're -- we've built, in collaboration with a lot of our health partners in these organizations that I mentioned before, a coronavirus information center that we are going to be putting at the top of everyone's Facebook feed.

We're going to be rolling this out in a number of places around the U.S. and Europe in the next 24 hours, and then other places -- hopefully more globally over the next -- over the days to come, and the goal here is going to be to put authoritative information from organizations like the CDC and WHO in front of everyone who uses our services, as well as prominent links to the websites of those organizations.

We've been coordinating a lot with governments around the world, from national governments to state and local governments on what messages they think are most important for us to be pushing out and encouraging, and right now the broad consensus is that the biggest role that we can help play is encouraging people to take the social distancing orders seriously, but especially folks who might feel like they're not personally at risk, but for broader public health perspective need to -- we need to make sure that people honor this.

So a big part of this hub will be basically showing content from public health experts, celebrities, visualizations that academics or journalists have put

together that can basically show people good information that is going to be encouraging the right behaviors on this.

And lastly, a big part of this is going to be about helping communities come together through our services to help each other out.

Right, if people need someone to go collect groceries from the store from them, or need different things, we've had a community help feature that we've rolled out in other disasters in the past.

Like if there's a hurricane in a place, we've never had to do it at the scale that we're talking about doing here for (basically) across the whole community at the same time.

But, where we're going to move forward with that and we will start to see that over the next few days as well. So, that's the Coronavirus Information Center and we're going to be putting it at the top of everyone's Facebook feed. So, that's the first piece.

The second piece goes along the thread of people needing communication and social services more in difficult times like this in responding to disasters. And one of the things that we found in running Facebook is, a number of years back we built this tool that we eventually called the Workplace, but originally it was just an internal version of Facebook at Facebook.

And it became so critical to how we ran the company and coordinated large groups of people, especially people who work in data centers, people who are not on e-mail all day long, help people coordinate across the company, that we kind of though to ourselves, hey, this is something that we should enable other people to use too.

And we've been doing that for a while and it's been -- it's been growing separately, but now in the middle of this situation we want to make sure that we're enabling governments and emergency service organizations to use this.

So, we're going to be making it free for governments and emergency organizations to use these tools for the next 12 months.

Governments and emergency service organizations are kind of right in the sweet spot for the type of folks who we think can get value from a service like this, because it's not all (inaudible) workers, they're not all at their computers, having a familiar interface like social feeds, but with groups at your workplace, where people can disseminate information within their organization we think could be pretty useful at this time. And we want to make that available to people if it's -- if it's something they want to use.

So, I want to wrap up, so that way we can take questions. But, I mean, to close, I just want acknowledge that this is clearly a very difficult and stressful time for a lot of people, and we want to make sure that we're doing what we can to support the public health response, but I also just want conclude by taking a moment to thank all of the health workers and folks who are really on the frontlines fighting this. And some of the work that these folks are doing is absolutely heroic.

And I personally am very grateful for what they're doing and I think at the end of the day, that's going to be the biggest thing that makes a difference here. So, I'm going to wrap now and I'm happy to take any questions that you have about our response or how we're thinking about any of this.

Operator: We will now open the line for questions. Please limit yourself to one question per person. To ask a question, please press "star" followed by the number "1." Our first question is from Katie Paul with Reuters. Your line is open.

Katie Paul: Hey Mark, thanks for doing this call. I'm wondering if you can talk a little bit about data sharing with the U.S. Government. There's been reports about how there might be -- there's a taskforce getting together and there might be some changes to how tech companies share data currently.

I know there's already Facebook disaster maps, but can you tell us which components of the U.S. Government will be leveraging the data? Do you know how it will be used?

Does it shut off at the end of this situation? Are you comfortable with military or intelligence communities potentially – whether in aggregated form or not, just where those things stand?

Mark Zuckerberg: Sure, as far as I can tell those reports are largely overstated. So as you say we have this program around disease prevention maps that we've been doing for some time.

The health organizations around the world, and of course the way that that works is that people (in our services opt in) to using location data, and to be able to share their location data and to be able to share their location data.

