



BEST PRACTICES

for counteracting COVID-19

Misinformation & Negative Comments

Facilitator



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16 YEARS OF
Experience

- Leading Federal & National MarComm programs & initiatives
- Advanced graphic design training



Learning Objectives

- At the end of this webinar, participants will be able to:
 - List the four problems of misinformation
 - List at least 2 communication strategies for responding to misinformation
 - Write tailored messaging to respond to misinformation using the truth sandwich method
 - List at least 2 strategies for responding to negative comments on social media



Agenda

**1. Pre-
Assessment**

2. The Problem

**3. Communication
Strategies**

**4. Social Media
Strategies**

**5. Available
Resources**

**6. Questions &
Answers**

**7. Post-
Assessment**

**8. Closing
Remarks**

The Problem

The Four Giant Problems of Misinformation

Misunderstanding

- Not enough information
- Unable to interpret the information

Mistakes

- Typos
- Lack of fact checking

Fragmentation

- Inconsistencies in available information

Mistrust

- Lack of perceived credibility
- Lack of trust

Communication Strategies

for Responding to Misinformation

1

Understand Your Audience

A hand holding a magnifying glass over a group of people icons. The background is a blurred image of a crowd of people.

Who are your target segments?

What are their questions, concerns, and motivators?

Identify the best channels to reach them

2

Listen & Monitor

Build a social listening & monitoring system

Monitor daily

Develop a misinformation log

Social Listening vs. Social Monitoring



SOCIAL LISTENING = WHAT / WHY

- Conducting in-depth **sentiment and terminology analysis**
- **Anticipates trends** before they happen



SOCIAL MONITORING = HOW

- Tracks **engagement**

Social Listening & Monitoring Tools

- [Hootsuite](#)
- [Social Mention](#)
- [Tweetdeck](#)
- [Socialbuzz](#)
- Search function within your social media platforms (e.g., [Facebook](#))





Sample Misinformation Log

Date <i>Date / time the rumor was published.</i>	Rumor <i>Details of the rumor.</i>	Channel <i>The channel the rumor was published on.</i>	Verification Status <i>Indicate if the rumor is True or Untrue</i>	Risk Rating <i>Perceived health risk if people act on the rumor (Low, Medium, High)</i>	Engagement Tactics <i>Details of how you will address untrue rumors.</i>	Key Message <i>Identify the key message that will be used when responding.</i>	Monitoring Outcome <i>Indicate when engagement tactics were published / implemented.</i>

3

Provide clear, timely, tailored Messaging

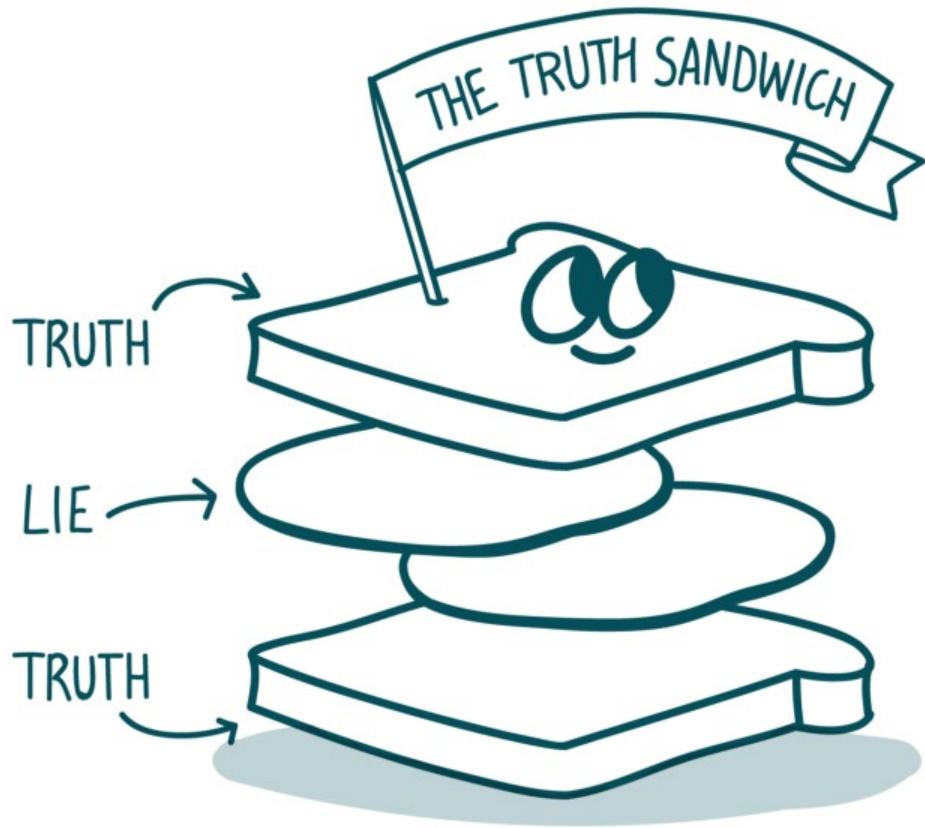
Don't speculate or make
false claims

Provide numbers, history,
and context

Provide clear, timely updates

Convey prevention strategies

The Truth Sandwich – Example



Start with the Truth

- Research tells us that different approaches work for different people.

