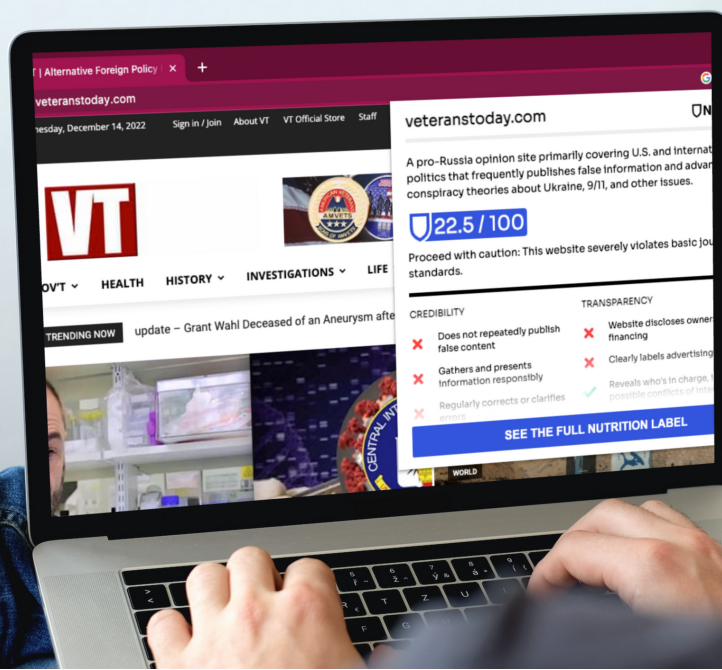




Online safety for readers,  
brands, and democracies

# Social Impact Report

# 2022





# 2022 at a glance

---

**Achieving Scale:** NewsGuard reviewed 8,641 news and information domains, covering 95% of online engagement, including calls for comment, updates, and writing 1,394 new Nutrition Labels.

**Tracking False Narratives:** 1,122 Misinformation Fingerprints, associated variations, and machine-readable metadata covering topics including politics, health, and war, were identified by NewsGuard and deployed at scale by its security, defense, and social media partners.

**Expanding Internationally:** NewsGuard launched in Austria, Australia, and New Zealand this year, providing ratings for the more than 39 million people living in those countries.

**Improving Media Literacy Around the World:** 7 million public library patrons get guidance from NewsGuard's pro bono partnerships with over 800 public libraries.

**Reporting on Russia-Ukraine Disinformation:** NewsGuard's Russia-Ukraine Disinformation Tracker led the charge in identifying more than 300 news sites spreading disinformation and republishing false claims seeded by Russian state media. NewsGuard provides this data to Ukrainian government agencies.

**Directing Revenue Toward Quality Journalism:** More than 1,014 quality news sites, including local startups and those serving disadvantaged communities, were vetted and added to NewsGuard's advertiser "inclusion lists" for programmatic ads, thereby giving them a vital new funding stream.

**Bringing NewsGuard to Millions of Students:** 1.7 million educators in the U.S., their students, and families get free access to NewsGuard's browser extension through a partnership with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT).

**Raising Journalistic Standards:** 2,141 news sites took steps to improve their practices and boosted their NewsGuard scores following engagement with NewsGuard's analysts and editors.

# 2022 by the numbers

**8,641**

sites reviewed,  
called for comment,  
rated and updated

representing

**95%**

of online  
engagement  
with the news

including

**1,394**

new websites  
rated

**3**

new markets launched—  
Austria, Australia, and  
New Zealand—providing  
ratings for more than

**39 million**

people living in those countries

**2,141**

sites improved their editorial practices  
as a result of engaging with NewsGuard

**1,122**

Misinformation  
Fingerprints  
covering politics,  
health, war, and  
other topics

**1.7M**

educators in the  
U.S., their  
students, and  
families get free  
access to  
NewsGuard's  
browser extension  
through a  
partnership with  
the American  
Federation of  
Teachers (AFT)