And we produce these aggregate and anonymized data sets to health organization basically identify the spread of certain kinds of diseases and produce maps from that.

As far as we (could shake down) from internally, once I saw these reports, is we're not aware of any active conversations or asks with the U.S. or other governments at this point asking for access to that data directly. So I think some of those reports might have just been rehashing the disease prevention maps projects that we've been doing in the past.

But I don't think that there are direct asks for access to people with data directly. There was – the request that we've gotten mostly from governments have largely been about helping to disseminate authoritative information, and making sure that we stay on top of preventing misinformation from spreading.

So those are the biggest things that we're focused on and that's lead to a number of the steps that we've taken including giving pretty much as many ad credits as these organizations need, running promotions at the top of Instagram and Facebook, and then of course leading to the coronavirus information center that we're releasing (inaudible) going to really include all of – a lot of their messaging in one place.

Operator: Our next question is from Martin Untersinger with Le Monde. Your line is open.

Martin Untersinger: Hello, thanks for doing this call. Understood that there are no discussions about sharing data to fight the coronavirus outbreak, but would you be ready to have the discussion with the U.S, or any other western government? Thank you.

Mark Zuckerberg: I'm not really sure what that means. I mean, I think the program that we have right now is working with health experts, and I think that it is quite effective. I don't think it would make sense to share people's data in a way where people didn't have – didn't opt to doing that.

So, I mean, I think at a high level the answer is probably no to what you're saying, but (it's sort of) a hypothetical because no one is asking for this.

Operator: Our next question is from Mike Isaac with "The New York Times," your line is open.

Mike Isaac: Hey all, thanks for doing this call. Mark, I'm just sort of curious what you all are doing to cooperate with other tech companies right now?

I know there was a meeting at the White House with a number of different tech companies, and I'm wondering how you all are working together to I guess put some of that good information out there? And then also I'm just curious if you're working from Facebook or if you're working from home too?

Mark Zuckerberg: Sure, so I think – for the collaboration of other tech companies, I think that there's (inaudible) around basically partnering together to identify misinformation and things like that, that we need to make sure that we're addressing.

The collaboration with the other companies has generally gotten a lot stronger on fighting bad content over the last few years. Whereas we've dealt with a whole lot of issues; probably the gold standard of that collaboration is GIFCT, the Global Internet Forum for Counter Terrorism.

Which we stood up with a bunch of the other tech companies, basically to coordinate on all the counter terrorism at first; of course there's been long

standing work on countering child exploitation and I do think that we'll find additional ways to work together on this type of threat as well.

But in general, I think that the theme has been more collaboration with both the tech industry and governments on being able to fight that kind of bad content.

I think -- you asked if I'm working from home, I'm definitely working from home. I don't think it would be very good to encourage everyone else to do that and then not do that myself. And I think so far I'd just like everyone to experiencing, it's a big change to work from home.

It's especially a big change now that the school's are closed and all the children are around, so we're not just asking our work force to adapt to remote work, we're also trying to find a balance of moving things forward while people need to balance their role is basically taking care of the kids during the day as well.

So that's been a balance that I think we're trying to help the whole company navigate.

But overall it's also been an opportunity to use a bunch of our products more in different ways and I'm sure this is going to lead to a bunch of new development of different things, that – to enable the new kinds of needs that people need to – that people have while they're at home for some time.

Operator: And our next question is from Shannon Bond with National Public Radio, your line is open.

Shannon Bond: Hi, thanks for taking my question. I'm wondering, Mark, if you can talk a bit about – with the content moderators who aren't able to do work from home, how will that work load get done?

Are you relying more on machine learning, like are other people picking it up? Mark, can you just talk a bit about the impact on making sure that things are getting taken care of?

Mark Zuckerberg: Yes, so this is a – this is a big one that we've been really focused on for the last few days. So there – so there's been a few challenges in – additionally in moving the content moderators to be able to work from home on top of our own full time employees.

The first, of course there's just sort of a logistical piece is that we don't employ those continued worker and contracts – the people of those contract partner's directly, so we've had to negotiating work through those companies. That took a little bit of time.

