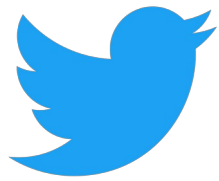


Mastodon: Neither elephant nor mammoth



Tug Williams Nov 2022



Twitter vs Mastodon



- I (almost) don't use twitter.
 - I use it as a 2nd rate news feed (2nd rate feed, not 2nd rate news)
- I don't use mastodon.
- Mastodon is not twitter
 - Can be a company website
 - Bulletin board / mailing list
 - Interconnected broadcast messaging service
- I'm less comfortable with Twitter under Musk.
- Wasn't comfortable before...

Where will Twitter go?

- if fears about direction, I can suggest Mastodon.
- Twitter doesn't make a profit.
- Revenue mostly advertising.
- Advertisers are fickle.
- Linux users can feel schadenfreude when closed source business models stumble.

Blue ticks

- Twitter single bucket of users
- Is @Mr_Ego the real Mr Ego?
- Need blue ticks for validation
 - USD 8 / month
 - $400k * 8 * 12 = \text{USD } 38 \text{ million / year.}$
 - Musk fired top 3 officials, cost USD 200 million.
 - 5 years for blue tick to pay for first 3 firings.
 - If all blue ticks start paying, and advertisers remain happy

Blue ticks

- To pay back purchase cost
 - $400k * 8 * 12 = \text{USD } 38 \text{ million / year.}$
 - Musk paid USD 44 billion.
 - 1,158 years for blue tick to pay for purchase.
 - Not counting lost opportunity cost
 - If all blue ticks start paying, and advertisers remain happy

Centralised vs Distributed

- How to classify the degree of centralisation of a system
 - **Centralised** Twitter, Facebook, Instagram
 - **Federated** Email, XMPP, phone networks, physical mail.
 - **Distributed** BitTorrent (shared files), IPFS (distributed file system), Scuttlebutt (shared data structures)
- Everyone understands email
 - people using different email servers.
 - you can communicate from one server to another.
- Mastodon is federated
 - you can follow a mastodon account on a different server.
 - Can be a single website based communication channel remaining internal.

Mastodon user

- twitter account is of the form
 - **@mr_ego**
- mastadon requires a domain
 - **@mr_ego@twitter.com**
 - hypothetical examples
 - **@Bill_Gates@microsoft.com**
 - **@Elon_Musk@tesla.com**
 - **@JustinTrudeau@commons.gc.ca**

Mastodon user

- no need for “blue ticks”, domain already trusted
- There isn't as much data as on twitter.
- I don't want to broadcast anything public.
- I don't follow people.
- I can't form an opinion about Mastodon usability.

Create mastodon account

- Creating an user account to connect to mastodon is easy.
 - <https://joinmastodon.org/servers>
 - select a server and connect to it.
 - Some servers are for niche interests, some are general.
 - Some servers are automatic, some require approval.
- mastodon.social
 - "The original server maintained by the Mastodon gGmbH non-profit"
 - doesn't require approval (you must agree to be civilised)

Mastodon server

- As open source, anyone can set up a server.
 - Akin to setting up an email server.
 - Truth Social and Gab are based on Mastodon.
 - Can be used
 - internally on an intranet.
 - publicly, with following users on other servers

Move server

- Mastodon allows you to switch from server to server.
- Download your data, and upload it to another server.
- Your login id is an email address.
- Your original supplier is closing, or evolving “morally”
 - switch to another domain.
 - your username might not be available on new server
 - Just like email

Install Server

- <https://docs.joinmastodon.org/admin/install/>
- Prerequisites...
 - Ubuntu 20.04 or Debian 11
 - root access
 - A (sub)domain name
 - e-mail delivery service or other SMTP server

