

Disinfopreneurs and infodemics | The Interpreter

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The use of social media in influence campaigns, including grey-zone activities and hybrid warfare, is becoming more complicated, more diverse, more profitable and more dangerous.

This is being led, in part, by the privatisation and industrialisation of “weaponised information”.

Referred to as information disorder or an infodemic, deceptive social media influence operations include mutations that have the ability to impact societies differently, contingent on political and economic factors, and a growing list of potential mitigating responses.

Social media began as an irrelevance, then a distraction, then a liberation, then an addiction, then a threat to democracy and a public health menace – a boon to extremists and authoritarians and activists and dodgy snake oil sellers.

Earlier hopes that social media might have liberalising impacts in repressive societies have been dashed – the 2011 Arab Spring being the principal case in point.

Now it’s all of these and it’s everywhere and it’s exhausting.

[...]

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