But then in terms of the actual work, there are a few challenges that we've needed to make sure that we can manage. One is that – the biggest one is that there's certain types of content moderation that are just very, very sensitive, right, so suicide and (inaudible).

If you're in the queues working on that content for a long time, that can be very emotionally challenging, and a lot of what we've done over the years is built up in the office environment and these places the mental health support, the resiliency training, forcing that people take breaks so that way they can kind of get time to recover.

That kind of thing is very important and a big part of our concern is that, if we now had contractors, who we don't employ and can't directly -- and it takes some time to work with their contract company to basically set guidelines for how they work, now working from home on those types of things, that will be very challenging to enforce that people are getting the mental health support that they needed.

For some of these queues, there are also privacy questions about individual data and making sure that if folks are looking at that at home, that we have the right protections in place. So, here's what we're basically doing.

We have moved, or are in the process of moving, the most sensitive types of content that need to get extra attention over to full-time employees for the time being. So that's the work on suicide and self-injury prevention, it's the work on child exploitation, counter-terrorism, those are kind of the types of examples.

We're actually surging the number of people who are working on those things. I'm personally quite worried that the isolation from people being at home could potentially lead to more depression or mental health issues and we want to make sure that we are ahead of that in supporting our community by having more people during this time work on things that are on suicide and self-injury prevention, not less.

So, we're -- so we basically shifted out work, so that it's more full-time work force, and we're surging some of that, which inherently is going to create a trade-off against some other types of contents that may not have as imminent physical risks for people.

Some of that we will -- the good news for some of this is that we've had been working for the last few years on building AI systems that we goal ourselves on what percent of that content we can find and take down proactively, so a lot of these categories were in a reasonable place.

But I do think it's reasonable to expect that for some of the other categories where the severity might not be as imminent or extreme, that we may be a little less effective in the near term while we're adjusting to this.

But the goal for the continued workers and the contractors is that, while they're working from home, to hopefully have them set up to be able to work on the types of content that would be a little less emotionally and physically (inaudible), and have that and some of that stuff will need to still be done by teams in person together in the same way that first responders and health organizations or the police kind of need to act to work on different threats.

Operator: Our next question is from (Linda Descino) with (Eltimano). Your line is open.

(Linda Descino): Hi, Mark. Thanks for opening this space. Considering that your (obligations) are Instagram, Facebook, and Instagram are the most used (and familiarly of countries), why haven't you start on considering the option of sending some alerts in WhatsApp, Facebook, or Instagram like reminders, for example, to wash hands or to clean out their cell phones.

I wonder because many of the actions that individuals can actualize are like in this basic health habit. So have you think in something like that in this kind of alert in your whole wide world -- worldwide services?

Mark Zuckerberg: Yes, absolutely. And when we talked about our efforts to get authoritative information out in front of people, these were some of the measures that I was -- that I was describing.

We've been -- we run a promotion at that top of Instagram and throughout the feed in -- on Facebook with these kinds of public health messages and linking people to the websites of CDC and WHO where were they can get more information from those organizations.

And I don't think that it's -- we're not best placed to decide what the public health messages should be. We want to work with these public health partners in messages. It's why we've also given them as many ad credits as they need. So basically its free ads -- free space on our services to be able to push out as many messages as they need to around these things.

And I know the WHO, for example, right now has the campaign around encouraging people to wash hands. A lot of messaging coming out of the U.S. right now and a lot of places in Europe is very focused on how we practice to do social distancing.

I think people kind of have heard the message at a high level (but with) very specific questions about how do they -- how do they do things that they need to do, how do you get food. How -- so just specific things. And that, we're working them to get out.

The coronavirus information center that we're launching, we're designing it to be very adaptive. So that on a day to basis as the messages that people need to hear and that as the public health organizations want to send out on a day to day basis vary and vary from location to location because the guidance is different in different countries that we'll be able to adapt to that and fit the needs of what people and the health organizations and governments need in all these different places.

Operator: Our next question is from Zoe Thomas with BBC. Your line is open.