**324**

websites that our  
tracker found to  
be publishing  
Russia-Ukraine  
misinformation, and

**95**

false claims related  
to the war: all shared  
with Ukrainian  
defense agencies  
and government  
bodies for free

**24**

research  
groups using  
NewsGuard's  
data to track  
and study  
misinformation

**1,014+**

news sites, including local startups and  
those serving disadvantaged  
communities, added to NewsGuard's  
advertiser "inclusion lists," thereby  
giving them a vital new revenue stream

**65**

licensees, including researchers, educators,  
advertisers, technology companies, content  
moderators, security agencies, nonprofits,  
and governments.

**20+**

Disinformation  
Risk Briefings  
sent to clients

**3,115,664**

engagements (likes and retweets)  
on the tweets posted by Twitter's  
top 25 most-followed untrustworthy  
accounts, the week after Elon Musk acquired the platform, according to a  
NewsGuard report. This is a 57.04% increase in engagement post-Musk  
takeover, according to NewsWhip.

**30**

pro bono presentations  
on media literacy and  
misinformation run by  
NewsGuard's analysts in  
eight countries, reaching

**1,000+** participants

**35**

analysts and editors monitoring  
the global news landscape  
located in 10 countries

and more to come...

# Contents

---

Letter from the co-CEOs	2
Telling Consumers Who's Feeding Them The News	4
Helping Students Find Reliable Sources	7
Making Big-Brand Advertisers Part of the Solution	9
Defending Democracies from Disinformation	12
Thank You to NewsGuard's Partners	15

# Letter from the co-CEOs

---



Gordon Crovitz



Steven Brill

When we started a company aimed at combating misinformation for readers, brands, and democracies, we never imagined a year quite like 2022. Across the world, the stakes of online misinformation were more apparent than ever.

Europeans witnessed the beginning of a war premised on disinformation—as Russia’s state propaganda outlets used false claims about Nazis running Ukraine’s government and Americans running bioweapons labs in Ukraine to justify a bloody invasion that continues today. In 2022, NewsGuard’s team identified and tracked 324 websites publishing Russian disinformation narratives about the war and tracked dozens of false narratives being spread by the Kremlin.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continued, purveyors of health misinformation found new and more creative ways to spread false claims. In one example cited in a NewsGuard special report, teenagers using TikTok to search for information about COVID-19 remedies were presented with a video of a woman claiming to have made hydroxychloroquine—a prescription drug that can only be produced in [controlled laboratory settings](#) and is unsafe when not taken as prescribed—at home. The woman dangerously asserts that it “can heal anything.”

Ahead of the 2022 U.S. midterm elections, residents in Kalamazoo, Michigan and hundreds of other communities searching for trustworthy local news stumbled upon sources like the “Kalamazoo Times,” a secretly partisan-funded website posing as an independent local news publisher. As NewsGuard reported, such “pink slime” sites—funded by partisans on both the left and the right—masquerading as local news publishers now nearly outnumber real daily newspapers in the U.S.

So, with the stakes of misinformation higher than ever we’re proud of our team’s work in 2022 promoting trust and transparency on multiple fronts.

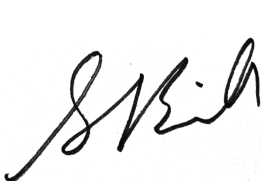
As you will read in this report, NewsGuard’s journalists spent the year rating and updating trust scores for more than 8,500 news and information sources accounting for more than 95% of online engagement with news, cataloging more than 1,000 false narratives, and uncovering misinformation campaigns and trends that are creating real-world harm.

Our data and reporting were used by a wide range of partners and licensees to combat misinformation, from Microsoft—which uses NewsGuard’s source ratings across multiple platforms reaching hundreds of millions of users—to the Ukraine government’s Center for Countering Disinformation (CPD), which used NewsGuard’s data to better understand disinformation threats.

