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# Torstar Owns Company Running Dozens Of American Gun Forums

VerticalScope removed the full list of firearms-related properties from its site shortly after being contacted by CANADALAND.

**ARTICLE** **ROBERT HILTZ** ([HTTP://WWW.CANADALANDSHOW.COM/AUTHOR/ROBERT-HILTZ/](http://www.canadalandshow.com/author/robert-hiltz/)) MARCH 20, 2018

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A company majority-owned by Torstar operates dozens of gun forums in the United States, on which users organize against gun restrictions (<http://www.floridaconcealedcarry.com/Forum/showthread.php?107890-Commenting-period-on-ATF-s-propose-rule-making-classifying-bump-stocks-as-MGs-is-open>), talk shit about mass-shooting survivors (<http://www.nationalgunforum.com/political-news-discussions/170946-david-hogg-won-t-return-school-without-some-gun-control-law-passing.html>), troubleshoot problems with modifying their weapons (<http://gunhub.com/gun-gear/64490-making-1893-mauser-into-sporter.html>), and fret over the possibility of reparations to African Americans (<http://www.nationalgunforum.com/political-news-discussions/172409-waters-promises-reparations-if-dems-take-over-2020-a.html>).

Torstar, the corporation that publishes the *Toronto Star*, *The Hamilton Spectator*, *Metro*, and dozens of smaller newspapers, bought ([https://www.torstar.com/html/whats\\_new/2015-archives/index.cfm?view=article&wnID=169](https://www.torstar.com/html/whats_new/2015-archives/index.cfm?view=article&wnID=169)) a 56 per cent equity stake in Toronto-based VerticalScope (<http://www.verticalscope.com/>) in 2015. VerticalScope operates several hundred different online forums and blogs, including more than 50 focused on firearms, with names like AR15Forums.com (<http://www.ar15forums.com/>), FloridaConcealedCarry.com (<http://www.floridaconcealedcarry.com/>), M14Forum.com (<http://m14forum.com/>), SniperForums.com (<http://www.sniperforums.com/>), and TheAKForum.net (<http://www.theakforum.net/>).

After receiving questions from CANADALAND about its firearm-related properties, VerticalScope removed the complete list of them

	<a href="#">Barry attends a top secret meeting</a> Started by underdog, 02-27-2018 06:35 AM
	<a href="#">The CIA, Obama, and Soros vs. Democracy</a> Started by Popeye, 02-27-2018 12:44 AM
	<a href="#">The statistical cost of providing new armed security for public schools</a> Started by Popeye, 02-22-2018 07:02 PM 1 2 3 ... 4
	<a href="#">The Left's Objective in Its War on the NRA</a> Started by Popeye, 02-26-2018 11:31 PM
	<a href="#">Exposing the Deep Rot in the Deep State</a> Started by Popeye, 02-25-2018 06:56 PM
	<a href="#">FL shooting survivor? who is one?</a> Started by wittmeba, 02-26-2018 03:54 AM 1 2
	<a href="#">Kalifornia DEMOCRATS Decline To Endorse Feinstein for Re-election</a> Started by Stevejet, 02-25-2018 01:34 PM

1657

1951

924

A selection of threads on the "Political News & Discussions" board at the VerticalScope-owned National Gun Forum.

The online world of gun forums offers a glimpse into the hardcore side of gun enthusiasts, according to the University of West Georgia’s Dylan McLean ([https://www.westga.edu/administration/profile.php?emp\\_id=91235](https://www.westga.edu/administration/profile.php?emp_id=91235)). His most recent research looks at the differences between American and Canadian gun culture by analyzing the words and phrases used by forum posters on opposite sides of the border.

“The most useful way to think about these things is if you are the proverbial fly on the wall of a gun shop or a shooting club,” he says. “Essentially, they’re the written form of what gun hobbyists are going to talk about when they’re finishing up a day at the range.”

McLean says that while the majority of conversations on such forums are focused on technical questions (“It’s enthusiasts discussing their hobby”), there’s plenty of space for political discussions, and even organizing. He says the politics of gun forums aren’t easy to pin down, as users aren’t uniformly of any particular viewpoint — except when it comes to guns.

“Most people that you find on the gun forums are going to be opposed to most types of gun control. It tends to be the fringe” of the gun-control debate, McLean says.

“You have to be careful extending that to other political views in a broader sense. But definitely when it comes to gun reforms, your gun enthusiasts are going to be hardliners. What does motivate them, what does move them, is resistance to significantly altering the gun-control regime.”