Zoe Thomas: Hi. I wanted to find out how long you're prepared to pay the contract workers to work from home. Do you know how long that will be going on for?

Mark Zuckerberg: I think we don't see an end to that. Hopefully at some point when the public health response has been sufficient, people can resume to working in the office. But we don't view this as a time bounded -- as time bounded thing.

Operator: Our next question is from Bob Woodruff with ABC News. Your line is open.

Bob Woodruff: Hey, Mark. Thanks again for this. Is there any -- is there any -- do you have a number or some kind of percentage or how much scams, how much misinformation you've been able to keep out of the system from people to read on Facebook? I know it's – I've been really talking only about the corona crisis that's going on right now.

                  Do you have any idea of how much has come through and how long do you think this is going to last? It's impossible to predict when this will slow down in the world, in the United States, but do you have any thoughts since you have a lot of information about exactly what's happening out there?

Operator: Our next question is from (Justice Bender) with (VAS). Your line…

Mark Zuckerberg: Well, I should probably answer that before we got to the next question. So how long do we think this will last? And do we have any specific data on the amount of misinformation that we're taking down?

                  I haven't seen a specific report on that. KX, I don't know if you have any specific stat. If you do, feel free to jump in. Otherwise, I'll just continue going here. It's tough coordinating with someone else trying to do a press call when they're not in the same place as you.

                  In terms of how long we think this will last, I'm not a public health expert. So it's – I'm not sure that it's good for me to opine on that. I do think it's a little confidence inspiring that in some of the earlier countries that had – that had outbreaks that after measures taken by the governments and public health

officials things do seem to be returning to somewhat of a more normal cadence.

And I don't know if there's anything through Facebook usage that definitely suggests that – a timeframe for this, but maybe we'll start seeing something soon in some of the countries in South Korea and Japan that had earlier outbreaks.

And, of course, we're not really in China so it's tough for us to track or have any sense of the momentum of what's going on there, but we may see something in the coming weeks and that would be good.

In addition to the work that we're doing at Facebook, I do have another lens into this work which is the work that we do at the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, our family's philanthropy where a big focus of that is on science and biological science.

And the long-term goal for the organization is to make it so that we can cure, prevent, or be able to manage all diseases by the end of the century, so a lot of what we do is basically make it so that we build tools for health workers and scientists to make further advancements on this, and to that there's a little bit of a lens that we have into some of the early research that's being done to develop therapeutics.

And one of the things that we're somewhat optimistic about – I mean, I want to be – I want to be cautious about this and we don't have line of sight to anything yet – is there are a lot of scientists who have theories of existing, approved therapeutics that worked for – that have already gone through their safety clearance and worked for some disease, whether it was related or unrelated to -- or maybe it acts on some receptor that there could be relevant here.

With a -- a concerted effort to test to the most promising of those kind of compounds, it's possible that that later this year, we will have more therapies that could be useful in either preventing or treating the symptoms of this to make it (it said it creates) long-term damage or fatality.

So that I think would be very promising, but I think it's just -- the situation is evolving very quickly and we know a lot more about the trajectory that we're on here in the U.S. for example, in just the last seven days, and I think we'll know a lot more a week or two from now about how long this is going to be as well.

Operator: Your next question is from (Justice Bender) with (VAZ). Your line is open.

(Justice Bender): Hi, thank you so much. My question is, why is it so easy for Facebook to do so much now against fake news and why is it so hard in a political context to suppress misleading political misinformation? And are you -- is this a test for you to change your stance on political fake news in the future?

Mark Zuckerberg: Well, I think that this is a different case for two reasons. One is we've always had our policy that doesn't allow content that's going to cause imminent danger or physical risk.

And not -- that's cornerstone of all the work, not just around misinformation but around hate speech that could incite violence, around child (inaudible) and all of the different areas.

We've never allowed things that would lead to imminent physical risk and as I've mentioned in my opening remarks, even countries like the United States that have the strongest traditions on free expression, the standard here is you can't yell fire in a crowded theater, basic idea.

