

# HOW TO BEAT FAKE NEWS?

## 1. A piece of history

Today we hear the term Fake News everywhere. It may seem surprising but false news is not a new term, it goes back to the time of Rome, where we find the first example.

Throughout history there are many examples of fake news and the impact they have, we can highlight some legends told after the discovery of America as Country of Cage or El dorado to Nazi propaganda, which through media such as radio claimed that the political enemies of the regime, especially Jews, were responsible for the discomfort and difficulties faced by German society.

In recent years the number of false news has grown exponentially due to the existence of a new mechanism that allows its rapid dissemination, the Internet.

Below is a list of some of the most relevant false news in recent years:

- **Trump achieved the largest television audience of any investiture**

Donald Trump boasted in February 2017 that he had the largest audience (45.6 million viewers) in the history of presidential inauguration. In fact, Obama's in 2010 was followed by 48 million people. George W. Bush's in 2003, by 62.1.

- **The Russians manipulated the U.S elections**

According to a poll, 52 percent of Democratic Party voters believe the Russian secret services influenced the U.S. presidential election to give Trump victory. At the moment, there is no evidence of this.

- **The agony of Hugo Chávez**

In January 2013, the newspaper El País (Spain) published on its front page a photo showing the Venezuelan leader intubated in a Cuban hospital during the treatment of the serious illness that would end his life two months later. The image, provided by the press agency GtresOnline, was removed after a few hours by the newspaper itself after it was known that the person portrayed was not Chavez, but a person who resembled him.

## 2. The target of the fake news

The main targets of fake news generated on the Internet today are:

- Affect the results of electoral processes.
- Influencing the strategic decisions of large companies or enterprises whether public or



private.

- Attack personal or business reputation.
- Viralize the spread of malware that may contain this news through a link that invites you to read more about this news.

## 3. Fight against fake-news

### 3.1 Identify the fake news

1. **Beware of strange or unknown URLs.** Be skeptical of strange domain names. In addition, news posted on blog sites (with domains ending in wordpress.com, blogspot.com, or similar phrases) many are unreliable.
2. **Find the original article.** If you're looking at a news channel that adds news from a variety of sources, it's important to try to find the place where the article was first published. Follow the links in the article that lead to the report source, and evaluate that source. Read other pieces of them to see if they have a particular inclination or bias.
3. **Read the "About Us" section of a website.** Most legitimate news sites will have a direct section describing what they do. If the language of the "About" section is extreme or melodramatic, it may not be a reliable source.
4. **Connect key story phrases to your search engine (Google, Mozilla Firefox...).** If there are elements of the article that seem outlandish, pull out key phrases or ideas and connect them to Google or another search engine. If the phrase is true and of journalistic interest, it should be reported by other sources.
5. **Check the date of the story.** Sometimes an old story makes rounds like new information. This lack of context can skew the perception of the story. Always read the original publication date of a particular article.
6. **Look carefully at the images.** Check to see if the images in the article match the details in the article. For example, make sure the photos were taken at night if the article incident occurred at night.
7. **Use online fact-checking services.** Numerous websites, such as Snopes, Politifact, and Factcheck.org, are dedicated to trying to check the facts for news articles. Search a topic or article through a fact-checking site to see if it can be trusted.
8. **Consider the political bias of a story.** Each time you read a story, think about who could benefit from the information.

## 3.2 Share the news?

1. **Think carefully before publishing.** One of the most effective ways to stop the spread of false news is to simply slow down and think before making for example a retweet or sharing news articles on social networks. You have to take the time to critically analyze a news item and its source before publishing it.
2. **Don't share headline-based stories.** To determine the validity of a news article, you really need to read it. Never share headline-based news.
3. **Share real news on your social networks.** It can help reduce the visibility of false news if we increase the number and true news.

## 3.3 Teach how to fight against fake-news

1. **Encourage friends and family to avoid inflammatory media.** Media that are known to be polarizing and prone to exaggeration are more likely to share biased or inaccurate stories.
2. **Advise friends and family to read the entire article before refueling.**
3. **If you see false news stories coming through your social network stream,** look who's replenishing them and report them.
4. **Teach friends and family how to identify false news,** outline some tips for catching dubious or totally false articles, or share this guide to combat fake news.

Keep in mind that the best way to identify a false news story is to contrast the information that appears on it or even search if the news itself is a fake new.