

## # Fake news on social media platforms

**Task 2:** Sum up what kind of fake information is created and consumed on social media platforms.  
→ **Helpsheet:** How to write a summary? (in section materials)

**Task 3:** *Mediation:* Tell a German friend what Joseph Finkelstein says about clickbait articles (lines 11 to 15).  
→ **Helpsheet:** Mediation (TB p. 146/147)

### Fake news on social media platforms

- 1 One of the biggest concerns surrounding the 2016 election was the propagation of fake news on social media platforms such as Facebook Inc and Twitter Inc. A surprising number (62 per cent) of Americans admit to getting their news on social media.  
While Facebook recently decided to step up its game when it comes to filtering out fake news
- 5 on its platform, the spread of information on social media remains largely unchecked.  
While it would take millions of dollars to set up a newspaper printing business, it's relatively cheap and easy to set up a fake news website.  
The partisan nature of many of these sites may make it seem like the motivation behind them is political. While that may be the case for certain sites, the primary motivation behind most of
- 10 the sites is profits.  
"The articles themselves are just filler stuffed with high-trending, low competition keywords associated with current news stories," SEO expert Joseph Finkelstein explains. "The way they make money is all in the headlines – they're designed to be inflammatory but just believable enough to entice partisans to click on them – or better yet, share them – without looking too
- 15 hard."  
These types of articles are often referred to as "clickbait" because the headline entices readers to click on the story, but the actual story is false or only loosely related to the title. Most of these sites don't care if readers are satisfied with the story. They simply care about the price their advertisers will pay for all the clicks.
- 20 Other sites, such as *The Onion*, are satire sites that were never intended to be taken seriously. Yet even White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer has been duped by Onion articles.  
Unfortunately, the ultimate responsibility of determining which websites publish fake news and which ones are reputable sources falls on the reader. While it's impossible to have a full list of all the fake news sites out there, *Fake News Watch* has compiled a large list of some of the most
- 25 popular fake news sites out there. The site even classifies the sites as fake/hoax, satire or clickbait sites.

(Source: <https://finance.yahoo.com/news/8-most-popular-fake-news-122102579.html>)

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#### Annotations:

3 **to admit:** here to declare to be true; 4 **to step up:** to increase; 8 **partisan:** here hidden, underground; 11 **filler:** something added just to make a product seem more important, more attractive, etc.; 12 **SEO:** search engine optimization; 13 **inflammatory:** here attracting attention, producing strong emotion; 14 **to entice:** to make someone do something; 16 **bait:** food used in a trap to catch fish, animals, etc.; 21 **to dupe:** to trick, to fool; 22 **ultimate:** last, final; 23 **reputable:** acceptable, trustworthy, respectable; 25 **hoax:** trick, joke

(Source: Mediengruppe Oberfranken – Fachverlag GmbH & Co. KG, p. 11.)