

Politics | Cybersecurity

Musk Cozies Up to Trump in Glitchy Conversation on X

- Musk blames cyberattack for 40-minute delay to event
- Audience for GOP nominee, world's richest man hits 1.3 million



WATCH: Elon Musk pitched a role for himself should Donald Trump win a second White House term. Lizzy Burden and Bill Faries report. *Source: Bloomberg*

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Donald Trump and Elon Musk held a warm but glitch-delayed conversation on X that saw the tech mogul pitch a role for himself should the Republican nominee win a second White House term.

The highly anticipated discussion started roughly 40 minutes late, stretched more than two hours and largely rehashed the notes that the former president routinely strikes at his campaign rallies.

The pushed-back start was an embarrassing blow to Musk's social-media site and the latest hiccup for Trump, whose campaign has struggled to douse a burst of momentum from Vice President Kamala Harris in the weeks since she replaced President Joe Biden as the Democratic presidential nominee.



Bloomberg Daybreak
The Trump-Musk Conversation

17:42

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The billionaire entrepreneur blamed the delay on a cyberattack, without providing any evidence, and when the event started, Musk suggested Trump's opponents were responsible.

Trump sought to spin the delay as a sign of interest in the event. As many as 1.3 million listeners tuned in, according to X.

Musk called for a government commission to ensure that taxpayer money is spent effectively and pitched himself for a role in that effort.

"I'd be happy to help out on such a commission," Musk said. "I'd love if it were formed."

Trump praised the idea, calling Musk "the greatest cutter."

But otherwise, the event in some ways resembled an online Trump rally with Musk, the world's richest man, playing the role of moderator.

The conversation came days after Trump held a more than one-hour press conference at his Mar-a-Lago resort. One of his campaign strategies is to try and goad Harris into doing more unscripted media appearances.

Musk endorsed Trump for president last month, part of a shift that has seen the [Tesla Inc.](#) and [SpaceX](#) chief executive officer publicly embrace

right-leaning causes and candidates to make his mark on the political scene. He also created a super political action committee to support Trump's reelection effort.



Elon Musk *Photographer: Alessia Pierdomenico/Bloomberg*

An already formidable Washington presence, with companies boasting sizable government contracts, Musk is poised to be an even bigger player if Trump returns to power. He's grown closer to the GOP nominee, advising him on electric vehicles and cryptocurrency policy – a reversal from a once-rocky relationship that saw the two trade insults.

Highlighting Musk's growing sway with Trump, long a critic of electric vehicles, praised the EV maker, saying Tesla's cars are "incredible." He also hailed Musk's intelligence, saying "You have definitely got a fertile mind. You and I can talk about rockets, tunnels and electric cars," referencing the entrepreneur's many business ventures.

Trump taking a softer stance on EVs could have massive financial benefits for carmakers and Musk's personal wealth, much of which is in Tesla stock. Trump has vowed to scrap some benefits intended to help grow the market if he returns to the White House. Those threats have intensified concerns over a slowdown in EV sales growth.

Trump and Musk’s conversation comes at a critical point in the 2024 race – less than three months to Election Day. Harris’ ascent to the top of the Democratic ticket has shaken up the race with polls showing she has erased the lead Trump held for much of the summer and pulled ahead in fundraising.

The first 20 minutes of the event was spent on Trump recounting last month’s assassination attempt on his life at a Butler, Pennsylvania rally. He said that he would be returning to the town in October to resume the campaign event.

Border Crackdown

Musk, like Trump, has criticized illegal immigration across the US-Mexico border and promoted conspiracy theories that Democrats are encouraging migration to bring in people to vote fraudulently in the 2024 election. Musk suggested the Republican candidate was “supportive” of legal migration but said the US needs “to shut down illegal immigration.”

“I think most people who are illegal immigrants are actually good, but you can’t tell a difference unless there’s a solid vetting of who comes across the border,” said Musk, who was born in South Africa and described himself as a “legal immigrant.”



Former US President Donald Trump *Photographer: Dustin Chambers/Bloomberg*

“They have to come in legally. They have to be checked,” Trump said.

Republicans have seized on Harris having been given a portfolio that included addressing the root causes of migration earlier in the administration even though other officials such as Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas bore more direct responsibility for the situation at the border.

“Trump’s entire campaign is in service of people like Elon Musk and himself – self-obsessed rich guys who will sell out the middle class and who cannot run a livestream in the year 2024,” Harris campaign spokesperson Joseph Costello said in a statement after the event concluded.

Musk, who tops the Bloomberg Billionaires Index with a net worth of \$227.3 billion, aims to use his vast fortune to swing the race for Trump.

Musk served on White House advisory councils when Trump was president, but left after the Republican decided to withdraw from the landmark Paris climate accord. Musk’s stint on the councils was mired in controversy as supporters urged him to step down.

Tech Glitch

The technical mishap on X, which delayed the start of the event, drew comparisons to the glitches that foiled the launch of Florida Governor Ron DeSantis’s ill-fated presidential campaign last year, as servers struggled to handle surging demand.

X has faced technical problems and scrutiny since Musk purchased the platform in 2022.

“This massive attack illustrates there’s a lot of opposition to people just hearing what President Trump has to say,” Musk said when the event finally began. “This is really aimed at kind of open-minded, independent voters who are trying to make up their mind.”

Trump was banned from X, then known as Twitter, after the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the US Capitol, but had his account restored after Musk bought the company.

Trump returned to X in August 2023, posting his mug shot after being indicted in Fulton County, Georgia on charges related to his efforts to overturn the 2020 election result, but has preferred to use his own social-media site, Truth Social. On Monday, however, Trump posted several times to X, including a campaign video.

(Recasts first two paragraphs.)

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