

# India had its first 'WhatsApp election.' We have a million messages from it | Columbia Journalism Review

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More and more, political advertising is being distributed on closed networks, such as WhatsApp and Messenger (both owned by Facebook), Signal, and Telegram. In many places, people like closed networks—they protect users' privacy, they offer a sense of intimacy. But during elections, closed networks provide a way for political campaigns and activists to avoid scrutiny from regulators and reporters; extracting ads, memes, and other material from inside closed groups is intended to be difficult. That's why our research team set out to establish routes through which journalists can collect and analyze what large-scale political campaigns are saying on WhatsApp.

[...]

Source: [India had its first 'WhatsApp election.' We have a million messages from it - Columbia Journalism Review](#)