It's that you want to allow a wide range of expression, but you don't want to support things that are going to lead to imminent physical harm work for yourself or others.

So in the case of a pandemic like this where we're seeing hoaxes that are basically encouraging people who are sick to not get treatment or to not act in ways that are going to protect the people around them or in some ways to do things that could be actively harmful, right, so I mean, there's one hoax going around that if you think you have this, drink bleach and that will cure it.

And that's terrible that's obviously going to lead to imminent harm if you do that. That is just in a completely different class of content than some of the kind of back-and-forth accusations that a candidate might make about another, for example, during an election.

The other piece here is that there are broadly trusted authorities who people across -- including governance, who people are just across society would all agree can arbitrate which claims are conspiracy theories or hoaxes and what's trustworthy and what's not, which makes this a very different dynamic than trying to be referee of political speech.

I mean and the WHO for example, or CDC, just do have broad trust and a government mandate on this in a way that in other domains there just (isn't) something like that. So I think that that's -- but you're basically asking about things that I think are on opposite ends of the spectrum in terms of difficulty of operationalizing the response.

I think for health misinformation that's probably -- during a pandemic or outbreak like this, that's probably one of the most black and white situations that you could expect. And I think political speech is probably the most difficult in terms of how you arbitrate and kind of govern that kind of speech.

Operator: Our next question is from Bruno Rufilli with La Stampa. Your line is open.

Bruno Rufilli: Hi there. I am in Italy and all I can say is that people are using Facebook and Instagram like never before. Italy is the first big Western country to face coronavirus.

Is there something you have learned from here that can be useful for other countries? Is there a specific trend that you have noticed here in Italy and are you planning any special activity for my country?

Mark Zuckerberg: Yes, we've certainly seen a number of trends that, (if we're) (inaudible) out from Italy to other countries would be very problematic in those countries and have given a sense of which things we might want to try to get on top of in other places.

We've also seen some really inspiring things in Italy that we want to try to enable in other places. So for example, I think the Pope is doing his daily mass on Facebook Live now, so that the people who cannot go to their place of worship on daily basis have a place to have that connection.

There's an ICU physician in Bergamo who -- this anesthetist who's been sharing every day, a readout of what she's seeing in the hospital. That basically -- those kind of firsthand accounts I think often tell a much deeper story than just a bunch of stats.

And when you read that, I think that that was extremely helpful in convincing people around the world that this isn't just flu, right, which I think was some of the questions that people were asking even a week or two ago about this. I think some of the stories coming out about that have been extremely important.

There's psychiatrists and doctors in Lombardy who are using WhatsApp to make calls to people to make sure that they can cope with the stress and anxiety of the quarantines. And reaching out to dozens and dozens of patients beyond her normal patients in order to be able to help and support people.

So these are some of the kind of pretty amazing ways that we're seeing people use the services to help support their community and get the word out about what they're seeing.

In terms of stats, we're seeing very elevated levels of use in Italy and in all countries that have been affected. Calling, right -- so in terms of WhatsApp or Messenger for calling is more than double overall what it normally is.

So the normal spike for us is New Years Eve, right, where basically everyone at the same time just wants to message everyone and takes a selfie and sends to their family wherever they are, and to wish them a Happy New Year. And we are (inaudible) basis well beyond what that spike is, on New Years.

And just making sure that we can manage that is the challenge that we 're trying to make sure that we can stay in front of because of course right now this isn't a massive outbreak in the majority of courtiers around the world yet,

but it is – if it gets there then we really need to make sure we're on top of this from an infrastructure perspective to make sure that things don't melt down, and we can continue to provide the level of service that people need in a time like this.

So these are probably – those are some of the trends that we're seeing. I guess on the public health side, I can just speak to this personally, I mean this is not so much in my Facebook capacity, maybe a little more in my Chan Zuckerberg initiative capacity.

I think that the public health risk that everyone is worried about is if the outbreak grows too quickly then we run out of beds and resources in the health system and that leads to significantly worse health outcomes, which unfortunately I think we are seeing in a lot of places – in Italy.

