News Item

"Interesting if true": A factor that helps explain why people share misinformation | Nieman Journalism Lab

By Mark Coddington and Seth Lewis

October 7, 2021

> Is there a journalist among us who has not been tempted by a hot story tip that sounds *slightly implausible* but, hey, would be deliciously fascinating if true?
>
> Imagining that, you can get an idea of why social media users might be inclined to share a news story with their friends that may not be clearly true news or false news but which, either way, would be really interesting *if true*.
>
> A [new study in Digital Journalism](#) explores that hypothetical by introducing this concept of *interestingness-if-true* — the quality of how interesting a piece of news would be if it were true — and testing how it might be connected to other factors (such as the perceived accuracy of a news item) that help explain why people might share news online, true or otherwise.
>
> [...]

Source: ["Interesting if true": A factor that helps explain why people share misinformation | Nieman Journalism Lab](#)