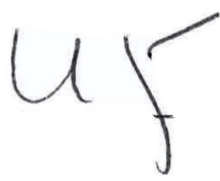
Dozens of advertising and ad-tech companies, including three of the top five global ad agencies and seven of the top 10 ad exchanges, used NewsGuard’s data to avoid funding misinformation sources to help reduce the \$2.6 billion advertisers unintentionally send to misinformation publishers each year because of the opaque nature of programmatic advertising.

Through a partnership with the American Federation of Teachers and a news-literacy program funded by Microsoft and others, NewsGuard’s tool for students and educators was made available to 1.7 million teachers and their students and at libraries serving more than 7 million patrons annually, enabling educators, students, and library users to navigate a sea of online disinformation and improve their news literacy skills by focusing on the nine criteria of sound journalistic practice that we use in rating the reliability of online news and information.

We’re proud of the work our team has done this year and know there’s more in store for 2023.



Steven Brill



Gordon Crovitz

Co-CEOs, NewsGuard

# Telling Consumers Who's Feeding Them The News

## THE CHALLENGE

In 2022, health misinformation continued to damage trust in COVID-19 vaccines and sow misleading claims about the monkeypox outbreak. Meantime, the number of “pink slime” sites—websites funded by partisan groups posing as local news outlets—threatens to outnumber local newspapers in the U.S.

# 938,200+

people were exposed to COVID-19 vaccine myths between October 2021-February 2022 on social media.

## THE SOLUTION

NewsGuard identified dozens of health-related myths throughout 2022, spanning misinformation about the COVID-19 vaccine (such as, "COVID-19 vaccine destroys natural immunity," "COVID-19 vaccines have killed more children than COVID-19 itself," among others) and monkeypox ("Monkeypox cases linked to AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine" and "Bill Gates predicted the 2022 monkeypox outbreak"). These myths appeared on news sites in the U.S., U.K., and Europe.

On the political misinformation front, NewsGuard in September 2022 [discovered a new group of five "pink slime" websites](#) run by the influential Democratic operative David Brock, publishing partisan content aimed at influencing potential voters in key battleground states.

The following month, NewsGuard [reported on](#) the extent to which “pink slime” newsrooms were exploiting Facebook and Instagram’s loose advertising rules to disseminate their message ahead of the midterms.

In December, NewsGuard [identified 1,202 “pink slime” sites](#) at a time when there are only 1,230 daily local newspapers left in the U.S. The partisan outlets masquerading as local news organizations identified by NewsGuard belong to five groups on the left and the right: Courier Newsroom, Local Government Information Services, The Main Street Sentinel, The American Independent, and Metric Media. These sites come with NewsGuard warnings for readers to proceed with caution.

### REPORT: Vaccination misinformation targeting young people on social media

As COVID-19 vaccination campaigns started for children ages 5 to 11 in the U.S. and Europe in early 2022, well-known purveyors of health misinformation began publishing myths about them, urging parents to not vaccinate their children. In this report, published in February, NewsGuard features false claims that were collectively shared to over 938,200 people on Facebook and Twitter, from October 2021 to February 2022, in English, French, Italian, and German.

**COVID-19 vaccine misinformation targeting children, teenagers and parents on social media.**

A Report for Governments and the WHO

Feb. 17, 2022

 NewsGuard



In the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court overturning the landmark Roe v. Wade abortion-rights case this year in the U.S., which restricted access to abortions, a NewsGuard review identified at least 102 herbal abortion videos on TikTok that encouraged viewers to experiment with dangerous, unproven tactics to induce home abortions. These videos appeared despite TikTok's pledge to "crack down" on abortion-related misinformation.

