

Written Representation 105

Name: Benjamin Chen
Student, Nanyang Technological University

Received: 5 Mar 2018

Dear Mr Chong,

As part of my course, I did a presentation and thought that I should share my recommendations regarding fake news.

[Here](#) is the link to my presentation. I have also attached the original task below.

Task

Assume that your audience are student leaders of a youth group in NTU. The group – responding to the call for public feedback by Mr Charles Chong's committee – wants to offer inputs but first it needs to hear more from undergraduates so that its feedback is youth-centric.

In presenting to these student leaders, you want to persuasively show the magnitude and urgency of fake news as a problem, citing a business case study or a collection of business-related examples. You also want to highlight some issues Mr Chong's committee should take note of and offer recommendations beyond legislation to help the committee address the problem of fake news in Singapore. Where relevant, you may make reference to the experiences of other countries.

The deliverable is a 4-5 minute presentation with PowerPoint.

Beyond The Classroom: Students who want to submit their recommendations can write to The Clerk of Parliament, Parliament House, 1 Parliament Place, Singapore 178880. They can also email to: selectcommittee@parl.gov.sg

Thank you for your consideration.

Script of my presentation (which includes the original task):

AB0602 Fake News Presentation - Assume that your audience are student leaders of a youth group in NTU. The group – responding to the call for public feedback by Mr Charles Chong's committee – wants to offer inputs but first it needs to hear more from undergraduates so that its feedback is youth-centric. In presenting to these student leaders, you want to persuasively show the magnitude and urgency of fake news as a problem, citing a business case study or a collection of business-related examples. You also want to highlight some issues Mr Chong's committee should take note of and offer recommendations beyond legislation to help the committee address the problem of fake news in Singapore. Where relevant, you may make reference to the experiences of other countries. The presentation is supposed to be 4.5 minutes long.

Script of the Presentation

Good morning, fellow peers.



Can you tell if this image has been modified?



Here is the original image.

The black circles show where the image has been modified (*at the drain pipe, shadows to the left, floating chain near middle of image*). According to Sophie Nightingale, a researcher at Warwick University, the average user can detect a fake image of a real-

world scene 60% of the time. This is only slightly higher than what is expected by random chance.



(Right: **Outdated law** saved the accused from harsher penalties – real news)
(Left: **PAP lawyer** saved the accused from harsher penalties – fake news)

There are many instances of fake news that involve such image manipulation.

We know about the City Harvest case where six leaders of the church have been convicted of fraud of \$50 million.

There was an appeal over their jail sentences and the verdict is that their sentences would not be increased due to an outdated law that prevents them from being convicted of the more serious crime.

Somebody edited an image of the headline such that it reads “PAP lawyer saved the accused from harsher penalties”.

As the edited image appears to have been published by LianHe WanBao, it appears to have more credibility.

This edited headline makes it seem like PAP condones corruption, which is completely different from the truth.

It may seem like an innocuous meme, but the implications of this are broad.

If people believe that PAP is corrupt, this can sway events such as causing more people to vote for the opposition parties.

It also scandalizes the courts and undermines the justice system of Singapore.

The collapse of the justice system can affect businesses, as foreigners may not want to invest in Singapore.

And finally, people may stop believing real news as they become unable to decide what the truth actually is.

Wow, can you believe that all this can potentially happen just because of fake news?

In this case, unfortunately, the government was able to detect it and control its spread. But we can't rely on that to always happen.

So why do people create fake news? Some reasons why people do so are:

To make money through increasing the number of viewers that visit the news site.
To maliciously target others. Besides PAP, many other celebrities have been attacked by fake news.

Some may just do so for fun without realizing the consequences and the fact that it can become viral.

Additionally, it is very easy to manipulate images in the current day and age.

People share fake news for various reasons.

Some may not know that the news is fake.

Others may know that the news is fake. However, these headlines often contain a shocking "too good to be true" revelation will likely elicit engagement, thereby driving the incentive to create fake news. They may also share it with their friends for entertainment reasons, which in turn can promote more widespread sharing.

