

Reality Team:

A Research-Informed Approach

A brief bibliography of research informing the need to combat disinformation, our audience priorities, strategies and tactics.

DISINFORMATION IS PERVASIVE AND PERSUASIVE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

K. Hao. (2021) MIT Technology Review. Troll farms reached 140 million Americans a month on Facebook before 2020 election. Troll farms reach the same demographic groups singled out by the Kremlin-backed Internet Research Agency (IRA) during the 2016 election. 75% of Facebook users who saw their content had it pushed into their feed by Facebook recommendation engines.

Center for Countering Hate. (2021). The Toxic Ten: How Ten Fringe Publishers Fuel 69% of Digital Climate Change Denial. Climate denialists reach 186m followers.

Advanced Science News: 2017 Inoculating the Public against Misinformation about Climate Change
“Misinformation on climate change has a significant impact on public perception.”

Stop Funding Heat. (2021). In Denial- Facebook's Growing Friendship with Climate Misinformation. Climate misinformation viewed 1.4m times daily on FB.

Kaiser Family Foundation 2021 : COVID-19 Misinformation is Ubiquitous: 78% of the Public Believes or is Unsure About At Least One False Statement, and Nearly a Third Believe At Least Four of Eight False Statements Tested

NON-NEWS READERS ARE VULNERABLE TO DISINFORMATION.

Pew Research Center. (2020). Americans Who Mainly Get Their News on Social Media Are Less Engaged, Less Knowledgeable. 18% of adults use social media as primary news source (same % as local and cable news); They are less knowledgeable, more likely to see false information.

De Beaumont Foundation. (2021) Americans Who Get COVID-19 Information from Social Media More Likely to Believe Misinformation, Less Likely to Be Vaccinated. Social media users far more likely to believe misinformation.

Harvard Kennedy School Misinfo Review: The causes and consequences of COVID-19 misperceptions: Understanding the role of news and social media

BELIEFS AFFECT ACTIONS

Security and Defense Quarterly (2021). Disinformation as a threat to national security on the example of the COVID-19 pandemic

A misinformed public can pressure policy makers to undertake decisions based on false information; disinformation is eroding public faith in American institutions. M. Wallin.

American Psychological Association 2019. The gateway belief model: A large-scale replication.

Advanced Science News: 2017 Inoculating the Public against Misinformation about Climate Change

"Misinformation on climate change has a significant impact on public perception."

Knight Foundation 2020 How Media Habits Relate to Voter Participation

For younger adults (25-29) social media plays a lead role in shaping their political knowledge. Of those who do not vote, 54% don't seek out news.

BEST PRACTICES FOR COUNTERING DISINFORMATION

Plos One. Neutralizing misinformation through inoculation: Exposing misleading argumentation techniques reduces their influence. Climate communication messages should take into account ways in which scientific content can be distorted, and include pre-emptive inoculation messages. J. Cook. (2017).

The International Journal of Press/Politics. Testing the effectiveness of correction placement and type on Instagram. To best correct misinformation on Instagram or other visual social media platforms, use logic-focused humor corrections. EK Vagra. (2020).

Global Challenges. Inoculating the Public against Misinformation about Climate Change. Prebunking 'Inoculating' by exposing a small dose of misinformation and explaining the lie or fallacy can neutralize misinformation on climate change, vaccines, and other issues. Van der Linden, et al. (2017).

Edward Elgar Research Handbook in Communicating Climate Change. Deconstructing Climate Science Denial. Uncovering rhetorical techniques is an effective and efficient communication approach. J. Cook. (2020).

The Debunking Handbook. Misinformation can be unstuck through refutations (debunking). S. Lewandowsky, et al. (2020).

Trends in Cognitive Science: The Psychology of Fake News. "interventions can successfully nudge social media users to focus more on accuracy"