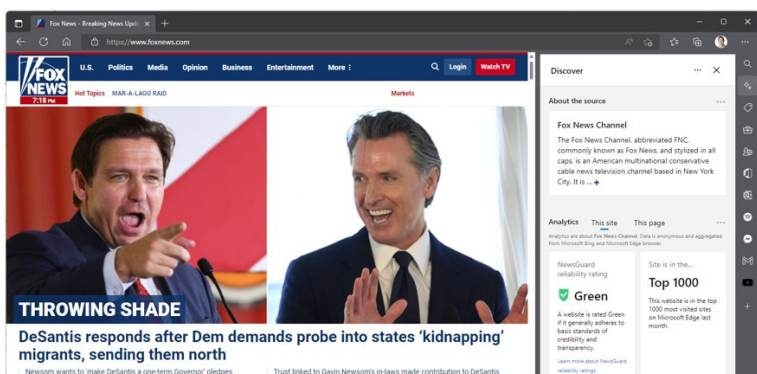
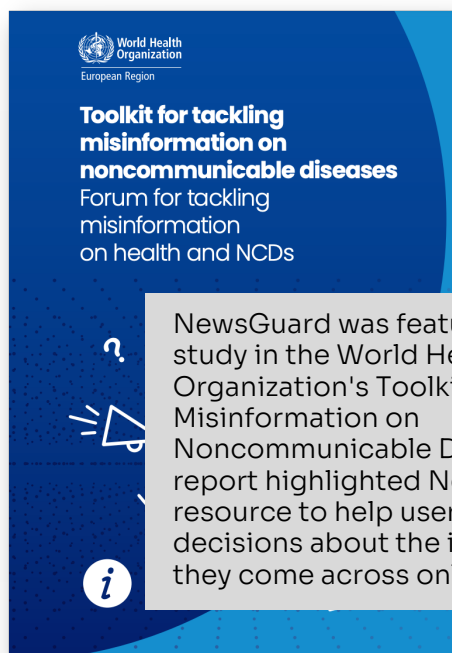
**"There are no herbal remedies, period, that are safe and effective for inducing an abortion or preventing pregnancy."**

- Ryan Marino, a medical toxicologist at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine, as told to The Associated Press on July 1, 2022.

NewsGuard also found numerous false claims about COVID-19 vaccines on websites with benign-sounding names, such as Clark County Today, Citizens Journal, and the Miami Standard, all of which a reader could easily mistake for a trustworthy local news source.

For example, the 11,000 Facebook followers of the Ventura County, California-based Citizens Journal have seen headlines such as "Healthy young people now dying en masse across Australia, and the corporate media still won't dare mention vaccine," alongside stories about local toy drives.

Finally, NewsGuard's analysts have begun aggregating their findings on the latest developments in the global misinformation landscape, and producing a weekly "Disinformation Risk Briefing" for clients. Each week, the briefing includes a summary and analysis of the latest misinformation narratives circulating in the nine countries where NewsGuard rates websites' trustworthiness, as well as the newest false narratives added to the company's machine-readable Misinformation Fingerprints database.



NewsGuard continues to provide thousands of browser extension subscribers with source credibility context for news sites online. NewsGuard's partner Microsoft has also integrated NewsGuard's Nutrition Labels and source ratings into the "Discover" sidebar of its Edge internet browser, enabling users to access Reliability Ratings at no cost to users.

# RECOGNIZING NEWSGUARD AS THE KEY TO THE SOLUTION

NewsGuard's 2022 reporting on "pink slime" publications received widespread attention from news media including Bloomberg, The Washington Post, Axios, WIRED, and MSN.

Additionally, NewsGuard's debunking of healthcare myths circulating on the internet, reporting on TikTok's lack of safeguards for users from herbal abortion "remedies," and providing reports to governments and the World Health Organization on monkeypox myths appearing on social media have helped counteract the harmful effects of misinformation on public health.

News outlets are also improving editorial standards after engaging with NewsGuard. In 2022, [2,141 news sites improved their journalism practices](#), increasing their accountability and providing readers with more trustworthy news and information. This represents 25.4% of all the sources rated by NewsGuard, as of October 2022.

