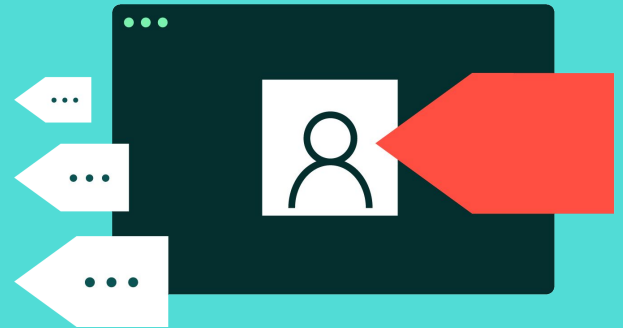


Australian Influencers 2021 Toolkit

Helping influencers and followers dodge disinformation

01

Your audience + you



Your media profile means your voice is very influential.

That's why the people who try to spread disinformation want to use it. You have the audience and the voice they lack – so you're an ideal host for them to piggyback onto.

Ideally they want influencers like you to repeat their rumors. Even if you don't believe the rumor, but still discuss it, that still works for them, as you are acting as a megaphone for their misinformation.

Unfortunately the more a rumor is discussed and repeated – no matter how false it is – the more likely people are to believe it. So if you do need to address an issue or story, rather than simply repeating the rumor, focus instead on proven facts. Always lead with the truth.



Even maps can distort reality

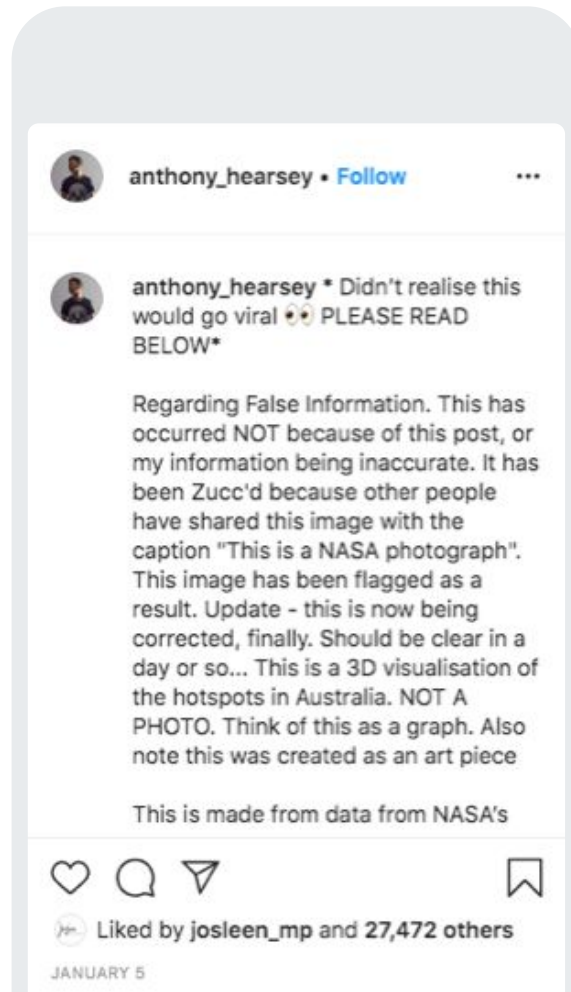
The next slide shows an example of this.

Kudos to the creator for correcting the record after their artwork was mistakenly taken as literal by celebrities and seen by millions of fans

Here's some useful information on [how to avoid mistakes with maps](#).

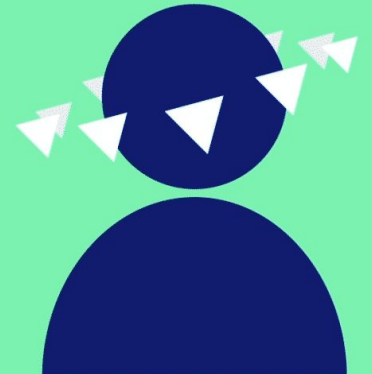


Kudos to the creator for correcting the record after their artwork was mistakenly taken as literal in this example:



02

So why do people spread disinformation?



