



Facebook backs out of SXSW over coronavirus fears

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San Francisco (CNN Business) – Facebook will skip one of the tech industry's biggest annual events as companies restrict travel over [fears about the novel coronavirus](#).

The company has decided not to attend this year's South by Southwest (SXSW) conference in Austin, Texas, it confirmed on Monday.

"Due to concerns related to coronavirus, our company and employees will not be participating in SXSW this year," a Facebook ([FB](#)) spokesperson told CNN Business.

[Founded in 1987](#), SXSW brings together some of the biggest names in technology, film, media and music in Austin each year. It occasionally helps usher in tech's next big thing, with notable beneficiaries including Twitter and Foursquare.

Twitter, which [announced over the weekend](#) that it would suspend all "non-critical business travel and events" and is encouraging employees to work from home, will also reportedly give the conference a miss. A Twitter spokesperson told [The Verge](#) that the company's travel restrictions include SXSW, where CEO Jack Dorsey was [scheduled to speak](#).

Twitter ([TWTR](#)) did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The coronavirus has [killed more than 3,000 people worldwide](#) so far, including six in the United States, and has caused major disruptions to the global economy, including the tech industry. Apple ([AAPL](#)) and Microsoft ([MSFT](#)) have warned that the virus will result in a hit to their sales, and major events including the [Mobile World Congress](#) in Barcelona and the annual [Game Developers Conference](#) have been canceled or postponed. Facebook has also axed two of its own events this year, including an advertising conference last month and [F8](#), [its biggest annual gathering](#), due to take place in May.

But SXSW will go ahead, its organizers said.

"SXSW 2020 is proceeding as planned," the organization's [official Twitter account](#) said Monday, adding that it is "working closely on a daily basis with local, state and federal agencies to plan for a safe event."

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