When it comes to NewsGuard's browser extension users, [research published in May 2022](#) by Princeton University and New York University demonstrates that individuals who frequently consume low-quality news improve their news diets after receiving access to NewsGuard's Reliability Ratings for news websites.

The study found that access to NewsGuard's transparent, apolitical ratings of sources of news and information online led to a "substantively meaningful increase in news diet quality among the heaviest consumers of misinformation."

One of NewsGuard's newest partners, citizen empowerment app and social platform MOXY, has integrated NewsGuard's ratings into its "veracity scores," adding valuable qualifiers about news reliability to hundreds of sources featured in the app.

## U.S. Midterm Election Misinformation Tracking Center

Through mid-November 2022 NewsGuard found:

**41** websites spreading myths surrounding the 2022 midterm elections

**23** false narratives about the 2022 midterm elections

Geographic reach: NewsGuard identified myths related to elections and voting in Wisconsin, Michigan, Arizona, Washington state, Illinois, Colorado, Pennsylvania, New York, and Georgia.

# Helping Students Find Reliable Sources

## THE CHALLENGE

Online misinformation remains a rampant and rapidly evolving problem, with risks to young people who lack sufficient tools and context clues.

## THE SOLUTION

From the students and library patrons who consult NewsGuard's browser extension for research to the educators and librarians who use NewsGuard's free classroom exercises and activities, NewsGuard's media literacy efforts continue to reach people all over the world.

NewsGuard's partnership with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), [announced in January 2022](#), provides the NewsGuard browser extension to the students and families of AFT's 1.7 million member teachers for free. With the help of NewsGuard, tens of millions of U.S. students can receive real-time Reliability Ratings of news websites in their internet browsers, safeguarding them from misinformation and supporting their early forays into online research.

NewsGuard data continues to be instrumental in educating and supporting the next generation of online citizens and media consumers. An Italian student at La Sapienza University recently completed a dissertation on the impact of TikTok and new media on trends and viral content, dedicating a chapter to NewsGuard's approach to empowering users and identifying disinformation on TikTok.

**27** **media literacy webinars, classroom visits and workshops led by NewsGuard's journalists in 2022**

delivered to Cambridge University, German state media authorities, the University of Padua, AdWeek London, Milan Public Library, Conflict and Resilience Research Institute Canada, and more.

## Microsoft Search Coach

Search Coach is a research tool launched by Microsoft and aimed at enhancing digital literacy skills in students and helping them become savvier users of search engines. Described as a "search engine with training wheels," it empowers students to search with confidence and distinguish fact from fiction with filtering options for domain names, file types, and keywords.

NewsGuard's data has been seamlessly integrated in this tool, allowing Search Coach users to access source-level Reliability Ratings for news websites while conducting research online.

In the [February 2022 edition](#) of the Misinformation Monitor, NewsGuard analysts identified that many .org websites publish misinformation or have other severe credibility issues, despite widespread assumptions about .org websites being more trustworthy than those with .com or other domains. In fact, websites with the .org domain ending do not actually need to meet any reliability standards to use the domain.

Analysts found that of the 290 .org sites in NewsGuard's U.S. database as of February 2022, nearly 20% — 56 sites — were rated below 60/100. Of the 43 U.K. and French-, Italian-, and German-language sites with a .org domain that NewsGuard had rated as of February 2022, nearly 50 percent were rated below 60/100, meaning they are generally unreliable.

Examples of generally unreliable websites that have a .org domain are:

- 4chan.org, a notorious platform housing online forums rife with pornography, xenophobia, and violent imagery.
- MedAlerts.org, a site associated with an anti-vaccine non-profit that regularly publishes false and misleading information about vaccines.

NewsGuard analysts turned this report into a learning resource and classroom activity for students.

