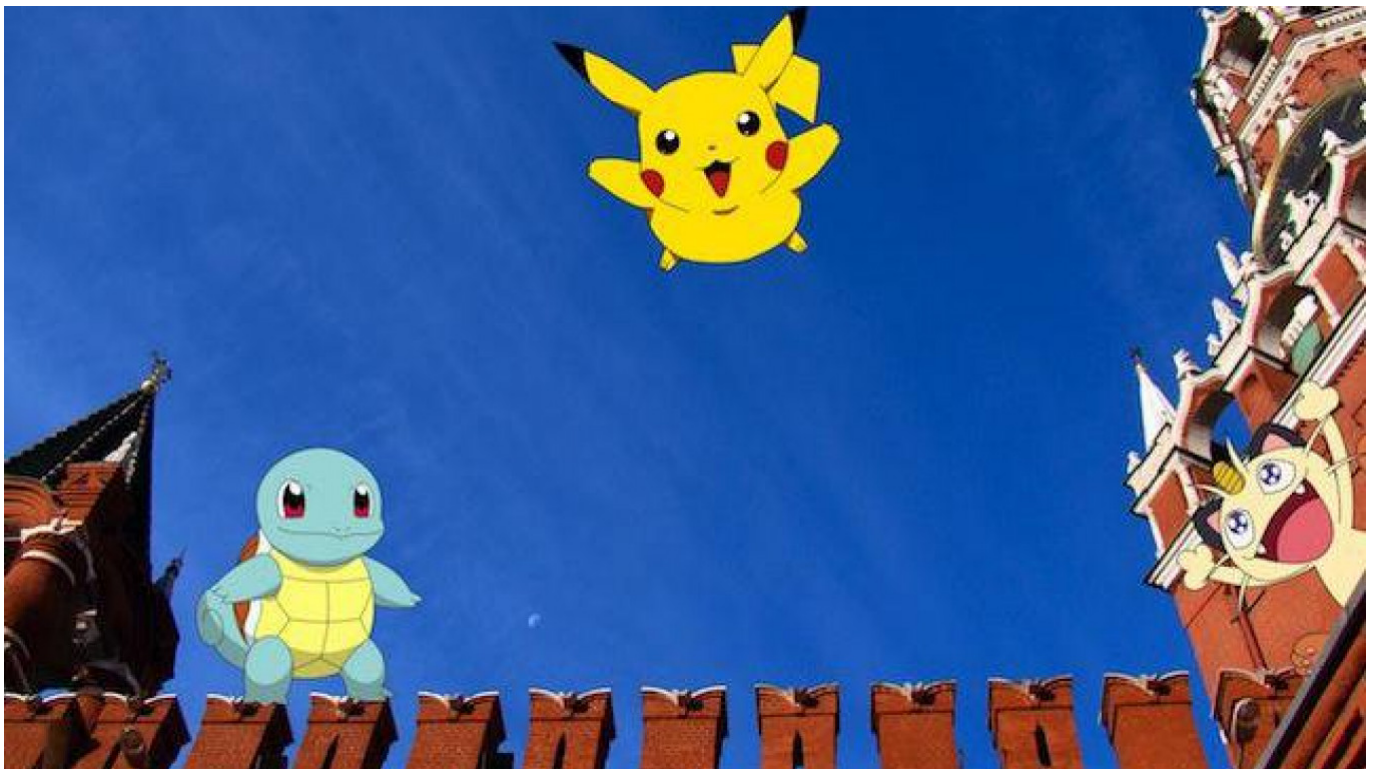


Russians Suspected of Using Pokémon Go to Sow U.S. Racial Tensions

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Pixabay / modified by MT

Russia's interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign extended to the viral online game Pokémon Go, CNN [reported](#).

The U.S. broadcaster said Thursday it had unearthed one of the 470 Russia-linked Facebook accounts that sought to exacerbate racial and social tensions in the United States.

Facebook has acknowledged that the 470 fake accounts and pages spent \$100,000 on 3,000 political and social ads in the run-up to the election.

Related article: [Facebook Blocks 470 Fake Accounts Linked to Russian 'Troll Factory'](#)

Titled “Don’t Shoot Us,” the Facebook page is thought to have been linked to the Kremlin “troll farm” known as the Internet Research Agency. CNN said it has traced the Facebook page to other “Don’t Shoot Us” campaigns on Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Tumblr and Pokémon

Go.

Although its Facebook, Instagram and Twitter pages have been blocked, the “Don’t Shoot Us” YouTube [page](#) links to a Donotshoot.us website, which links to an active Tumblr page that promoted a July 2016 Pokémon Go contest, CNN reported.

Pokémon Go players were guided to areas where incidents of police brutality against African-Americans took place, dating back to 2014.

An image advertising the contest instructs users to win an Amazon gift card by “giving your Pokémon the name of a victim of U.S. police brutality.” For example, Tumblr’s Pokémon Go contest announcement names one Pokémon Eric Garner, an unarmed African-American who was choked to death by a New York police officer in 2014.

Related article: [Russia’s Infamous ‘Troll Factory’ Is Now Posing as a Media Empire](#)

CNN wrote that the platforms, borrowing from the “Hands Up, Don’t Shoot” refrain used by the Black Lives Matter movement, served dual purposes.

“Don’t Shoot Us” allegedly sought to galvanize African-American protests while stoking fear of the threat of black activism among other Americans.

The “Don’t Shoot Us” campaign’s 200 YouTube videos were viewed nearly 370,000 times collectively, while its banned Facebook page reportedly had a quarter-million views.

The website linked to the “Don’t Shoot Us” web page is registered to a shopping mall in the state of Illinois, according to CNN.

Russia’s Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova labeled the broadcaster’s investigation “ham-fisted.”

“The Russians are to blame again... along with the Pokémons controlled by them,” she [wrote](#) on her Facebook page.

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