So I think the U.S. and other European countries really need to learn form what we're seeing in Italy, to get in front of this. And actions that seem like they're on the border of going too far today, I think if this continues to spread at the exponential rate that it has, in a week we'll be thinking we'd wished done it even earlier, right? That's just the nature of this kind of exponential growth.

So in terms of doing our part to help in our communities in the Bay area, internationally – and around the world, stand up the health capacity – reopen decommissioned hospitals. Do different things that need to get done to increase capacity – we're very focused on that after seeing the lessons from what's happening in Italy and some of the earlier countries as well.

So yes, it's – I do also just want to say it's – I know a lot of people who are there in Italy, and it's obviously a very tough situation, and I just want to offer my personal acknowledgement and tell everyone there that I'm thinking of you, and it's inspiring to see how you're pulling together to get through this.

Operator: Your next question is from Sarah Frier with Bloomberg, your line is open.

Sarah Frier: Hello Mark, I just wanted a little bit more information on the coronavirus' information with regards to other countries and other languages. Are you

going to be able to have this information center available globally, and in how many languages? Thanks.

Mark Zuckerberg: Sure. The goal is to have it out very widely. I don't have a number on the number of languages it's going to be in, but certainly we want it to be global.

In the next 24 hours our goal is to launch it, and have it be promoted at the top of the Facebook app in Italy, in France, and Spain, and Germany, and the U.S. and U.K., as a few we want to get started. And then over the next few days we want to be able to expand it more broadly, once we confirm that we're doing what we need to in those places.

But, I mean, this is -- is obviously it's an evolving situation where we're building this to be adaptive so we change it on a day-to-day basis. Put different content in from different countries and in different languages.

And this is something that I'm -- I'm basically -- I'm working with our team on it every day and then I'm talking to different governments and health organizations about what they -- the messages that they think are most important to get out there.

It's worth noting that, for localization and translation, some of the content in there helps sympathize, but I think in general a lot of the stuff that's in there is going to be (inaudible) the (inaudible) are (inaudible) those things to make sure that they have -- they have the biggest impact.

And a lot of what we're hearing right now is, it's not necessarily that people haven't heard the message around social distancing is important, a lot of what needs to happen is people just need to be convinced that it's actually important for them and understand how to -- how to do it.

So, that's not just about writing a quick text message saying, hey, stay at home. I mean, that's -- that is useful from your -- from friends that need to apply some positive social pressure on their -- on the people around them, but it's probably not the biggest thing that Facebook can do.

In addition to doing that, I think that by pulling together content from people who are trusted authorities and public figures, that will probably have a bigger impact. So, that's a lot of the approach that we're taking. But again, we'll evolve quickly as we see what works.

Operator: Our next question is from Casey Newton with Verge. Your line is open.

Casey Newton: Hey Mark, I'm trying to get a sense of how significant this shift to A.I. for moderation is going to be during this time. Is there any way you can quantify how much you're going to be leaning on A.I., even in a ballpark way? And how well positioned are you during this disruption to continuously improve the A.I.?

Mark Zuckerberg: So, I think varies by content type. If you want to look at this quantitatively, we've been putting out for at least a few cycles now, this transparency report on our enforcement.

And basically what we -- what we've been doing is, there's about 20 different categories of harmful content that we track, everything from counterterrorism to child exploitation to graphic violence, to incitement of violence. All these different categories that you can imagine and each one basically requires somewhat different A.I. work and systems to be trained to find that content.

And we basically hold ourselves accountable. Our goal is to -- is to make it so that as much of the content as we take down as possible, our systems can identify proactively before people need to look at it at all.

So, because the time that a -- that someone's flagging it for us, it's -- a bunch a people have already been exposed it, whereas if our A.I. systems can get it up front, that's obviously the ideal.

And the gold standard where we've been kind of most advanced and most proud of our work has probably been in counterterrorism, where we're consistently at 98 or 99 percent of the terrorism content that we take down, our AI systems identify and take down before anyone even sees it, so that's quite good.

And in a category like that you wouldn't expect that we're going to miss too much more by – even if we – in the near-term, didn't have as many people involved in the process. Over the long-term, of course the training of the AI system degrades and that will be a bit more of an issue.