## RECOGNIZING NEWSGUARD AS THE KEY TO THE SOLUTION

The screenshot shows the NewsGuard interface for nytimes.com. At the top, it says 'nytimes.com' and 'NewsGuard'. Below that, it states: 'The website of a New York-based news organization with a network of journalists worldwide whose coverage exerts significant influence on national and international news and on public debate.' A blue badge shows '100 / 100'. Below the badge, it says: 'This website adheres to all nine of NewsGuard's standards of credibility and transparency.' There are two columns of criteria: 'CREDIBILITY' and 'TRANSPARENCY'. Under 'CREDIBILITY', there are three items: 'Does not repeatedly publish false content', 'Gathers and presents information responsibly', and 'Regularly corrects or clarifies errors'. Under 'TRANSPARENCY', there are two items: 'Website discloses ownership and financing' and 'Clearly labels advertising'. At the bottom, there is a blue button that says 'SEE THE FULL NUTRITION LABEL'.

Chris Salvagio teaches AP Language and Composition at Cienega High School. He encouraged students to install the NewsGuard browser extension to aid their research, and requested that they reference NewsGuard's Nutrition Labels to justify why they had cited particular sources. He found that not a single student used a questionable source with NewsGuard installed, which Salvagio called "an extraordinary improvement from years prior."

In classrooms such as those at DePaul College Prep in Chicago, NewsGuard is at the heart of classes on media literacy and research techniques.

Librarian Anthony Powers assigns students the task of downloading NewsGuard and finding a source related to the legislative branch of Government that has a minimum score of 90 from NewsGuard. "We talked about how to use [NewsGuard] when looking at sources for their reliability," Powers said. "It's been great fun and rewarding to be assisting students with becoming more savvy consumers of news."

Randi Weingarten, the AFT's president, says teachers are "constantly trying to help our students... separate fact from fiction, as we help them develop their critical-thinking and analytical skills." She describes NewsGuard as a "beacon of clarity to expose the dark depths of the internet and uplift those outlets committed to truth and honesty rather than falsehoods and fabrications."

# Making Big Brand Advertisers Part of the Solution

## Instead of Continuing to Fund the Problem

---

### THE CHALLENGE

In 2022, NewsGuard's team found hundreds of ads from top brands and blue-chip companies splashed across the homepages of some of the internet's worst offenders: disinformation sites publishing hoaxes about Russia's war in Ukraine, "health" sites peddling herbal abortion "remedies," and "pink slime" networks of partisan websites publishing political disinformation. These brands include Toyota, Squarespace, Uniqlo, Verizon, Lowe's, Adobe, Nike, Capital One, Calvin Klein, and more. Not only are such companies risking damage to their brand reputations, but they are also inadvertently financially supporting egregious misinformation sites with their ad spend.

When Russian President Vladimir Putin's forces invaded Ukraine, tech companies such as Google were quick to announce that they were taking seemingly decisive steps to keep the Kremlin's disinformation machine off of their platforms. However, NewsGuard found [dozens of websites promoting Russian disinformation](#) about the Ukraine war that continued to receive advertising revenue from Google and other advertising companies. Of the sites identified spreading Russian disinformation narratives and still receiving programmatic advertising revenue, 64% were monetized by Google's ad platform.

Meanwhile on U.S. soil, as congressional hearings brought about new revelations regarding the Capitol riots of Jan. 6, 2021, the misinformation sites that spread false claims about election fraud in 2020 continued to receive ad placements and revenue.

NewsGuard [reported](#) last year that in the period leading up to Jan. 6, 2021, more than 1,600 top brands placed thousands of ads on 166 websites flagged for publishing falsehoods and conspiracy theories about the election. In July 2022, a [NewsGuard Moat Pro analysis](#) found 1,975 brands advertising on the same 166 sites, despite their having been flagged previously for publishing misinformation. It is highly likely that in all or most of the cases found in NewsGuard's analysis, the brands in question did not intend for their ads to appear on websites publishing election misinformation narratives.

