

Facebook's CTO steps down, the latest in a series of high-level departures.

Article

The news: Facebook's long-time CTO Mike Schroepfer will step down from his post next year, per Bloomberg.

- Schroepfer oversaw the company's AI work, including efforts to revamp Facebook's controversial News Feed and to police misinformation on the platform.
- Schroepfer will stay on in a part-time "senior fellow" role, with Facebook virtual and augmented reality **Andrew Bosworth** stepping up as CTO.

How we got here: Schroepfer is the third Facebook executive to leave the company this year, signaling that some at the highest level see greener pastures elsewhere.

- **Carolyn Everson**, Facebook's vice president of global marketing solutions, stepped down from her role in June. Her departure was followed by that of **Fidji Simo**, who led the Facebook app.
- Both left Facebook to join **Instacart**, where Everson is president and Simo is CEO.

Troubling times at Facebook: Facebook's string of high-level departures comes at one of the most embattled periods in the social media company's history.

- Facebook's News Feed has come under fire from regulators for promoting divisive content and misinformation, prompting the company to revamp its **recommendation systems**—an effort that Schroepfer oversaw.
- Advertiser relations have also been rocky. The platform has struggled to find new tracking measures after **Google** announced it will stop supporting browser cookies by 2023 and **Apple** removed its **Identifier for Advertisers**. And earlier this month, Facebook said that an undetected glitch resulted in **months of incorrect metrics** being sent to advertisers.
- And internal research conducted by Facebook and **Instagram** highlighted Instagram's **negative impact** on teen safety and mental health, according to The Wall Street Journal. The revelation has caused concern among Facebook employees, some of whom **asked** to see the full report in a Thursday employee Q&A with **CEO Mark Zuckerberg**.

Why it's worth watching: Facebook is fighting off regulators and critics on multiple fronts, and the departures of high-level executives may suggest that those with the most intimate knowledge of Facebook's operations are not optimistic about the company's future, or they see greater potential elsewhere.