Migration Moments: Extremist Adoption of Text-based Instant Messaging Applications

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Telegram is still the preferred online messaging platform for several major extremist groups. However, preferences may be shifting due to Telegram's policies on cooperation with law enforcement and other tech companies.

Supporters of Salafi-jihadist groups and extreme right-wing groups alike are beginning to explore alternatives to Telegram. So far, their efforts have been relatively unsuccessful, but the shift to a new platform is inevitable.

During the past year, extremists have exploited or plan to exploit a range of text-based instant messaging platforms, including BCM, Gab Chat, Hoop Messenger, Riot.im, Rocket.Chat and TamTam.

In finding an alternative to Telegram, extremists will likely explore platforms that are similar to Telegram's suite of features, affordances, and visual layout. They may also continue experimentation with platforms offering decentralised servers and data storage.

This report's findings suggest focusing on specific features rather than individual platforms is a more helpful approach to countering extremists' efforts to exploit text-based instant messaging platforms.

Write a message

Write a message

How are you?