# THE SOLUTION

This year, in partnership with IPG Mediabrands, NewsGuard expanded to [launch ratings](#) for 140 cable and streaming TV shows and networks to enable advertising agencies and brands to make better informed decisions about the news and information shows that are most appropriate for their brands and campaigns. The regularly updated ratings and scores, as well as ratings and scores for new shows, are now available industry wide to support quality news programming.

Next, NewsGuard is bringing its evidence-based, trusted ratings process to podcasts — helping brands advertise on trusted, brand-safe podcasts and helping podcast streaming platforms promote reliable news and information podcasts.

From a programmatic advertising perspective, NewsGuard made significant strides by signing new partnerships with ad-tech platforms including Media.net, Unruly, and Magnite. NewsGuard also [launched a Responsible News Private Marketplace \(PMP\)](#) with long-term partner Pubmatic, providing brands the opportunity to buy inventory for the more than 3,000 news sites that meet NewsGuard's most important credibility criteria.

As regulatory bodies and global standards including the European Commission's Code of Practice on Disinformation and the World Federation of Advertiser's "Global Alliance for Responsible Media" (GARM) [crack down on misinformation](#), brands and partners have turned to NewsGuard to help them avoid placing ads on — and therefore funding — misinformation. NewsGuard is the only provider of news source credibility ratings that has signed onto – and committed to comply with – all of the requirements of the European Commission's new Code of Practice on Disinformation related to preventing advertiser-financing of misinformation by providing such assessments.

Following NewsGuard's launch in Canada in January 2022, the company [announced a partnership with the Canadian Media Director's Council \(CMDC\)](#) to support responsible news media in Canada and to help achieve the goals set out by the Canadian Media Manifesto. Through the partnership, brands represented by CMDC members can leverage NewsGuard's Reliability Ratings to place ads on credible Canadian news and information sites, while avoiding news outlets that traffic misinformation and unreliable "news."

# RECOGNIZING NEWSGUARD AS THE KEY TO THE SOLUTION

NewsGuard continues to add the world's leading advertising agencies, conglomerates, ad-tech platforms, and brands to its growing roster of clients who are committed to advertising responsibly on news and proactively defunding misinformation. Partners have used NewsGuard's data to expand inclusion lists—adding hundreds of high quality news sites to their ad spend—and exclusion lists. NewsGuard also enables inventory quality teams to make informed decisions about what news sources meet their criteria for credible journalism, safeguarding partners and clients from inadvertently funding and appearing on hoax websites.

“It’s helpful for our clients to have a third party like NewsGuard that’s impartial and allows us to invest in and support quality journalism,” said Allie Kallish, Executive Vice President, Managing Director, Strategic Investment & Accountability at MAGNA, the global media investment and intelligence arm of Mediabrands. “We are pleased to have partnered with NewsGuard to create this indispensable scoring system and to give our clients assurances that their media dollars are being allocated to news programs that live up to the highest standard.”

“Brands and agencies want to know that their investment in programmatic advertising isn’t supporting the propagation of disinformation and misinformation on the internet,” said Timothy Jasionowski, Senior Vice President, Brand Safety at Magnite. “NewsGuard will help ensure our global exchanges offer news and information sites that meet Magnite’s standards for transparency and journalistic integrity.”

# Defending Democracies from Disinformation

## THE CHALLENGE

In February 2022, Russia launched a war on Ukraine on two fronts—with its military on the ground in Ukraine and through information warfare deploying false narratives to influence public opinion.

As lives and livelihoods were lost, Russia spread disinformation to justify its invasion, to discredit Ukraine's allies, and to cover up its atrocities. From false claims that Ukrainian authorities committed genocide in Donbas and that the U.S. maintains a bioweapons program in Ukraine, to denials that the Russian military attacks civilians, Russia's falsehoods spread globally through state media, proxy sites, and social networks.

The scourge of disinformation compelled the European Union and Canada, as well as major digital platforms, including Meta and TikTok, to block Russia's well-known propaganda outlets RT and Sputnik.

