

Making The Truth Louder

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Introduction

This project focuses on the ongoing issue of misinformation being spread across social media platforms. We are investigating the differences between user interaction tendencies on social media and their motivations behind sharing information on their timelines.

Objectives

The objective of this summer project is to answer the following research questions:

- What motivates users to share verified information?
- what motivates users to not share verified information?
- How can we design better features to make the truth louder ?

Method

We used three methods for our study

1. [Training Video](#) : Participants were asked to watch a video that explained each new design features
2. [Task with think aloud](#): Participants were asked to say aloud their responses to specific social media post presented to them:
 - i. Which action they chose
 - ii. Why they choose that action
 - iii. If the post presented was helpful, harmful, or relevant.
3. [Interview](#): We asked participants follow- up questions on their sharing habits

Interview Questions

- How do the sharing buttons influence your decision to share a related article?
- Under what circumstances do you prefer to share publicly or privately?
- Are you more likely to share a related article if the post is verified? Or if the post is not verified? Why?
- Are you sharing habits the same across social media platforms?

Findings

Based on a thematic analysis of the data collected

we’ve summarized the answers to the following research questions:

What motivates users to share verified information?

- 5/10 participants state that they are more likely to share information publicly when it is fact-checked.
 - “Since this information is fact checked I would like other people to know about this.”
- 4/10 participants stated how they are more likely to share information privately when it relates to a specific family member or friend.
 - “It’s a good source of information to like and share privately to my family because my family members have children and I think they would like to know this.”
- 2/10 participants stated how they are more likely to share information when it relates personally to them or those they surround themselves with.
 - “I usually share information when it relates to me or my friends.”
- 2/10 participants stated that they are more likely to share information when it is useful for friends or family to know about.
 - “I would share information publicly if it affects everyone and it should be something other users should see”
- 2/10 participants stated how they are more likely to share information that warns about false content so their friends and family are aware of it.
 - “I have to share this content because it would warn others about this harmful information”

What motivates users not to share verified information?

- 3/10 participants stated how they tend to not share political content to avoid upsetting friends and family.
 - “Honestly I probably wouldn’t share this, I usually don’t share political information at all” .
 - “I don’t want to share anything related to covid because I don’t want anyone to take it the wrong way”.
- 3/10 will not share information if it does not relate to them or mutual friends.
 - “This information doesn’t directly affect me or anyone I know so I don’t think I’ll share it”.

Collected Data

- Conducted 10 interviews
- Demographic questionnaire: 5 male 5 female age 17-25, 25+
- Think aloud responses
- Social Media Usage Questions
- Interview questions

Conclusion

We received feedback on our design layout from participants and they’ve suggested the following:

- Moving the related article section towards the bottom of the post, similar to facebook’s layout.
- Making the related article sections and its features more noticeable and less confusing to grasp.

Based on feedback provided form our participants, we were able to design a better framework for our study



Figure 2: *Improved design based on feedback from participants.*

Future Work

We will test the effectiveness of our new design by conducting another round of pilot study interviews.

References

AUTHORS. (2018).*Reframing the Fake News Problem: Social Media interaction design to make the truth louder*, 2-10.

Design Principles For Making The Truth Louder

The goal of the design principles is to help users and designers to provide interaction support for spreading more credible information and make the truth louder on social media platforms.

These are the following principles:

Awareness: The purpose of this design principle is to remind users and nudge their attention to perform the target behaviors that can make the truth louder.

Guidance: The purpose of this design principle is to provide users the necessary interaction support for performing target behaviors that lead to making the truth louder.



Figure 1: *Prototype describes the Awareness design principle for promoting target behaviors.*