But you can basically go through lists of the content types in our report and see which areas we're best at proactively, and which ones we are less good at proactively, and I think it's fair to assume that our content moderation work – even though the content moderators will generally continue working while at home, I think productivity you should expect to go down.

So I think the overall amount of effort, or force that we can apply to the problem, I think will be a little bit less on the human side. And that'll be compounded by the fact that we're shifting a lot of the focus to things like suicide and self-injury prevention. So other categories, I think will not only – might have even less focus than they would have before.

You can basically look at those reports and see what we're more likely to miss during this period, and where there might be relatively less disruption.

Operator: All right…

Dave Arnold: Hey everyone, we have time for another couple questions here.

Male: (Inaudible).

Operator: Our next question…

Dave Arnold: No, I was just – (inaudible).

Male: Sorry, go for it.

Dave Arnold: Was just saying we have time for another couple of questions here.

Operator: Our next question is from (Sebastian Dumoulin) with (L'Echo), your line is open.

(Sebastian Dumoulin):   Hello, thank you very much for taking the time. I guess we all received our fair share of hoaxes and fake news (in plenty of WhatsApp groups), and I was wondering if you received any government requests – well new government requests to lower the encryption levels on WhatsApp to better police these?

And is there a point in the pandemic where you could change your mind and have it (inaudible) differently on the encryption layer (issue or schedule)?

Mark Zuckerberg: Yes, so on this one, encryption levels, I don't think we've seen any heightened pressure. There is of course the consistent level of pressure applied to us from a number of governments to unwind encryption. But as you know our public position on this – we've been very consistent that we think that this is important for privacy and security.

We think that this sort of privacy tool should be the default and should be something that everyone has access to. So we've pushed back a lot on that. But part of the (inaudible) that we really believe that there are other ways to get at preventing harm, than by – that there would be more effective than getting rid of encryption.

So for example in WhatsApp, the biggest step that we've taken has just been making it hard for people to forward content to a lot of people at once, because we have seen that of the misinformation that spreads, a disproportionate amount of it is – or at least was – used to be forwarded to a lot of people at once, they were spread quickly.

And by cutting down on the amount of people who you can forward a message to at once, adding all the friction there, we significantly reduced the number of messages that were sent on WhatsApp, but I think we also had a big dampening affect on misinformation.

We also now put in an indicator in WhatsApp if the content you're seeing being forwarded. More recently we added something to see if it's been highly forwarded so that way you get a sense that if – and this isn't just like assuming that I have sent to one person and then I forwarded it to you. This has been forwarded in the chain, so you can be extra skeptical of it.

And then there's a bunch of work that we're doing within WhatsApp to work with fact checkers to get authoritative information out directly.

We fund a number of fact checkers, including we just announced another $1 million program around – specifically around this outbreak, making sure that we have the support on this, and there's a bunch of people how basically track to get a sense of what are the memes that seem to be going public on -- what are the memes that seem to be going public on WhatsApp, and then they basically post to their status on WhatsApp or message out to people in groups to give them the correct information on this.

And there are a bunch of (bots) in groups that we've seen health organizations and governments stand up to make sure that we can get good information out and correct any memes that are going around that are incorrect as well. We're working on a number of more things like this that in partnership with some of these health organizations we'll have more to announce on that soon as well.

Operator: Our next question is from (Ida Hertskip) from (Solinsky). Your line is open.

(Ida Hertskip): Hello. This is (Ida) from Copenhagen. I have a question concerning the fact checking medias. If an external fact check media finds that a post spread untrue health advice about corona, then I know that Facebook marks the post and links to an article with correct facts. Why don't you just delete the post?

Mark Zuckerberg: (So there's) two things that we do. For content that is going to lead to an imminent risk of physical danger, we take it down. And that's not just about misinformation that's hate speech, that could incite violence, that's terrorism content that we worry about.

And for what it's worth because I know that some of these questions have been about political speech, we don't allow politicians to say this stuff either.