<a href="#">Post New Thread</a>				Page 1 of 18 1 2 3 11 > Last	
Threads in Forum : Civil War aka War of Northern Aggression Discussion				Forum Tools	
Thread / Thread Starter		Rating	Last Post	Replies	Views
	Sticky: Links of interest Ga.windbreak		09-16-2012 08:05 AM by subdjoe	7	2,707
	Sticky: More interesting reading subdjoe		04-21-2010 03:01 PM by subdjoe	3	2,521
	Confederate Bowie Question? sherppa		03-14-2018 02:04 PM by sherppa	2	136
	why do folks in the south hold a 150+ year old grudge? (1 2 3 ... Last Page) jng		03-01-2018 10:29 AM by buckskin	548	24,985
	I will shoulder my musket and brandish my sword. Darto		12-08-2017 07:26 PM by Dee	4	269
	Bonnie Blue Flag lgn270		11-23-2017 02:26 PM by lgn270	3	266
	So. How do you suppose secession would be handled today? (1 2 3 ... Last Page) Muddy		11-22-2017 01:27 AM by NWBear	43	1,705

VerticalScope-owned Graybeard Outdoors has a board devoted to "Civil War aka War of Northern Aggression Discussion."

LinkBack
Thread Tools

02-21-2018, 05:43 PM
Thread Starter
post #1 of 4 (permalink)

**TM7**  
Senior Member  
Join Date: Aug 2004  
Location: NorthEast of a Parallel Universe  
Posts: 23,333

**False and Fake Flag Attacks are not Conspiracy Theories....**  
....especially when they're admitted to....  
Sobering review of fake and false flag attacks and CTs admitted to -->  
<https://www.globalresearch.ca/false-...spread/5601511>  
....TM7

Quote
Quick Reply



Graybeard also has a board devoted to "Truth, Lies and Conspiracy Theories."

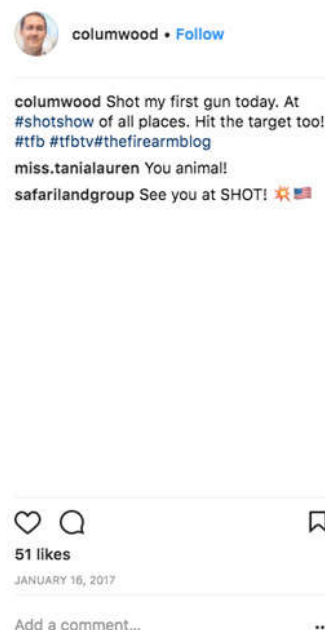
And this, McLean says, extends beyond just discussing politics. Their online discussions transfer into the meatspace, with the forums being used as a platform to organize rallies and other resistance to changes to gun laws.

For example, one of the forums VerticalScope facilitates is DefensiveCarry.com (<http://www.defensivcarry.com/>), which bills itself as "a friendly, educational community dedicated to keeping you safe and educated on the latest defensive technologies." One section of the forum is dedicated to local meet-ups and other social gatherings. But it also includes plenty of posts about regional protests (<http://www.defensivcarry.com/forum/member-meeting-place/337410-patriot-picket-harrisburg-calling-all-central-pa-members.html>) (<http://www.defensivcarry.com/forum/member-meeting-place/418329-florida-members-rallyintally-pro-2a-rally-state-capital.html>).

At the same time, on another VerticalScope forum, FloridaConcealedCarry.com, you can find a thread spreading the word (<http://www.floridaconcealedcarry.com/Forum/showthread.php?107890-Commenting-period-on-ATF-s-propose-rule-making-classifying-bump-stocks-as-MGs-is-open>) that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) is accepting public comments on its plans to regulate bump stocks.

A bump stock, you may remember, was employed by the Las Vegas shooter in his rampage that killed more than 50 people and wounded scores more. Sometimes referred to as bump fire stocks, they allow a semi-automatic rifle to fire at something approaching fully automatic fire using the weapon's recoil. On the forum, users posted their opposition to regulating these accessories. ("Listen, I get it—bump fire is just a fun noisemaker. But the implications of what the ATF is proposing is disastrous," one wrote.)

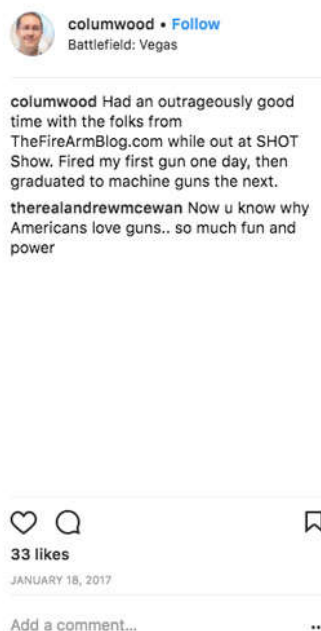
Colum Wood, the vice president of content for VerticalScope, did not answer a list of questions sent by CANADALAND about VerticalScope's approach to running gun forums, what sort of influence Torstar has over the company, or whether VS might have some responsibility for the state of American gun laws by giving a platform for hardline gun owners. Nor did he answer questions about his 2017 trip to the SHOT Show in Las Vegas — America's largest gun expo, an industry-only event organized by the firearms trade association (<https://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2013/09/the-gun-lobbying-group-you-dont-hear-about/279616/>) — and what he made of American gun culture.



In early 2017, VerticalScope VP Colum Wood documented his trip to America's biggest gun industry event in a series of posts on Instagram.

