

First Draft Impact Report

Q1 2020

Our mission

First Draft's mission is to empower societies with accurate information in critical moments.

We work to ensure the integrity of the world's information ecosystem, developing and delivering pioneering techniques, tools and training for how information is discovered, shared and presented to the public.

Our values

Pioneering

Rigor

Empathy

Empowerment

Integrity

Executive summary

Last year, First Draft expanded from a remote team of four to a team of forty in offices across three continents.

We were faced with a complex challenge: to continue delivering high quality, high impact work, while at the same time building a brand new team infrastructure and culture. Finding the right balance between these two endeavours was the year's defining challenge.

In the first three months of 2020, we saw why this investment was so important.

The sudden outbreak of coronavirus is unique, but also emblematic of the speed that unexpected global events can take, and how they alter the online landscape in unpredictable ways.

First Draft has been focused on building a team that can identify, pivot and respond to these kinds of threats. The coronavirus has been the first test of its kind for our newly established team, and this report records what we have achieved.

CORONAVIRUS

The Reporter Hub

As the true scale of the crisis became apparent during February, we responded with a [Coronavirus Reporter Hub](#) which brings together 11 new resources on subjects including ethics, data analysis, self-care and platform analysis.

During this period our readership doubled, with a quarter of a million hits on our website in 2020.

Webinar Programme

With an inability to travel and an even greater demand for our networking, skills sharing and tutorials, we launched our coronavirus [Webinar Programme](#). We have so far delivered webinars for U.S., European and Asia-Pacific audiences, in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese, and

on verification, monitoring and newsgathering, the use of headlines, imagery and data visualisation, and computational approaches to reporting on coronavirus.

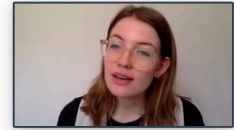
Debunk Database

Our response also saw the launch of a searchable database that gives fast access to existing debunks about coronavirus, drawing from IFCN, WHO and our CrossCheck network. With over 20,000 search queries, we are creating new data about what audiences need, and building an analytical and UX layer to make reports more valuable to both their creators and audiences.

Covering Coronavirus Course

It quickly became apparent that reporters needed specific guidance and training around reporting on a pandemic in the information age. In just two

FIRST DRAFT



CARTES

Les questions à se poser

firstdraftnews.org @firstdraftnews

CARTES: LES QUESTIONS À SE POSER

Les questions à se poser lorsque l'on regarde une carte et les informations qu'elle contient pour juger de son sérieux et de sa fiabilité

1. Avez-vous **lu le titre**, la description, la légende, la source ou toute autre mention?
2. Qui a fait la carte et pourquoi? Avez-vous essayé une **recherche d'image inversée** pour voir si la même carte est déjà apparue en ligne auparavant?
3. Si la carte montre des données, de **quelle sorte de données** s'agit-il? D'où viennent ces données et sont-elles fiables?
4. Vérifiez la taille des pays, régions, etc. Sont-ils d'une **taille inexacte ou déformés**?
5. Comment la carte a-t-elle été dessinée? Est-ce qu'elle inclut des **symboles ou des zones**? La manière dont le design sert le propos pose-t-elle problème?

FIRSTDRAFT

Webinar delivered in French on the use of headlines, images and data visualisations. [Watch on YouTube.](#)

weeks from kitchens and living rooms and bedrooms, we conceived, designed, delivered and distributed a new course, which include two hours of brand new training material.

The course focuses on Covid-19 and the understanding of information disorder across the social media platforms. It incorporates sections on verification, monitoring and reporting.

An adapted Daily Briefing

Our Daily Briefing, a round-up of the best reads on disinformation which we deliver to 2,000 industry professionals and interested citizens, has been a core output for First Draft since September 2019. Following

the coronavirus outbreak, we adapted our offering to provide insights from our extensive monitoring of the information surrounding the crisis.

Broader strategic work

We have also been continuing with our regular work: training newsrooms, publishing in-depth studies, and disseminating clear, evidence-based guidance.

Particular highlights include a train the trainer session with 62 newsroom representatives from TEGNA, delivering 12 full day training sessions including live simulations across the breadth of the U.S., publishing two in-depth studies of health misinformation in Pakistan and the Philippines, and providing evidence to the UK

House of Lords.

Building core capability

All our work has been underpinned by investment in First Draft's core capability. In January, we spent three days bringing the team together in a single place - unlikely to be repeatable in the near future - to build stronger relationships, processes and principles, and to enjoy each other's company.

A core output, besides reams of documentation about new procedures and policies, were First Draft's values. In Q1 2020, these values have been at the heart of what we do, and they will continue to be as we head into another unpredictable quarter.

What we've done

What we've done

CORONAVIRUS

We produced 16 new resources for covering coronavirus, including a brand new course, a Webinar Programme, a searchable database of debunks and a range of stories and guides.