So what can we actually do to solve this issue?

Legislation, at least by itself, will not work very well. People who want to be malicious may not care about the consequences and upload the fake news anyway. Those who are profit-driven may decide that the additional gains from publishing and circulating the fake news outweighs any legal action faced.

Technology, too, has limits, since algorithms that work to filter out fake news are not perfect and can be circumvented.

I believe that educating the public and making them aware of fake news is a more effective measure.

Educating the public, where possible, should be done at a young age to successfully cultivate the habit. Digital literacy modules should be incorporated into school curricula. For working adults, this should be incorporated as part of training in companies; there should also be free seminars for non-working adults to attend. (This should be done alongside existing legislative and technological measures to cut down the quantity of fake news spread in the first place.)

We need to accept the fact that fake news is here to stay, and I believe that it is up to us to defend against fake news by being more vigilant.

Thank you.

Rubric for the presentation:

Communication Outcome (15%)

- Conveys a message with a clear takeaway for the audience
- Maximises likelihood of the audience accepting the message

Situational Factors (15%)

- Addresses the needs and concerns of the appropriate audience
- Focuses on the most important message orientation
- Recognises the requirements of the organisational culture and context
- Establishes rapport and sender credibility, demonstrating awareness of correct sender-audience relationship

Design Factors (70%) Content development (10%)

- Presents relevant information
- Makes and supports claims with evidence and examples
- Makes content interesting for the given audience
- Adheres to the time limit

Structure (10%)

- States the main point clearly and early
- Organises content logically and coherently
- Signals transitions and relationships between points
- Has strong opening and closing

Verbal delivery (15%)

- Uses correct grammar and vocabulary
- Speaks at appropriate speed and volume
- Articulates clearly and pronounces words correctly
- Projects energy and enthusiasm through voice

Non-verbal delivery (15%)

- Stands poised and looks confident
- Establishes meaningful eye contact with the audience
- Gestures and/or moves appropriately
- Projects energy and enthusiasm through body language and facial expressions

Visuals (10%)

- Develops a unified set of slides
- Organises titles and sub-points logically
- Presents readable slides that follow design principles

Q&A (10%)

See also: Presentation video

Bibliography

- Giuffrida, A. (2018, January 19). Italians asked to report fake news to police in run-up to election. Retrieved February 16, 2018, from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/19/italians-asked-report-fake-news-police-run-up-election>
- Friedman, U. (2017, December 23). The Real-World Consequences of 'Fake News'. Retrieved February 16, 2018, from <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/12/trump-world-fake-news/548888>
- Lay, B. (2018, February 5). AGC treating fake Chinese headline about City Harvest decision as contempt of court. Retrieved February 16, 2018, from <https://mothership.sg/2018/02/city-harvest-church-fake-headline-chinese-newspaper>
- Nightingale, S. J., Wade, K. A., & Watson, D. G. (2017). Can people identify original and manipulated photos of real-world scenes? *Cognitive Research: Principles and Implications*, 2(1). doi:10.1186/s41235-017-0067-2
- One third of fake images go undetected in recent study. (n.d.). Retrieved February 23, 2018, from https://warwick.ac.uk/newsandevents/pressreleases/one_third_of
- Report: malicious 'fake' news links used to socially engineer. (2017, January 17). Retrieved February 16, 2018, from <https://www.scmagazineuk.com/report-malicious-fake-news-links-used-to-socially-engineer/printarticle/631919>
- Tan, J., & Tan, M. (2018, February 2). Why did 6 City Harvest leaders get off with shorter sentences? They got lucky with the law. Retrieved February 16, 2018, from <https://mothership.sg/2018/02/why-city-harvest-case-final-verdict-shorter-sentences>
- THE BIG READ: In an era of fake news, the truth may not always be out there. (2017, June 04). Retrieved February 16, 2018, from <https://www.todayonline.com/singapore/big-read-era-fake-news-truth-may-not-always-be-out-there>
- Wending, M. (2017, January 30). Solutions that can stop fake news spreading. Retrieved February 16, 2018, from <http://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-trending-38769996>