Wood did, however, provide a brief written statement: "VerticalScope owns and operates more than 1,400 enthusiast websites that provide a platform for enthusiasts to share their passions, experiences and hobbies with others, including outdoor websites related to fishing, hunting, boating, camping and shooting. VerticalScope does not participate in any discussions on its platforms but welcomes and values the exchange of ideas, conversations and opinions by its group of passionate enthusiasts."

A spokesperson for Torstar did not answer a list of specific questions about the company's ownership stake in VerticalScope, how much influence it has over VS, or whether it approved of VS's operation of firearms forums. Bob Hepburn referred all questions to VerticalScope.



The *Toronto Star's* editorial board, which speaks as the voice of the paper from on high, weighed in on gun control measures (<https://www.thestar.com/opinion/editorials/2018/02/16/mass-shootings-wont-stop-until-americans-get-outraged-and-stay-outraged.html>) after the recent Parkland shooting. "The facts speak for themselves: the United States is in the grip of an epidemic of



gun violence unique in the developed world. It is standing by while its citizens, often its children, are slaughtered in batches,” the editorialists wrote. “None of this will change until Americans move beyond fatalism and decide that enough is truly enough.”

In its latest quarterly earnings report ([https://www.torstar.com/html/whats\\_new/index.cfm?view=article&wnID=201](https://www.torstar.com/html/whats_new/index.cfm?view=article&wnID=201)), released February 28, Torstar described its relationship with VerticalScope as somewhat arms-length, despite its majority stake.

“[Torstar] has classified its investment in VerticalScope as an associated business ... based on management’s judgement that the Company does not have control but has significant influence, based on rights to board representation and other provisions in the shareholders agreement,” the report read. Still, Torstar management highlighted continued growth at VerticalScope as one of the few good-news stories in an otherwise bleak update.

Another VerticalScope website, The Firearm Blog, takes its tagline “Firearms Not Politics” to a literal maximum. A recent piece on the blog (<http://www.thefirearmblog.com/blog/2018/03/02/magpul-pmag-d-60-spotted-use-7th-special-forces-group-soldier/>) used a report on domestic violence in the U.S. military (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lnZ5Hn3yyL8>) from Arizona’s 3TV as a jumping-off point for a discussion of the kind of magazines one of the accused soldiers had used:

A recently published news video from Arizona-based 3TV/Arizona Family Channel concerning domestic violence in the U.S. Army included a photograph of a U.S. Soldier from the 7th Special Forces Group based out of Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. The soldier is posing with what appears to be an M4A1 SOPMOD Block II and also appears to be on deployment in Afghanistan due to the terrain, green valley, and patchwork of compounds in the background.

Much more telling than the background scenery or the rifle is the Magpul PMAG D-60 drum magazine that is inserted into this soldier’s magazine well. The feeding device is a Magpul Dynamics PMAG D-60 polymer drum magazine that is designed to hold up to 60 rounds of 5.56x45mm NATO.

While it included the full video at the end of the post, the description of the original report as “concerning domestic violence in the U.S. Army” was the only mention or discussion of the video’s core content: a military wife telling her story of abuse. The rest concerned the various possible uses of Magpul products by U.S. military personnel.

@robert\_hiltz ([http://twitter.com/robert\\_hiltz](http://twitter.com/robert_hiltz))



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31 likes

JANUARY 17, 2017

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The full list of VerticalScope's firearms-related properties, according to the page recently removed from its website:

1911Forum.com

1911Talk.com

68Forums.com

700Rifle.com

ACRForum.com

AirSoftSniperForum.com

AR15Forums.com

ArmsLocker.com

BersapistolForum.com

BlowgunForum.com

ColtForum.com

DefensiveCarry.com

FloridaConcealedCarry.com

FNForum.net

GearHog.com

Glock.pro

GlockForum.net

GrayBeardOutdoors.com

GunBlog.com

GunBoards.com

Gunco.net

GunForums.net

GunHub.com

GunnerForum.com

GunListings.org

HandgunForum.net

HandgunsandAmmunition.com

HKPro.com

KahrForum.com

KeltecForum.com

KimberTalk.com

M14Forum.com

MarlinOwners.com

MassCops.com

MP-Pistol.com

NationalGunForum.com

PistolSmith.com

RimFireCentral.com

RugerForum.net

RugerPistolForums.com

ShootersForum.com

ShootersRealm.com

ShotgunForums.com

Sigarms556.com

SigTalk.com



SlingshotForum.com  
SmithandWessonForums.com  
SniperForums.com  
TaurusArmed.net  
TheAKForum.net  
TheFirearmBlog.com  
UtahConcealedCarry.com  
WaltherForums.com  
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Our next goal is a new investigative podcast about Thunder Bay.

**Reddit** (<http://www.reddit.com/submit?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.canadalandshow.com%2Ftorstar-owned-verticalscope-runs-dozens-of-gun-forums%2F&title=Torstar%20Owns%20Company%20Running%20Dozens%20Of%20American%20Gun%20Forums>)

%3A%2F%2Fwww.canadalandshow.com%2Ftorstar-

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