

Most Americans Who See Fake News Believe It, New Survey Says

An exclusive Ipsos poll conducted for BuzzFeed News found that 75% of American adults who were familiar with a fake news headline viewed the story as accurate.

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NOTE: This document has been edited.

Fake news headlines fool American adults about 75% of the time, according to a large-scale new survey conducted by Ipsos Public Affairs for BuzzFeed News.

The survey also found that people who cite Facebook as a major source of news are more likely to view fake news headlines as accurate than those who rely less on the platform for news.

This survey is the first large-scale public opinion research study into the fake news phenomenon that has had a [sweeping effect on global politics](#), and that recently [caused a gunman to threaten a DC pizza place](#). The results paint a picture of news consumers with little ability to evaluate the headlines that often fly toward them without context on social media platforms. They also — surprisingly — suggest that consumers are likely to believe even false stories that don't fit their ideological bias. And the survey calls into question the notion — which Facebook has [reportedly](#) begun testing — that consumers themselves can do the work of distinguishing between real and fake news.

The new data comes from an online survey of 3,015 US adults conducted between Nov. 28 and Dec. 1.

this article. A detailed summary of results to all questions can be found [here](#). Additional calculations can be found [here](#).

Top Fake News Headlines

In the survey, respondents were shown a random selection of six headlines — three true and three false — related to the election. Those six were drawn from a list of 11 headlines gathered largely from a [BuzzFeed News analysis](#) that compared the top-performing fake election news articles on Facebook to the the top-performing real election news articles on Facebook. Of the 11 headlines tested, five were false and six were true.

Respondents who said they recalled the story in question were then asked to rate the claim in the headline as "very accurate," "somewhat accurate," "not very accurate," or "not at all accurate."

Real news headlines received a higher overall accuracy rating than fake news. The respondents made 1,516 judgments about fake news headlines they'd recalled seeing or hearing about; 75% of the time, they thought those headlines were "somewhat" or "very" accurate. By comparison, they

considered 83% of real news headlines to be accurate, based on 2,619 judgments.

Of the people surveyed, nearly 33% recalled seeing at least one of a selection of fake news headlines from the election. That compared to 57% of respondents who recalled seeing at least one of the real news headlines tested in the survey.