For this assignment I chose to focus on the plans for addressing fake news given by Twitter and Facebook. Since Twitter and Facebook are both social medias that millions of people use for news today, I decided to look at the information available from both platforms on the topic of fake news. Both platforms are similar in the way they spread content so I thought it would be interesting to compare the two. Twitter has several areas that specifically address fake news under the rules and policies section. According to the Twitter rules, "you may not share deceptively altered media on Twitter in ways that mislead or deceive people about the media's authenticity where threats to physical safety or other serious harm may result."

Both companies, rely on third-party fact-checkers to help address the issue of misinformation. According to Facebook's help section, it is up to the company and its users to first identify any posted news that is considered fake. Facebook will fact check any content that is identified as possibly misleading, biased, or untrue and will rate the accuracy of the content. Facebook and Twitter both use humans as well as technology to review the material that is shared on their platforms. On Facebook's help page, it states that "third-party fact-checkers who are certified through the non-partisan International Fact-Checking Network are used in certain countries" (Silverman, 2019). Facebook's identification process involves machine learning and puts a great deal of emphasis on the importance of community help.

The next aspect of the plans I focused on is the criteria given by the companies used to identify fake news. According to Twitter, there are three main areas of the content that are investigated to determine authenticity. First, they must decide if the content is synthetic or manipulated. To complete this first criteria, Twitter evaluates the audio of the content, the editing of the video, and depicts the reality of the characters in a video. Second, is the content being shared in a deceptive manner. Within this criterion, an investigation on the information linked to the Tweet is evaluated. The links associated with the Tweet, the text within the Tweet, and information on the profile of the account that made the Tweet are investigated. The possibility of a post's intention of misleading or confusing viewers about the original content is evaluated. The third piece of criteria that Twitter considers is the likelihood of the content to impact public safety or cause serious harm. Twitter also notes that the time frame of the content is taken into consideration when addressing Tweets that may be considered to be harmful to the public or cause serious harm. Twitter goes into even further detail about each of the three criteria giving users a clear understanding of what is evaluated under each criterion. Facebook states criteria that is much less detailed than Twitter. Facebook states that they review the content, check their facts, and rate the accuracy of the content. These are important steps needed to analyze any information, but the details provided by Twitter in this area are much more defined. Still, Facebook does provide a list of rating options that third-party fact-checkers use when assessing possible misinformation. I found this to be just as robust as the information that Twitter provided.

Facebook and Twitter both have plans in place when they identify misleading or false content. On Facebook, a message is given to the user before actually posting the false content, helping

users understand that they are about to post news that has been identified as false. It then asks the user to reconsider making the post. The message also encourages the person doing the posting to view the fact checker linked to the content that they are considering sharing. I find this to be helpful. It is a smart addition since it can help educate the user on the issue of factual information and can actually help increase the facts being shared on the topic. If we care enough about a topic to share it, we should care enough to learn the facts on the topic. The next step includes fading out the false information through Facebook and other linked social media platforms that the information has been shared to like Instagram. The goal is to limit the number of people who view the material. When the false news makes it onto the platform, Facebook tries to debunk the story by posting related content that proves that the information is inaccurate. Also, Facebook identifies repeated offenders and reduces the amount of material they can distribute and eventually removes their ability to advertise if it is a reoccurring problem.

According to Twitter, if there is identified misinformation, there are four possible actions that may take place. First, they might apply a label to the content where it appears in the Twitter product. Second, Twitter can show a warning to people before they share or like the content. Third, Twitter may reduce the visibility of the content on the platform and/or prevent it from being recommended. Lastly, Twitter may provide a link to additional explanations or clarifications, such as in a Twitter moment or landing page (Twitter,). Twitter notes that they reserve the right to permanently suspend accounts that repeat such violations. Twitter also explains that they will take action if the content has been changed in such a way that the actual meaning of the content is changed. Other misleading tweets that are changed in a less harmful way will be evaluated on a case to case basis. If Twitter and or their third-party partners are not able to determine the authenticity of the Tweet, Twitter will not remove the content.

Both Twitter and Facebook recognize the importance of notifying their users about the misinformation and both have a policy in place for removing the content if necessary as well as a plan for addressing repeat offenders. Although, Facebook does a good job of providing readers with the general information of how they mark false information, I find that Twitter goes into greater specifics on the possible outcomes of the situation once the information is identified. Both platforms also provide users with the opportunity to reconsider posting the information and give the users an opportunity to read related information that explains why it is not true.

Both platforms offer additional information that I found to be important. According to Facebook's director of analytics for newsfeed, once a piece of false news goes through their process it reduces the percentage of distribution by 80%. Evidence of reducing the spread of fake news is important for participants to see. Participants should be given data that shows the success of their joint effort of reducing misinformation. Facebook provides its users with information about how to spot fake news. According to the website, about.fb.com, Facebook

has significantly decreased the amount of fake news on their website since the 2016 election and the company claims they are collaborating with outside experts who can help them continue to fight the false news on a large scale. They are working with and plan on sharing their progress of collaboration along the way. This information allows participants to see the progress being made.