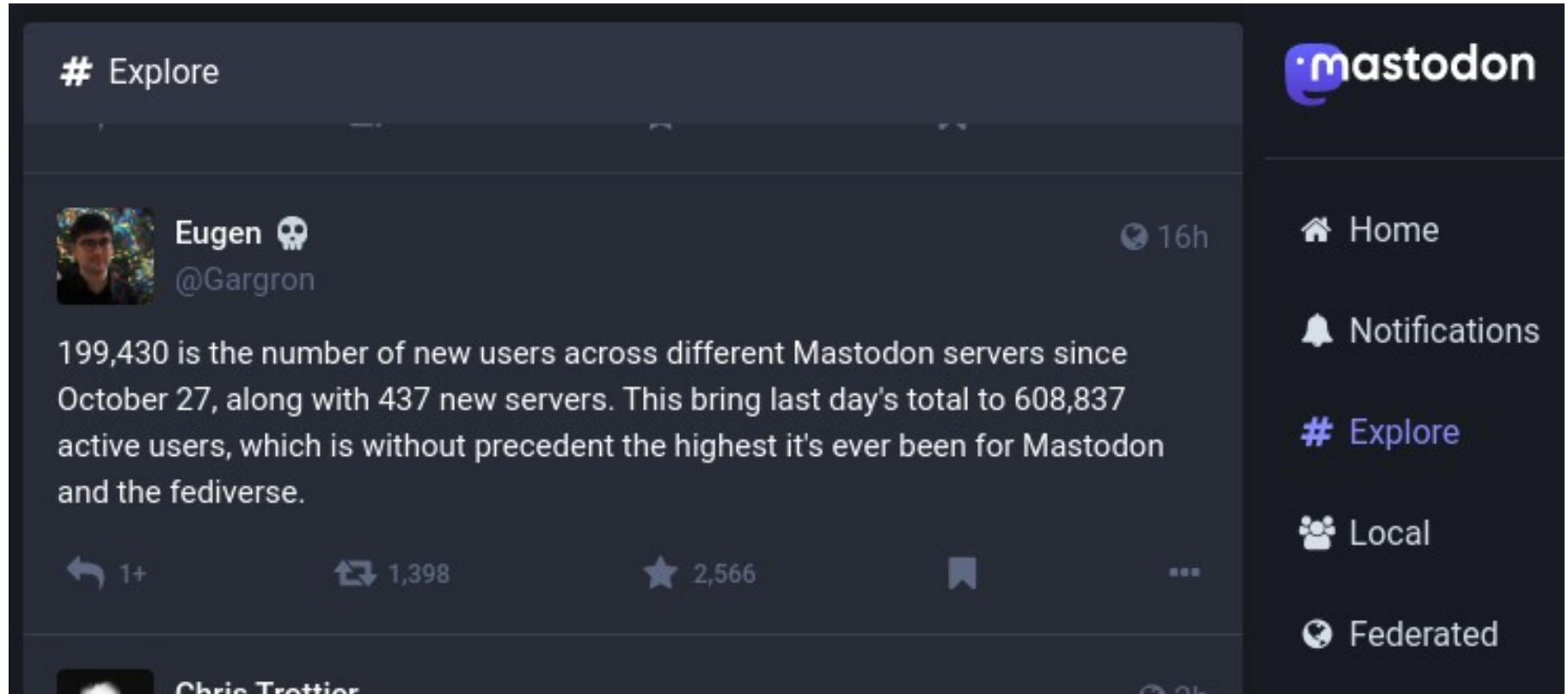
Install Server

- On gentoo I failed on the first instruction
 # adduser --disabled-login mastodon
- adduser / useradd is not the same across Linux
- Gave up – will try on a virtual machine... maybe

Further research

- Install a server
- Use a client (don't like following)
- Scalability with volume
- Importing twitter feed
- Adding twitter to mastodon


Leaving Twitter?



The image shows a screenshot of the Mastodon mobile application interface. At the top left, the text "# Explore" is visible. On the right side, the Mastodon logo and name are displayed. Below the header, a post by a user named "Eugen" (with a skull icon) and handle "@Gargron" is shown. The post text reads: "199,430 is the number of new users across different Mastodon servers since October 27, along with 437 new servers. This bring last day's total to 608,837 active users, which is without precedent the highest it's ever been for Mastodon and the fediverse." The post is timestamped "16h". Below the text, there are icons for reply (1+), retweet (1,398), favorite (2,566), and a bookmark icon. At the bottom of the post, the start of another user's name "Chris Trottier" is visible. On the right side of the screen, a navigation menu is open, listing "Home", "Notifications", "Explore" (which is highlighted in blue), "Local", and "Federated".

Explore

mastodon

Eugen 
@Gargron

16h

199,430 is the number of new users across different Mastodon servers since October 27, along with 437 new servers. This bring last day's total to 608,837 active users, which is without precedent the highest it's ever been for Mastodon and the fediverse.

1+ 1,398 2,566

Chris Trottier

Home
Notifications
Explore
Local
Federated

Mastodon meets Twitter The End?

