

I fell for Facebook fake news. Here's why millions of you did, too.

Notes & Cues:**Article:**

The Facebook video is nuts, but I can't tear my eyes away. A plane, struggling in a huge storm, does a 360-degree flip before safely landing and letting out terrified passengers.

It turns out the video is totally bunk, spliced together from a computer-generated clip and unrelated real news footage. But that didn't stop the Facebook post from arriving in my News Feed via a friend last month. I watched it. Maybe you did, too: It has nearly 14 million views.

If you think you're immune to this stuff, you're wrong. Detecting what's fake in images and video is only getting harder. Misinformation is part of an online economy that weaponizes social media to profit from our clicks and attention. And with the right tools to stop it still a long ways off, we all need to get smarter about it.

Fake news producers also use our friends to add to their credibility. When I saw the plane video, my suspicions weren't on high alert because it came from my friend, who I trust as a smart guy. He told me he realized later the video was a fake, but thought comments on his post would alert his friends. "It's just funny thinking about the steps by which we get duped," he said.

Maybe we'll eventually learn to be less trusting of our friends—at least the online ones. The people we count on for important information in the real world aren't always the people who fill our social media feeds.

Or if you want to avoid being that friend: Before you spread the latest outrage online, stop and consider the source.

Summary: