

# Meta starts testing facial recognition tools to combat 'celeb-bait' adverts



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[Meta](#) is testing the use of facial recognition technology to help protect people from so-called “celebrity bait” adverts and to help users verify their identity and regain a compromised account.

The technology giant said the new schemes would be tested globally, but confirmed that they were not currently coming to the UK or the EU, but said it was “continuing to have conversations with regulators” in both regions over the tools.

Under the new system, when Meta’s existing technologies spot a post it believes to be a scam and it contains an image of a public figure “at risk for celeb-bait”, it will use facial recognition to compare faces in the ad against the public figure’s own [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) profile pictures.

We immediately delete any facial data generated from ads for this one-time comparison regardless of whether our system finds a match, and we don't use it for any other purpose

Meta

"If we confirm a match and that the ad is a scam, we'll block it," the company said.

"We immediately delete any facial data generated from ads for this one-time comparison regardless of whether our system finds a match, and we don't use it for any other purpose."

Meta said early testing of this scheme with a "small group of celebrities and public figures" had shown "promising results" when it came to "increasing the speed and efficacy" of spotting and removing scam ads of this kind.

It added that over the coming weeks, it would start alerting a larger group of figures who have been used in scam ads to let them know that they would be enrolled into the new scheme – and would allow them to opt out if they so wished.

Elsewhere, Meta said it was also now testing using facial recognition and video selfies as a means for people to verify their identity and regain access to an account that had been compromised.

The video would then be compared to the profile picture on the account the user was trying to access.

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Monika Bickert, Meta's vice president of content policy, said: "Scammers are relentless and continuously evolve their tactics

to try to evade detection.

“We’re just as determined to stay ahead of them and will keep building and testing new technical defences to strengthen our detection and enforcement capabilities.

“We have vetted these measures through our robust privacy and risk review process and built important safeguards, like sending notifications to educate people on how they work, giving people controls and ensuring we delete people’s facial data as soon as it’s no longer needed.

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“We’ll continue to discuss our ongoing investments in this area with regulators, policymakers and other experts.”