[Reporter Hub](#)

[Webinar Programme](#)

[Debunk Database](#)

[Covering Coronavirus Course](#)

[Coronavirus: Tools and guides for journalists](#)

[Coronavirus: Information Sources](#)

[Coronavirus: Journalist FAQs](#)

[Coronavirus: Responsible reporting and ethics](#)

[Tips for reporting on Covid-19 and slowing the spread of misinformation](#)

[5 quick ways we can all](#)

[double-check coronavirus information online](#)

[How social media platforms are responding to the coronavirus infodemic](#)

[How to investigate health misinformation and anything else using Twitter's API](#)

[From coronavirus to bushfires, how misleading maps are distorting reality](#)

[The 6 types of coronavirus misinformation to watch out for](#)

[How to stay sane while reporting on the coronavirus](#)

[How newsrooms can support staff reporting on Covid-19](#)

US 2020

We began the year with a strict focus on US 2020, delivering live training across the nation and building an extensive monitoring architecture in anticipation of the election.

Training

We trained 62 TEGNA staff to train their newsrooms, scaling our training to hundreds of journalists.

12 Masterclasses & Live Simulations

We continued our US tour with 12 day-long events that included 4 masterclasses and live simulations across 11 states.

- University of Oregon
- University of Southern California
- Arizona State University
- The Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism CUNY
- The Detroit Free Press
- Missouri School of Journalism
- University of Texas, El Paso
- University of Texas, Austin
- The Miami Herald
- Ohio University
- University of Georgia
- Florida A&M University

In total we trained over 900 journalists between mid-January and early March.



Marie Bohner
Responsible Projet, First Draft

Conference held in France in advance of the municipal elections

FRANCE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

- Insights into how trends in disinformation evolved in France between collaborative projects in 2017 and 2019, published in French and English
- A series of webinars on newsgathering and monitoring, attended by journalists from across local, regional and national media organisations. Upcoming webinars will focus on covering coronavirus
- A weekly newsletter distributed to more than 100 journalists, students and media professionals on the trends of dis- and misinformation in the French landscape

- First Draft's Essential Guide to newsgathering and monitoring the social web, adapted to the French context
- And a fully translated French edition of First Draft's Essential Guide on Responsible Reporting

IRELAND GENERAL ELECTION

- Daily monitoring briefing email shared with journalists covering the election
- Newsroom training for Business Post and Newstalk

HEALTH MISINFORMATION STUDIES

Case study: Understanding the impact of polio vaccine disinformation in Pakistan

Case study: Exploring the controversy around Dengvaxia and vaccine misinformation in the Philippines

Who we've reached

Who we've reached

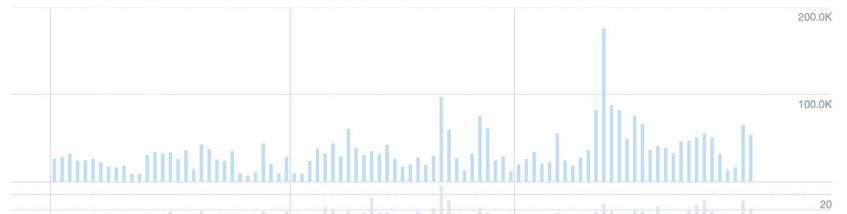
240,000 reached on firstdraftnews.org

The number of people coming to First Draft's website doubled following the sudden acceleration of coronavirus. March has seen First Draft providing value when it matters, reflected in a significant readership during this time.



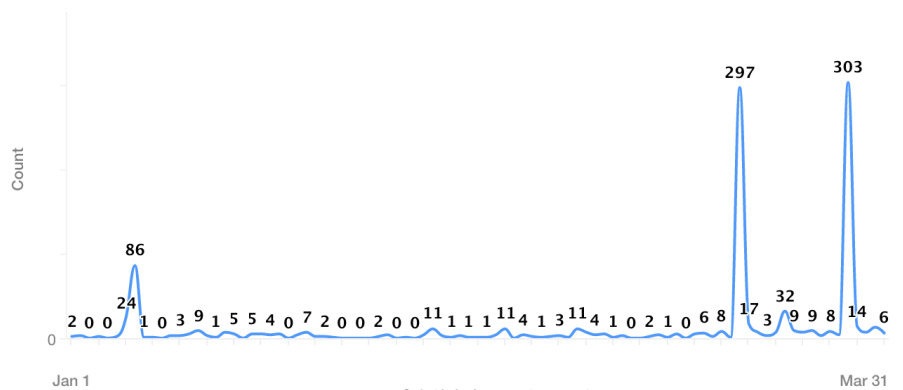
3.2 million reached on Twitter

Following a strong quarter on social with our coverage of the 2019 UK General Election, we have maintained a strong presence and reach, significantly increasing with our offering on coronavirus.

