

CBR BRIEFING #70

How social-media companies should alert users to fake news

→ Using fake-news alerts could help social-media companies such as Facebook and Twitter strike a balance between maximizing user engagement and minimizing the amount of misinformation being spread on their platforms, say Chicago Booth's Ozan Candogan and University of Southern California's Kimon Drakopoulos.

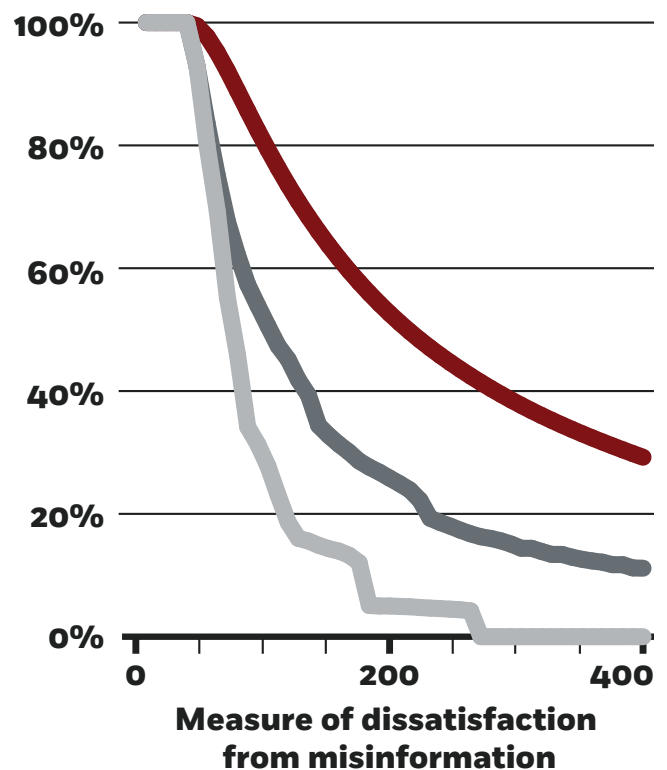
→ The researchers find that warning a targeted selection of users about fake-news content could be the most effective way to manage the drop-off in clicks and shares due to people's dissatisfaction from misinformation.

→ Focusing on social-media users' tolerance for inaccuracy and their influence within their network, the researchers built a model that measures overall engagement with fake-news posts.

→ Using a sample of Facebook user data, the model demonstrates that the company finds a better balance with selective alerts than with broad public alerts—or with no intervention at all.

Percentage of users in researchers' model engaging in Facebook content as misinformation increases

- Targeted alerts based on users' influence within their network
- Broad public alerts
- No intervention



Ozan Candogan and Kimon Drakopoulos, "Optimal Signaling of Content Accuracy: Engagement versus Misinformation," Working paper, October 2017.