So if a politician is posting something that's going to incite violence or imminently suppress someone's voting or right to vote or participate in the census or posting dangerous health misinformation, then we're going to take that down, too.

So basically anyone who is saying anything that can create and imminent risk of harm, we take down. Beyond that we have a broader program to stop the spread of misinformation where postings are being spread, even if it's not clear that they're going to cause imminent harm, we just don't want the main things that are going viral or spread on our services to be things that have been debunked.

So what we do in those cases is we basically apply a discount and make it so that they don't spread as far in your news feed, and we attend what a fact checker has marked as false, and let people go and see what the fact checker has said about this.

We also for groups where a bunch of misinformation has been reported to be spread, we removed those groups from recommendation.

So the basic principle here is that you can send -- we allow you to send things that are wrong if they're not going to lead to imminent, physical harm, but if there are -- but we don't want those to be the main things that are spread, and we don't want to be recommending groups that are doing that.

And we want to highlight the right information as much as possible during that. I know this is a controversial program, there are folks who thinks this goes not far enough, there are folks that think it goes too far.

But I do think it's worth putting out there, that the program that we've stood up around working with independent fact checkers, and looking through that content in line, is more advanced than what any other technology company is doing on this front.

So, so I -- we do a number of things on this overall, I'm quite proud of our response, both in this coronavirus outbreak, and overall around us, and I think this is the right balance of how to treat this (inaudible).

Dave Arnold: Great, thanks Mark. We have time for one more.

Operator: Our final question is from Julia Boorstin with CNBC.

Julia Boorstin: Hi Mark, thanks so much for doing this call, just quickly, I know there've been some reports that accurate articles have been pulled down as you try to handle misinformation.

Do you have a sense of how much you're willing to occasionally limit the spread of accurate articles because you're relying more on automation to catch misinformation or how much can we expect you to maybe overcorrect as result of being really cautious, what can we expect in terms of pulling down articles moving forward?

Mark Zuckerberg: Yes, thanks for asking about this. I was hoping to get a chance to address this. So, we -- the incident yesterday, which was the bug in our spam detection system, it was quite widespread in taking down a number of things that were legitimate links and marking them as spam, a lot of people saw this issue.

The system is fixed, those posts are back up, and hopefully we won't have that issue again anytime soon. That bug was not related to coronavirus, so a lot of the content that got flagged and ended up being removed for spam yesterday, it was not just about coronavirus, but of course a lot of people are talking about coronavirus right now, so a lot of people thought that this had some connection to that, but it wasn't that.

Another narrative that I've seen that I want to clear up, is a lot of people are wondering whether that is connected to the shift in how content moderators are working as they move from home -- to work from home or as we adjust our system to balance the load there.

And that is also not correct, this is a completely separate system on spam, spam is one of the areas of content that we take down where these vast, vast majority, I think it's like 98 or more percent of the spam content is taken down by AI systems.

So this is not about any kind of near term change, this was just a technical error and we're still doing the post mortem to understand what happened so we can – so we can operationalize any learnings from that.

But I do want to clear up, up front, that this was not because of an approach an approach on coronavirus and it was not because of a change in approach on how we're handling contingent worker's or any kind of content moderation strategy around this.

To answer your question about what we might expect going forward, I do think we will make some false positives that are limited to those strategies where basically we will in some cases end up taking down some content that was not supposed to be taken down.

We try very hard not to do that of course, but I don't think that we should expect to see anything of the level of the bug yesterday, which I think was quite a widespread thing and a number of people saw it.

So hopefully on a day to day basis we'll make – these, the mistakes that we make will be capped to individual cases, which hopefully we will be able to handle and fix on appeals.

Dave Arnold: Great, thanks Mark and thanks everyone for joining and we're going to have to wrap there. Just a reminder before we go, if anyone has any initial follow up questions pleas email us at press@fb.com and thanks for joining us today.

Mark Zuckerberg: All right everyone, stay healthy and safe and we'll have more updates soon. All right, see you.

Operator: This concludes the Facebook press call, thank you for joining. You may now disconnect your line.

<center>END</center>