

Fake News & Social Media

The role and updated challenges facing local media
and those who depend on it...



What is “Fake News”?



**“Alternative
Facts?”**

...about anything!

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0HXYm](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0HXYm4k6w0)

[4k6w0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0HXYm4k6w0)

“A method of distorting the truth for emotional persuasion, seeking to drive action.” (Carson, The Telegraph, March 2017)

Fake News is blamed for:

- ▶ Brexit
 - ▶ The election of Trump / The denigration of Trump
 - ▶ The empowering of ISIS
 - ▶ The spreading of malware and viruses online
 - ▶ The rise of the far right – normalising extremist views
 - ▶ AND the recent rise of left leaning or “populist” politics – i.e. instant gratification in clicks!
- (DEPENDING ON WHO YOU ASK OF COURSE!)

But what has all that got to do with things here? How does it apply in the local setting?

It's actually much more dangerous...

- ▶ Local faces and voices can be damaged leading to cases of defamation
- ▶ No regulation: Anyone can start a website & call it a newspaper or a news source for a local area
- ▶ Local hearts and minds can be swayed more easily “because why would anyone be bothered making up stuff about Longford?” for example!
- ▶ In less populated areas, it's simpler to generate a feeling of “justified mob-like mentality” over issues for example the case of the man in Kildare who was mistaken for 44 year old convicted paedophile from England Anthony Luckwill.

Why is local press/media so important?

- ▶ Differentiation from rumour, speculation & fact
 - Fact checking has to be at the core of any newsroom
- ▶ Qualified staff should be dedicated to that task
 - (This is becoming increasingly difficult for time/resource poor news outlets)
- ▶ The only outlets who will cover world and local issues from a local perspective
- ▶ Providing a platform for local voices/local discussion
- ▶ Even though the net has made the world a smaller place, local outlets are still the number one source of media/news information within their local regions

Challenges facing Local Media

- ▶ Resources
- ▶ Lack of funding
- ▶ Increasing Centralisation of Ownership
- ▶ Major Events e.g. The Repeal of the 8th Amendment Referendum
- ▶ Social Media Monitoring
 - Keyboard warriors may not need to worry, but newsrooms do – and therefore **YOU SHOULD TOO!**

((Don't forget about the law!))

- ▶ Social media is a legal minefield.
- ▶ Don't take comments for granted:
Defamation is a massive issue online.
- ▶ ***Stay Positive and Take the High Road....*** Be careful on engaging with tit for tat...
- ▶ Remember Social Media is an **echo chamber**
– He who shouts the loudest isn't always right or indeed agreed with

Posting on Social Media: The 4 Ps

1. Positivity

- ▶ Praise where praise is due, lash it out! Kill them with kindness

2. Potential

- ▶ Hopes for the future, what can we do about this place/problem/issue – I want to try and tackle it / Have been sitting down with so and so, has anyone got any ideas to add? Seeking feedback for this for next meeting etc.

The 4 Ps Contd.

3. Practicalities

- ▶ Keep it simple... Number one question from lots of people in local areas any **bingos** cancelled?!?!? Think of the realities of the day to day lives of your constituents ... help your local organisations. **Weather alerts, road closures, planning deadlines, consultations** – use your local media services & your council website
- ▶ Bring Transparency to the process

The 4 Ps Contd

4. Promotion, Promotion, Promotion!

- ▶ Promote yourself by promoting your area and its activities (Again, kill them with kindness)
- ▶ Don't put yourself on a pulpit... let social media do it for you
- ▶ Don't post without a picture (should really be a 5th P!!!)

Ireland LOVES Radio & so should you!

- ▶ It's all about interaction – stay in touch with your local station and your nationals too, but chiefly your local station, because coverage there will often be picked up by the nationals anyway.
- ▶ Mutual Respect is key
- ▶ Keep her lit ... don't get complacent or lazy when it comes to publicity ... not now and especially not when an election is called.

Why won't my local station give me air time?

