

How to monitor conversations in closed spaces

A look at the practicalities and ethical considerations of tracking content in closed groups and messaging apps.

In many countries, closed messaging apps like WhatsApp, Telegram, and WeChat are the main platforms for sharing information.

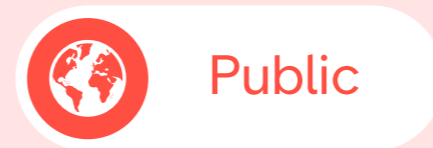
They are similar to SMS but have additional functions, like end-to-end encryption. Users are often members of many private groups, and misinformation in the form of links, images and videos, can travel fast.

So the origins of a falsehood can be impossible to verify. Some people actively promote their groups and use them to promote their agenda.



Facebook Groups can help you uncover valuable information.

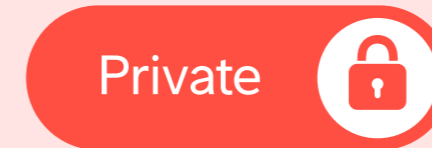
You can search them by location or topic, but not all are public and open to join.



Anyone can see who's in the group and what they post



Visible
Anyone can find this group



Only members can see who's in the group and what they post



Visible
Anyone can find this group



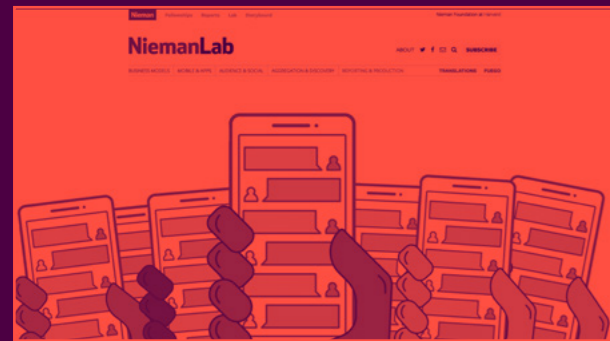
Only members can see who's in the group and what they post



Hidden
Only members can find this group

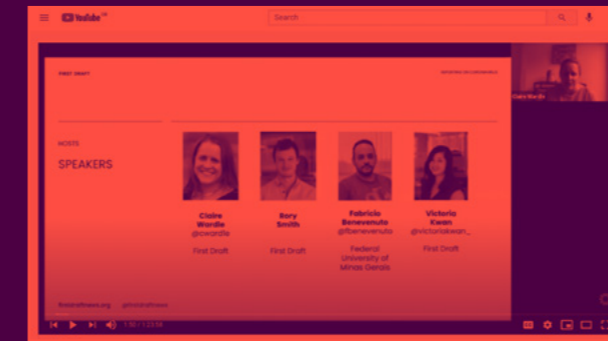
8 questions to ask before joining a platform

- 1 Have you thought about the personal information you are giving the platform?
- 2 Have you checked what device data is being linked to you?
- 3 Have you checked your privacy settings within the platform?
- 4 Are you informed about what kind of content the platform allows on the site?
- 5 Do you know what privacy experts have to say about the platform?
- 6 How will you identify yourself on the platform?
- 7 Have you thought about the implications of being in certain spaces?
- 8 What are you going to do with what you find?



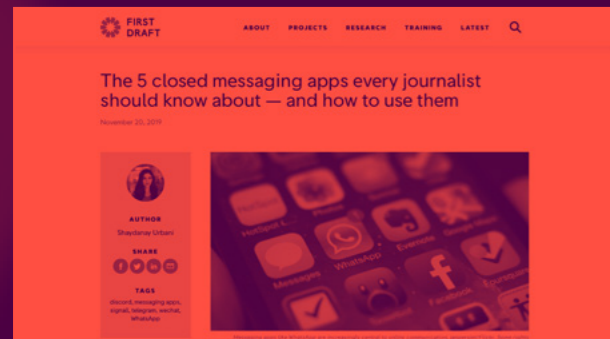
The promises and pitfalls of reporting within chat apps and other semi-open platforms: A journalist's guide →

(Neiman Lab) Learn how to continue reporting ethically and responsibly as communities move onto closed apps.



Reporting on Coronavirus: Using WhatsApp to find Covid-19 stories →

Explore how to monitor public WhatsApp groups and learn more about the ethics of doing so.



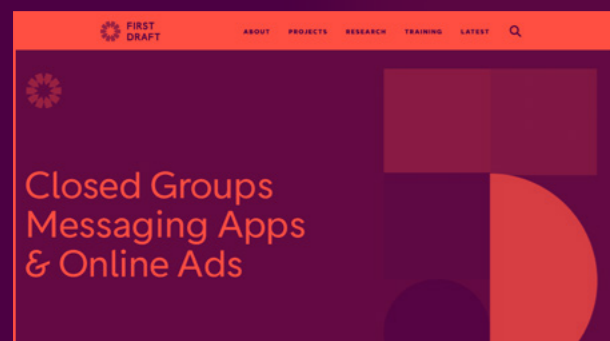
The five closed messaging apps every journalist should know about — and how to use them →

Discover the top five closed messaging apps you need to know.



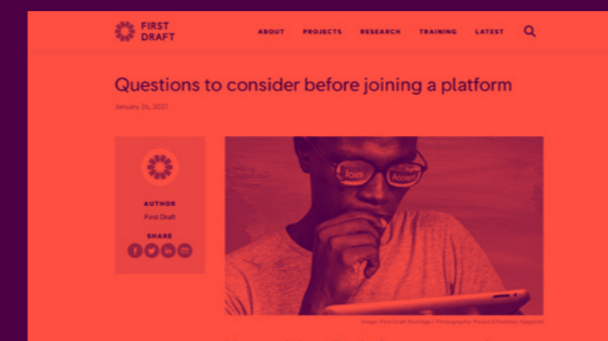
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Closed groups, messaging apps and online ads →

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Questions to consider when joining a new social media platform →

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|----|---|-----|---|
| 1. | HOW TO UNDERSTAND VACCINE MISINFORMATION | 6. | HOW TO VERIFY VISUAL CONTENT ONLINE |
| 2. | HOW TO IDENTIFY THE KEY VACCINE NARRATIVES | 7. | HOW TO TRACE SOURCES |
| 3. | HOW TO SEARCH ONLINE | 8. | HOW TO AVOID AMPLIFYING MISINFORMATION |
| 4. | HOW TO MONITOR CONVERSATIONS ON SOCIAL MEDIA | 9. | HOW TO PUBLISH RESPONSIBLY |
| 5. | HOW TO MONITOR CONVERSATIONS IN CLOSED SPACES | 10. | HOW TO ANSWER QUESTIONS (BEFORE THEY'VE BEEN ASKED) |

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