



OPINION MAKING ON THE INTERNET

Believing or knowing for a fact? In what way do fake news, social bots and filter bubbles influence our opinions?

#DABEI-Geschichten – an initiative by Deutsche Telekom AG
Moderation documents for a workshop (approx. 25 minutes)



LIFE IS FOR SHARING.

PUBLICATION DETAILS

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#DABEI-Geschichten – an initiative by Deutsche Telekom AG
Barbara Costanzo, Vice President Group Social Engagement
Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 140, 53113 Bonn, Germany

FURTHER INFORMATION

<https://dabei-geschichten.telekom.com/en/topics/opinion-making-on-the-internet/workshop-25min/>

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CONTACT

engagement-bonn@telekom.de

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Tablets, blackboard, flipchart, cards, pen and paper for the participants

NOTES FOR MULTIPLIERS

In the course of this workshop, participants will explore the topics of “Opinion Making on the Internet” and “Fake News”. The goal is to draw attention to the complexity of the topics. The focus is on interactive phases in which participants think about fake news reports, examine the credibility of news and photos, and learn about criteria for assessing information on the Internet.

Fake news and false news reports are of great importance in political and social discourse. On the Internet, news, whether real or fake, can be disseminated very quickly and must be judged by users as to whether it is credible or not.

The core statements of the workshop are therefore:

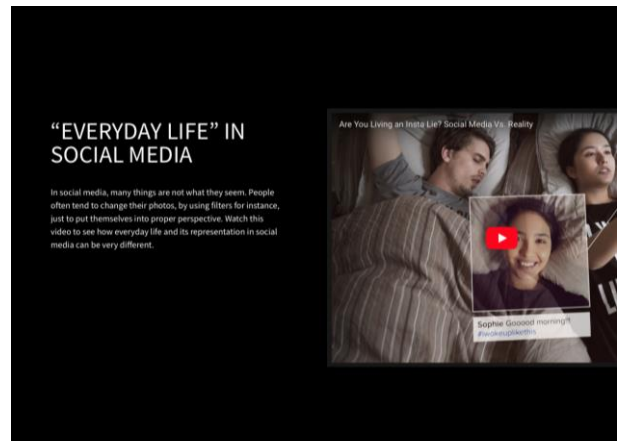
1. On the Internet, users are confronted with a multitude of different information. But not all of this information is true. If the news deliberately conveys false information, it is called “fake news”.
2. But there are ways to distinguish real from fake news. Various criteria can be used for evaluation (e.g. the language of the message).
3. Images can also be manipulated. At first glance, these are often indistinguishable from real images.
4. The swift circulation of false information via many channels (e.g. social networks, websites etc.) can lead to the propagation of fake news. It can make fake news appear to be the opinion of the majority (keyword “majority illusion”).

PHASE 1: "EVERYDAY LIFE" IN SOCIAL MEDIA

5 MIN.

Procedure

"Welcome to our workshop on "Opinion Making on the Internet. Today you will learn how easy it is to fake news and how you can still recognize fake news. I will start by showing you a short video. In it you see normal situations from everyday social network life."



Task

"Take a look at the video and write down the associations that it triggers in you."

Possible solution

"In social media, people present themselves differently than they would in their everyday lives."

Your Notes

PHASE 2: RECOGNIZING FAKE NEWS EASILY

7 MIN.

Procedure

"As you have seen, it has not always been easy to distinguish real from fake news. All too often the boundaries are blurred. Which news story made it difficult to decide? Here are some tips on how to expose fake news."



Task

"How did you recognize the fake news? Compare your answers with the tips on the following page."

Possible solution

"Fake news is often exaggerated, real news stories are neutral", "Fake news is often very one-sided", etc.

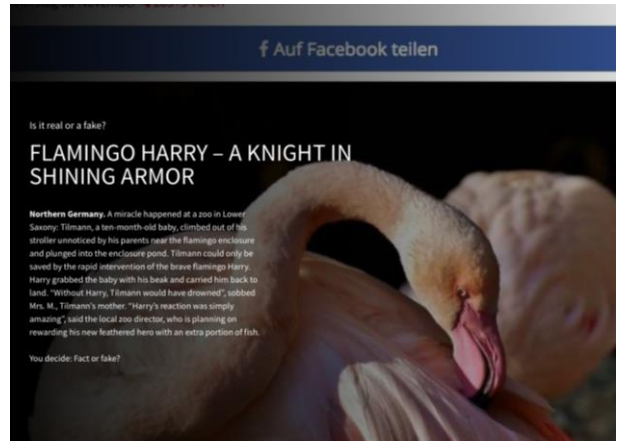
Your Notes

PHASE 3: FACT OR FAKE? (2 NEWS REPORTS)

7 MIN.

Procedure

“You now have the tools to find out for yourself whether news reports are true or false. But these criteria are not always so clear. On the following pages you will see different news reports. Whether heroic flamingo (story 1), glowing plants (story 2) or new film versions of the Twilight novels (story 3) – in the news everything is possible.”



Task

“Watch the news and decide for yourself: Are the news reports fact or are they fake?”

Possible solution

“The story about the flamingo seems a bit strange to me. Flamingos are not strong enough to carry a child. I think it is a fake story.”

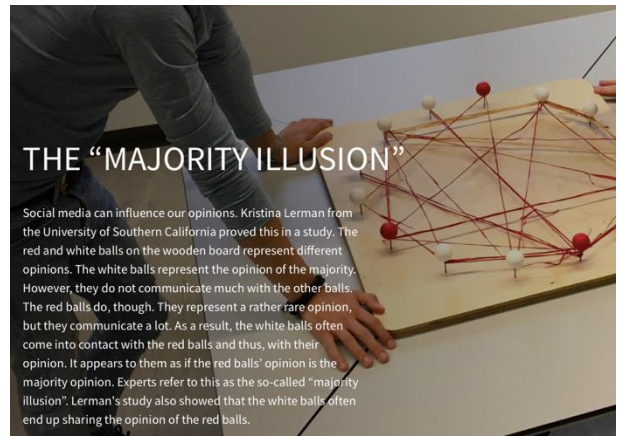
Your Notes

PHASE 4: THE MAJORITY ILLUSION

6 MIN.

Procedure

“Social media can influence our opinions. The study from Kristina Lerman of the University of Southern California shows that the opinion of individuals in social networks often appears to be the opinion of the majority. This is called the ‘majority illusion’.”



Task

“Read the text about the majority illusion and take a stance: Do you think a phenomenon like this is dangerous?”

Possible solution

“Yes, I think it is dangerous. It can irritate other users and may lead them to adopt other people's opinions.”

Your Notes



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