Three main reasons to keep in mind.

01

To make money

For example, tricking people into clicking on false sites to make money from advertising, promoting fake Covid-19 tests or asking for donations to fake GoFundMe accounts.

02

For political gain

Like creating a smear campaign before a domestic election, or a foreign government interfering in another country's election.

03

For social or psychological reasons

Some people try to push false or misleading content just to see if they can get away with it.



03

Take a beat before sharing



Emotions can sway us.

When we feel a strong emotional reaction to a piece of news or an article we've just read – fear, anger or joy – we're more likely to share that content with others. Sometimes before we've really had time to process whether the content is factual and who the authors were.

You can play your part in slowing the spread of disinformation by taking a beat before you reshare content. Ask yourself if the content has deliberately provoked an emotional response to entice you to share it.



04

How to talk about conspiracy theories (or not)



We've all seen it on social media and in closed apps.

Wild conspiracy theories can spread rapidly online. Sometimes they're even shared by your friends and family. So how do we deal with it?

It's tempting to ignore these posts, or even mute the sharers. But sometimes it is necessary to set the record straight. If you do discuss conspiracy theories in your stories, it's important to triple check all the facts in trusted sources first and to avoid alienating other people.

Calling the people who share the rumors crazy or wrong just makes them double down on their beliefs.

The best approach is to use empathic language when we talk about the people who share and believe disinformation. And understand [how people approach things can differ](#).

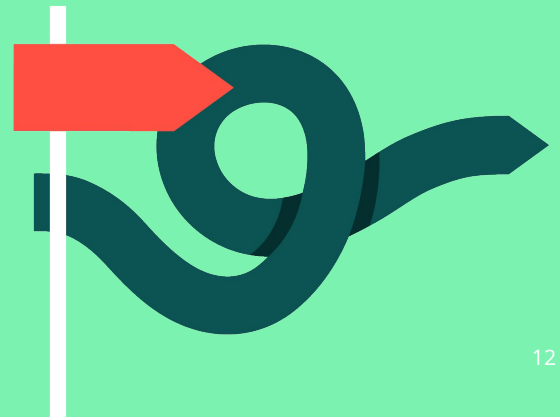
You could say that you've seen people posting the rumor and that you're worried the people creating it are trying to divide us or scare us.

It shouldn't feel like you versus the sharer, but you and the sharer versus the original creator of the post. Here's more on [how to talk to family and friends](#) if they're sharing misleading messages!



05

There's more than
just fake news



Beyond “f*** news”

The term “Fake news” is used to describe pretty much any content that someone thinks is deceptive.

There’s a big range of ways that content can be manipulated to trick people – and it isn’t always obviously ‘fake’. In fact, online information often lies on a spectrum between ‘false’ and ‘true’.

We need to be more aware than ever of how and why information spreads, so we can understand and navigate what we find online and have better-informed conversations with family and friends.



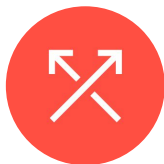
The deceptive seven

Here are seven common techniques you'll see again and again



Satire or parody

No intent to cause harm but has the potential to fool.



Misleading content

Misleading use of information to frame an issue or individual.



Imposter content

When genuine sources are impersonated.



Fabricated content

New content that is 100% false, designed to deceive and do harm.



False connection

When headlines, visuals or captions don't support the content.



False context

When genuine content is shared with false contextual information.



Manipulated content

When genuine information or imagery is manipulated to deceive.



06

Be a disinformation detective



Here are a few ways to verify something you've seen.

The more of these you're able to dig into, the more sure you can be about the content.

Try to find the original

Who sent it to you? Who sent it to them? Where did they find it? How it traveled will tell you a lot about that piece of content.

