

Media monitoring a shield against fake news in the digital age

At a time when information is accessible at our fingertips, distinguishing between fact and fiction can be increasingly challenging, making fake news is one of the most significant challenges of the digital age.



Image supplied. Novus Group says fake news is one of the most significant challenges of the digital age

Even though the digital landscape provides a valuable platform for global connectivity and rapid information sharing, local media monitoring company Novus Group says it has also opened doors to fake news.

More people aware of the risk of fake news

Despite social media being considered the least trusted news source in the world, more than 50% of internet users across several countries rely on these platforms to stay up to date.

This is even more concerning given how almost a quarter of Gen Z and Millennial news consumers shared fake news over social media.

Fortunately, more people are aware of the risk of reading fake news online than in the past with an Oxford study finding that 71% of respondents were worried about encountering either disinformation, harassment, or fraud when surfing the Web and accessing social media.

“This underscores the devastating impacts of false information. Things like diverting attention from critical issues, promoting divisiveness, and inciting unwarranted panic or complacency are just some of the risks associated with the spreading of such misinformation,” says Joe Hamman, founder and director of Novus Group.



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Essential steps to distinguish genuine news

Considering how more people are connecting to social media and the exponential growth of data, fake news is something that will not disappear any time soon.

But how can one distinguish genuine news from its counterfeit counterpart?

Critical thinking, fact-checking, and analysing the source and content of news are essential steps.

Sites such as [Africa Check](#) and [Snopes](#) are well-known resources to help check the truthfulness of information found on social media and the Web.

Nevertheless, accessing these sites requires time and resources which many busy individuals or corporations lack.

A double edged sword

Hammon points out that the information age is double-edged. "While we have unprecedented access to global data, the risk of misinformation is equally high."

This is where media monitoring comes into play.

“By leveraging advanced technologies and human expertise, media monitoring companies help ensure the credibility of information. They sift through the vast digital wilderness, separating the wheat from the chaff, and provide clients with accurate and timely insights.

“Media monitoring acts as a gatekeeper, protecting clients from the detrimental impacts of fake news. These services are designed to validate information from various sources and provide the most accurate and credible news,” he explains.

Moreover, media monitoring adds a layer of sentiment analysis, understanding the tone and emotion behind the news.

This feature provides an additional filter for fake news, as it often carries strong, emotionally charged sentiments intended to provoke specific reactions.



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An ongoing fight

The fight against fake news is ongoing.

Media monitoring provides a great resource to help debunk falsehoods. And yet, these solutions are also about promoting informed decisions, and fostering a trustworthy communication environment.

"Media monitoring is not merely a shield against fake news. It can enable more informed decision-making and can be considered as a guardian of truth. Media monitoring companies such as ourselves are committed to empowering clients with accurate, timely, and actionable insights," says Hamman.

"As we journey further into the digital age, the partnership between advanced technology and human expertise will become even more crucial, he adds.

In the face of an ever-evolving media landscape and the growing scourge of fake news, media monitoring remains a valuable ally that can serve as a compass in guiding organisations towards the truth in a sea of misinformation.

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