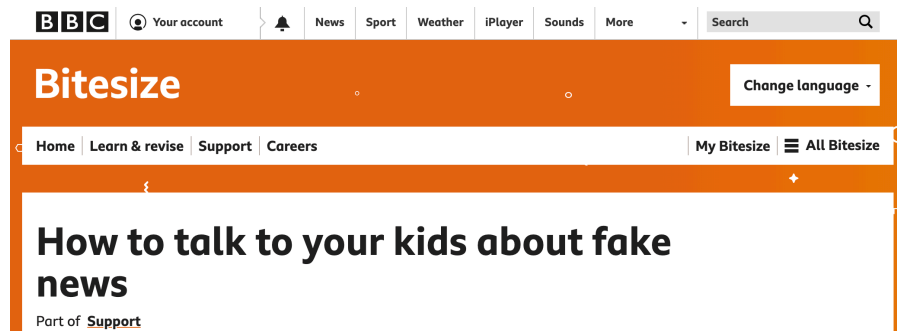


1.06k appearances in the media

U.S. Director Claire Wardle has been a leading voice throughout the rise of the 'infodemic', providing insight for numerous leading newsrooms, policy-makers and researchers.



Where we've provided insight



Contributed to [BBC Bitesize media literacy course](#)



Provided evidence to UK House of Lords inquiry on Democracy and Digital Technologies. Watch on [Parliament TV](#).



Discussed coronavirus misinformation with [Al Jazeera](#) and BBC

Where we're headed next

April, May and June will likely have many surprises in store for us all.

What we do know is that we will be continuing to ramp up our support for the people covering and trying to understand the outbreak of coronavirus, as the crisis continues apace.

In particular, we'll be looking to widen our reach to empower a wider public audience to find high quality information. We'll be launching a new course for members of the public wanting to better understand the coronavirus information

landscape, and we'll be looking to work more closely with community members to help them take an active role in highlighting the best and worst coverage.

We'll also be turning our eyes back to the US 2020 election, and working with reporters to develop new skills, methods and resources ahead of one of the year's major elections.

If you want to talk to us more about what's next, get in touch with us at contact@firstdraftnews.com.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank everyone that makes the work we do possible. In particular, our Advisory Board has provided invaluable support.

ADVISORY BOARD

Daniel Bramatti is the president of Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism (ABRAJI). He also serves as the editor of *Estadão Data* and *Estadão Verifica*. Daniel previously worked as a subeditor at POLITICO and as a correspondent in Buenos Aires.

Liz Carolan is the Executive Director of Digital Action, which works to counter digital threats to democracy. In 2018 she set up and ran the Transparent Referendum Initiative, a project to enable scrutiny of online activity during the Irish referendum on the 8th Amendment. She has spent the last 10 years working on governance, transparency and data issues at the Institute for Government, the Africa Governance Initiative and Open Data Institute.

Phil Chetwynd is the Global

News Director of Agence France-Presse. Prior to that, he served as the editor-in-chief of AFP and as the organization's special correspondent in over 20 countries.

Sam Dubberley manages the Digital Verification Corps at Amnesty International. He has over ten years' experience in broadcast news and was head of the Eurovision News Exchange from 2010 to 2013, managing the world's largest exchange of TV news content.

Sam Gregory is the Program Director at WITNESS and an award-winning technologist, media-maker and advocate. For 20 years, Sam has enabled people to use the power of the moving image and participatory technologies to create human rights change. Currently Co-Chair of the Partnership on AI's Expert Group on AI and the Media, he focuses on emerging threats linked to AI and mis/disinformation including deepfakes and synthetic media.

Sameer Padania runs Macroscope, an independent consultancy supporting

experimentation, innovation and learning in journalism, human rights and philanthropy. He has worked and consulted for organizations such as Open Society, Ariadne, Transparency and Accountability Initiative, WAN-IFRA, the European Cultural Foundation, The Philanthropy Workshop and Google DNI Innovation Fund, on a wide range of journalism, digital media, activism and policy initiatives.

Chris Perry is the Chief Innovation Officer at Weber Shandwick, a leading global communications and marketing solutions firm. With over 20 years of digital and media experience, Chris specializes in helping clients decode the rapidly changing media environment. His writing and work have been featured in Forbes, Fortune, The New York Times and The Washington Post. Chris authors the Media/Genius newsletter, which focuses on media at the intersection of content and intelligence.

Adam Rendle is a partner at Taylor Wessing in the IP/IT group, specialising in copyright, media and brands. Adam provides a wide range of support for clients

Acknowledgements

including complex, strategic advisory work, litigation and disputes, content, advertising deals and corporate transactions. His work focuses on media and tech industries, with major clients across music, publishing, broadcasting, advertising and digital service.

Vivian Schiller is the Executive Director for The Aspen Institute's programs on technology, media, innovation and cybersecurity. Previously, she was head of the Civil Foundation, Global Chair of News at Twitter, Senior VP & Chief Digital Officer at NBC News, and President and CEO of NPR.

Dan Shefet is the founder of Cabinet Shefet, a law firm that focuses on international IP, IT and competition law. He also founded the Association for Accountability and Internet Democracy, which aims to introduce a general principle of accountability on the internet to secure the protection of human integrity. Dan was elected to the American Law Institute in 2019.

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