Indicate the Lie

- Evidence shows that methadone, buprenorphine, and naltrexone all reduce symptoms related to opioid use disorder.

Repeat the Truth

- Research shows that MOUD is more effective than treatment without medications since it minimizes withdrawal symptoms and cravings and reduces the likelihood of overdose and death.



Common Misinformation Examples

- Everyone can “get clean” without meds
- There are bad side effects with MOUD
- The government makes \$\$\$ from pushing medication
- MOUD is just substituting one drug for another



4 Equip Trusted Messengers & Partners

Community Leaders (e.g., faith-based, tribal, Mayor)

Needed Supporters (e.g., Healthcare Providers, volunteers)

Local Media

Local Retailers (e.g., pharmacies)

Strategies

*for Responding to Negative Comments
on Social Media*

Social Media Best Practices

Monitor Social Media Accounts

- At least one person
- Average 5-10 minutes every 2-3 hours
- Minimum at least once a day
- Develop FAQ / rumor log

Respond in a Timely Manner

- Validate their concerns
- Truth sandwich
- Include a relevant link

Establish a Social Media Policy

- Identify and publish a policy on all social media accounts
- If a comment violates your policy, delete it

Stay Professional

- Deal with the issue privately
- Don't make it personal
- Be respectful

Sample Social Media Policy

Our Company's Social Media pages allow our employees, consumers, and others interested in learning about us to engage in online interactions and discussions.

Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. Any offensive posts or comments on our Official Social Media sites will be removed at the Company's discretion and the offending users will be reported to the respective online service provider. Before participating on our Social site, please read and adhere to the following guidelines:

- Protect your personal/private information by refraining from posting it online.
- Keep your contributions to our page relevant to the topic being discussed.
- Be mindful of others when posting; be respectful and courteous in every post.
- Refrain from posting anything that includes profanity, nudity, depictions of violence, threatening language; inappropriate, indecent, harmful, discriminatory, or obscene content; or depictions of acts that are dangerous or encourage any person to undertake a dangerous activity.
- We reserve the right to delete or remove any comments we find inappropriate or offensive.
- We reserve the right to delete any comments that promote other products or services.
- Comments and information posted on our page are not always verified and do not necessarily reflect the views, policies, or practices of our Company.

When to Hide Comments

NEVER

Hiding a comment will keep it hidden from everyone except that person who posted the comment.

Hidden comments remain in the comment count so people know you hid them, which reduces transparency and trust.

- **DO**

- Address the comment if it contains misinformation in a timely manner
- If the comment violates your policy, delete it

- **DO NOT**

- Hide comments

When to Delete Comments

Deleting a comment will erase it; no one will be able to see it.

- **DO**

- Delete comments that are racist, sexually explicit, or raise concern about someone's welfare
- Delete spam (e.g., links to a 'special deal')

- **DO NOT**

- Immediately delete all negative comments
- Respond with the same canned messages every time

When to Block/Ban Users

Blocking or banning users will keep that particular user from commenting on any of your posts or accounts ever again.

- **DO**

- Block repeat offenders of your social media policy
- Block spammers or trolls

- **DO NOT**

- Block numerous people



Reinforce the Positive

- **DO**

- Respond with positive comments as well!
- Responding to positive comments allows you to express gratitude
- Also helps build communication ambassadors that will help increase the reach of your messages



Sample Responses to Negative Comments

Validate their Concerns

- We share your concerns about [topic] and appreciate your interest in the science.
- We often hear this concern and we can see why some people have this fear. However, the science offers some reassurance on this topic.

Address How You Will Help

- Thank you for sharing your concerns, [insert name]. We want to clarify some of your comments, and offer resources that will help you research this further.
- We know that different people have different experiences, but as public health professionals we advise people to look at what the most recent scientific evidence shows.

Correct Negative Comment or Misinformation

- Insert the tailored messaging

Include Relevant Link

- Share a relevant link for additional information

Summary



Communication Strategies

1. Understand your audience
2. Listen & monitor
3. Provide clear, timely, and tailored messaging
4. Equip your trusted messengers and partners

Social Media Strategies

1. Establish a social media policy
2. Routinely monitor your accounts
3. Respond in a timely manner
4. Don't hide comments
5. Delete comments that violate your policy

Questions & Answers

Questions and Answers

- Chat Q&A
- Do you have any additional questions or concerns about responding to negative comments or misinformation?
- Other questions?