- ▶ How often and how recently have you been on air?
Need for balance
- ▶ How good of a speaker are you?
 - This doesn't need to be a hindrance – you can still get your on air credit or acknowledgement by getting work done and putting newsrooms/journalists/producers in touch with people who have experiences to share or issues to highlight.
- ▶ What have you sent in?
- ▶ What is it that you are trying to highlight?
- ▶ Is it radio worthy material / suitable for the audience at large...
- ▶ Recommendations for press releases very much follow Peter's Advice regarding print but make it even more succinct if you can – subject lines are key.

How should I prepare when sending out a press release to local stations – what can I expect?

- ▶ Expect the phone to ring and be prepared to TALK
- ▶ If the phone doesn't ring, be prepared to call in to follow up.
- ▶ Speak your mind on a topic, DON'T read a press release – use bullet points as reminders
- ▶ Radio is about being on the level – explain the issue, what – where – who – why – when?
- ▶ Relevance is key.

Example 1

✓ Shortage of Irish-language teachers in Irish schools a “crisis” – Ni Riada

From: EuroParlRadio <karen@europarlradio.eu>

Date: 09/02/2018 08:18 AM

Remote images were blocked. [Click here to view them.](#)

Title: Shortage of Irish-language teachers in Irish schools a “crisis” – Ni Riada

Interviewee: Liadh Ni Riada, Sinn Fein MEP, Ireland South

Interviewed by: Karen Coleman, EuroParlRadio, European Parliament, Strasbourg

Intro Script

The Sinn Fein MEP Liadh Ni Riada says the shortage of Irish-language teachers in Irish schools is leading to a crisis situation. The Ireland South MEP has called for greater protection of the Irish language at an EU level. She says the reduction in young people taking up teaching is leading to a lack of them in Irish schools. And Liadh Ni Riada is calling for better incentives to encourage more of them to teach the Irish language.

Out words: to teaching

Dur: 00:34

Example 2

✓ McGuinness urges swift examination of MEP boundaries

From: EuroParlRadio <karen@europarlradio.eu>

Date: 09/02/2018 07:49 AM

Remote images were blocked. [Click here to view them.](#)

Title: McGuinness urges swift examination of MEP boundaries

Interviewee: Mairead McGuinness, Fine Gael MEP, Midlands North-West & VP European Parliament

Interviewed by: Karen Coleman, EuroParlRadio, European Parliament, Strasbourg

Intro Script

The Fine Gael MEP Mairead McGuinness is recommending that plans are put in place to deal with changes in the European constituency boundaries following Britain's exit from the EU. MEPs this week approved the new make-up of the European Parliament once the UK leaves the EU. Ireland is set to gain 2 MEP seats which could necessitate a re-drawing of the existing boundaries. Here's Mairead McGuinness.

Out words: those seats

Dur: 00:43

- ▶ Remember you are speaking to someone sitting at their kitchen table, you're invading their space – use that time wisely.
- ▶ Imagine someone sitting at their table with their children, eating their cornflakes etc – that is who you are speaking to – a group of all types of people, not just the angry commuter / business person / protester
- ▶ Lowest common denominator – keep it simple

I feel like I'm getting nowhere with my station... what are they at in there?!

- ▶ Think of the region...
- ▶ Steer clear of bland party political copy unless it's very relevant
- ▶ If you are going to send it, remember to adapt it properly... fonts, counties, figures etc
- ▶ Don't greet/address the wrong media outlet
- ▶ Don't sent a blank email with an attachment
- ▶ Make your point quick smart in the first few lines... get the hook across.

- ▶ Producers want case studies. General discussions without details are almost always a no go. People want to be able to hear a story in the first person from someone who can explain what happened to them... that's what captures a listener and encourages them to engage with an issue
- ▶ It's a journalists job to inform, interpret and relay, it's a producer and presenters job to inform and entertain!!!
- ▶ That means real lives, real stories, real incidents and issues from our own real areas.

Final thoughts to consider...

- ▶ Think twice before you click like
- ▶ Think thrice before you re-share
- ▶ Question the source of ALL material you read online
- ▶ Don't unknowingly become part of the social media echo chamber
- ▶ And of course, help and support your local press and media outlets
- ▶ HELP THEM HELP YOU!!! 😊