Find the author or creator

Who recorded the audio? Took the original photo? Who shared that screenshot?

Confirm the date

When was it created?

Seek the location

Where was the content or account created?

Uncover the motivation

Why might this account have been made? What motives do the creators have for producing the content?

Look for visual clues

Can you do a bit of detective work to confirm where a piece of content is from?



07

Ways to fight the good fight



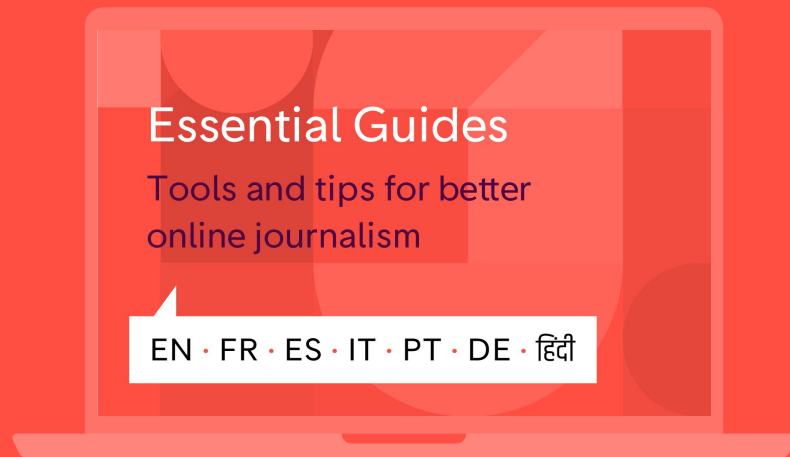
First Draft's Essential Guides

→ Understanding Information Disorder

In this guide we help map the new digital information landscape by explaining our framework of the seven types of misinformation and disinformation. We also provide examples that underscore how damaging information disorder has been in the context of elections and breaking news events around the world.

→ Responsible Reporting in an Age of Information Disorder

People who push disinformation have devised increasingly inventive methods for manipulating journalists and communicators. As a result, news organizations find themselves facing new ethical challenges relating specifically to amplification. This guide will provide you with questions you can ask as you navigate the tricky ethical terrain that comes with broadcasting in a world of information disorder.



08

Further Resources



Webinars

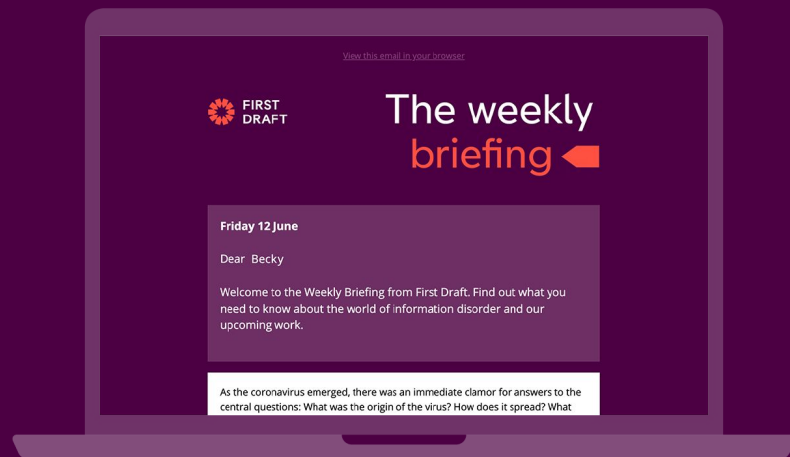
These webinars are for journalists and community members, and are hosted in several languages. They aim to share valuable knowledge, tools and information.

→ [Watch our webinars here](#)

Newsletters

Sign up for our daily and weekly briefing newsletters, which include updates about our work, insights on disinformation and training tutorials.

→ [Newsletter sign up](#)





Who made this guide?





First Draft is a global organization working to empower people with the knowledge and tools to build resilience against harmful, false and misleading information.

Learn more at:

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audience informed.