

MIT Sloan research about social media, misinformation, and elections | MIT Sloan

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“Fake news” and misinformation peak online during presidential election years. Experts look at how they spread and what can be done to stop them.

False information has become a feature of social media — especially during election years. Research shows [false news peaked on Twitter during the 2012 and 2016 presidential elections](#), and a bipartisan Senate committee found that before and after the 2016 election, [the Russian government used Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter](#) to spread false information and conspiracy theories and stoke divisions.

Over the last several years, MIT Sloan researchers have studied the spread of false information, or so-called fake news, [described by researchers](#) as “entirely fabricated and often partisan content presented as factual.” Understanding more about why people share misinformation, and how it spreads, leads to proposed solutions — a goal that becomes more important as people spend more time on social media platforms, and the connections between misinformation and election results become clearer.

[...]

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