It is important that we choose to be part of communities that share the goals of collaborating with tech companies, continued growth and focused plans that can lead to the reduction of misinformation. Twitter has developed a blog (found linked to the help section) that addresses the specifics of Tweeting false information in regard to Covid-19. A "Know the Facts" section on Twitter has been created for accurate information to be posted. It is also important to recognize that all news is not categorized the same. For some instances, like pandemics, the misinformation being spread could potentially cause one to make decisions that could threaten a life. This is why, I think it was an intelligent decision that Twitter made creating a separate area for Covid-19. Recently, Facebook has added an area in the help section where one can go to get Covid-19-related resources. It is not as detailed as the blog that Twitter offers but it is still a necessary component that everyone needs today.

Facebook and Twitter obviously still have not mastered the massive task of capturing and reducing misinformation (a.k.a fake news) but they have made huge gains over the last decade. It is easy to get onto both platforms and find content that is biased, opinion based, inaccurate, half true, or just simply inaccurate. Yes, this is an issue that we have always faced since mankind began communicating. Still, as we continue to move forward in accessing news through online experiences, we must find ways to develop tools and strategies that do tackle the issue.

During my research for this project, it became clear that many of the plans that are available differ in many ways but mainly in the way they are formatted and with the information that is provided. All the plans included a variety of information. Some plans are very detailed in some aspects and others are extremely vague. However, I will do my best to create an action plan that includes the necessary components for my audience.

In my opinion, action plans for identifying fake news should include the following components:

1. Characteristics that make up/define fake news. A what to look for section. Examples of a variety of content that have already been identified as false with explanations of what makes the information inaccurate.
2. Information on why it is important to report fake news. Information on the importance of being a proactive digital citizen will be provided. What does it mean and why is it important?
3. Rules and regulations for posting the original inaccurate/fake news.

4. Consequences for disobeying the rules.
5. Immediate help to know how to make a fake news claim.
   This includes an easy, identifiable area/that lets users quickly submit content that needs to be checked.
6. Explanation on who or what is used as a fact-checker. When monitoring content and fact-checking possible information that is inaccurate, I think it is important that multiple tools are used to help identify and check the content. Humans as well as computer programs should be used to help identify misleading content. Both should also be utilized to investigate the content. A rating system that is used by humans and third-party fact-checkers will be included in this section.
7. Stated criteria that is used to determine the authenticity of the content. How does the platform determine if content is misleading or considered inaccurate information? To what degree is the information inaccurate? The following components are considered when checking for authenticity.
   - consider the source
   - check the author
   - the supporting sources listed, and studies linked within the source
   - the date the content was created
   - check the web address and credibility of the site it came from
   - the ads associated with the content
   - accuracy of the photos involved
   - word usage and intended audience
   - audio and visual edits made to the content
8. Plan for addressing what happens with the fake news. Once the content is identified, fact-checked and rated, the content will be given a plan for what to do with it. A rating system should be used to indicate the severity of the misinformation based on the given criteria. The rating system will include the criteria used to determine the severity of misinformation. The labeling system will allow users to easily see the level of inaccuracy created from a percentage of misinformation that the content was found to have. After determining if the news is false and identifying the parts that are either edited or false a percentage will be created representing how much of the overall content is false. For example, a label with the number 0 could represent a piece that is 100% true. A label of 2 would represent 90%-99% to be true. A 3 would represent 80%-89% to be true. A 4 would represent 70%-79% to be true and so on. This labeling system could give the platform a universal way for users to recognize the accuracy of what they are viewing.
9. Depending on the percentage of inaccuracies, the content will be removed or labeled with the rating system for users to see. Users will be given information on the misinformation depending on the rate the content receives. The users can use the labeling system to help them decide if the content should be shared or even viewed. Additional information that has been found about the content will be linked when there is less than 80% of accuracy within the content.
10. Immediate access and up to date information on what to do when you think you have come across fake or misleading content. Data that shows users how their input makes a

difference at stopping the spread of inaccurate news. Success stories about misleading news

11. Commonly asked questions and answer section.

12. Long-term plans and or goals to decrease inaccurate information on the platform. The long-term plan should include components that the business or platform will include in their agenda to continue the process of reducing fake news. This will include access to new information regarding misinformation such as new ways people are creating the false information. This component also will include current technology advances such as quicker machine programs that are able to scan for misinformation that the company is eager to add. Plans focused on how to educate the young will be included. Also, under this section users could access focused lessons with examples from linked websites that give additional information to educating the young. Research articles and a general section on how to help online users identify characteristics of fake news will be included.

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