

Fake News

Operational definition. These are pieces of content (text, audio, video, or image) that contain false or misleading information disguised as legitimate news. Due to their structure and style, they often have a “viral” effect.

Types of *fake news*:

- Satire or parody: it intends to make fun of a situation. It does not seek to cause harm.
- Deceptive content: it is the use of misleading information to incriminate someone.
- Fake or forged content: it is the type of information that replaces sources, or it is news content designed to mislead.
- False connection: it occurs when the headlines, the images, or the captions do not match the content.
- False context: it occurs when genuine content is spread together with incorrect content information.
- Manipulated content: it happens when the images are used to mislead.

Sharing this type of information generates **infodemic** (overabundance of information) and generates the feeling that we live in a world of post-truth in which nothing seems real.

The viral cycle of fake news:

- The user detects fake news and assumes they are true because of an emotional or ideological factor caused by the bubble effect or an algorithm.
- The information is repeated by different resonance chambers; in other words, multiple “media” share the same information.
- The traditional media spreading the information does not mention it, generating distrust in the user.
- The repetition by sources perceived as reliable (for example, an acquaintance) increases the trust in fake news.

I shared fake news: what do I do now?

- Analyze beforehand everything you want to share.
- Lean on associations like *First Draft*, *Verificado*, and *International Fact-Checking Network*.
- If you have already shared it: take it out from your social network.
- Clarify for your readers that you have shared the incorrect information.

Information resources

McKenzie, J. (2023, May 9). *How to spot fake news in eight simple steps*. Simon Fraser University.
<https://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/research-assistance/fake-news>

MindTools (n.d.) *How to Spot Real and Fake News*. <https://www.mindtools.com/a0g6bjj/how-to-spot-real-and-fake-news>

University of North Dakota. (n. d.). *Tips for Students on How to Identify Fake News*.
<https://onlinedegrees.und.edu/masters-cyber-security/tips-for-students-on-how-to-identify-fake-news/>



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