Since 2020, the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) in the U.S. has called for the establishment of a Social Media Data and Threat Analysis Center to address the rise in disinformation, improve coordination among content moderators at large technology platforms, and invest in anti-disinformation solutions at scale.

## THE SOLUTION

NewsGuard analysts closely monitor the sources of disinformation they have discovered, identify and track new false narratives as they are created and analyze the evolving tactics for these information operations. NewsGuard is thus able to provide continuously updated alerts to defense and intelligence officers in democracies to new false narratives and the malign actors spreading them.

Beyond NewsGuard's tracking of new misinformation websites and myths, the company's analysts monitored and summarized the newscasts of Russian state TV Channel One to identify emerging myths and narratives about the war.





An [April 2022 Misinformation Monitor](#) report showed how the channel portrayed the West’s support for Ukraine as detrimental to its own citizens. Other NewsGuard reports uncovered how Chinese state-run Facebook pages have amplified Russian war-related disinformation, and how TikTok has been feeding war disinformation to new users within minutes of their going onto the platform.

## NewsGuard’s Russia-Ukraine Disinformation Tracking Center

By the end of 2022:

**324**

websites spreading Russia-Ukraine disinformation identified by NewsGuard

**95**

false narratives and variations spread about the Russia-Ukraine war

NewsGuard launched a Venezuela Misinformation Tracker in September, thanks to funding from the U.S. Department of State’s Global Engagement Center. The tracker debunks the top 10 false narratives spread by 30 Venezuelan domains that regularly disseminate Kremlin-sponsored disinformation and domestic political misinformation.

## NewsGuard’s French Election Disinformation Tracker

NewsGuard tracked the top myths spreading online about the April 2022 vote, hampered by hoaxsters’ preoccupation with the pandemic and Ukraine war.

**16**

false narratives spread about the 2022 French presidential election, including:

- Ukraine-related election myths, often portraying the war as a useful “pretext” for President Emmanuel Macron to retain power.
- Myths about an alleged risk of massive voter fraud.
- Myths about polls, with images of fabricated polls circulating online.

## NewsGuard’s Italian Election Disinformation Tracker

NewsGuard chronicled the top myths spreading online about the Sept. 25, 2022, vote, in partnership with the Italian Digital Media Observatory.

**20**

false narratives and variations spread about the Italian election, including:

- Myths about alleged fraud in the mail-in ballots to vote from abroad.
- Myths misrepresenting political parties’ platforms and agendas, public figures’ statements, and polling data.
- Myths about the functioning of the electoral system.

# RECOGNIZING NEWSGUARD AS THE KEY TO THE SOLUTION

Microsoft's AI for Good Lab created a Russian Propaganda Index (RPI) to monitor newsflow from Russian state-sponsored outlets, using data from NewsGuard to help define which sites are known purveyors of state-sponsored media.



"[There is a] rapidly evolving need to help consumers develop a more sophisticated ability to identify propaganda that comes from foreign cyber influence operations. Globally, new technology like the browser plug-in from NewsGuard can help move this effort forward much faster."

- "Defending Ukraine: Early Lessons from the Cyber War,"  
Microsoft July 2022 report

The Center for Countering Disinformation under the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine requested NewsGuard's catalog of myths as part of its "cooperation network to collect and debunk all types of Russian propaganda all over the democratic world," Andrii Shapovalov, acting Head of the Center said. "We are grateful to NewsGuard's team for their professional cooperation."

Other government entities that license NewsGuard's catalog include the U.S. Department of State and the Pentagon's Cyber Command. NewsGuard's data on Russia-Ukraine malign actors has also been used by advertisers, agencies, and ad-tech companies to ensure that programmatic ads no longer support sites perpetuating Russian propaganda.

# Thank you to NewsGuard's partners



Transparent, accountable  
trust ratings for thousands  
of news outlets.

Fighting misinformation  
on behalf of readers,  
brands, and democracies.