

## How Facebook and Google Are Trying To Tackle Fake News

**Jajati Karan**

**Ommcom News**, 20 August 2017

With the advent of GenX gadgets globally and 21st Century technology in an era of science and technology, the inventions of Google and Facebook empowered with internet have turned further our populous planet of Earth into a global hamlet replete with information at the tip of our fingers.

Notwithstanding that, the menace of peddling misinformation and fake news has simultaneously posed a lurking danger to our so-called neo-modernism and pseudo civilisation.

Hence, responding to the dire need of the hour, both digitally-charged and encyclopaedic Google and Facebook have now woken up to the occasion of stemming the rot and keeping a tab on proliferation of fake/false news.

Taking part in the ongoing global conference on 'Dealing Fake News In Social Media' organised by Asia Journalism Forum and supported by Temasek Foundation Connects here since August 17, both Google and Facebook put forth their respective ways and means for tackling dissemination of dangerous fake/false news.

Delivering on the topic of the day 'Fighting Mis/Disinformation with Google News Lab' on Saturday (August 19), Ms Irene Liu, News Lab Lead, Asia-Pacific Google informed, "Google's Mission is to organise the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful."

Commenting, "Journalists have been doing the same thing long before Google," Ms Irene Liu stressed, "Creating a more informed world takes journalists and technologists work together."

"Our mission is to collaborate with journalists and entrepreneurs to build the future of media with Google," Ms Liu made it clear.

On 'Trust and Verification', she said, "We train journalists around the world. While we're proud of our website, we know nothing beats in-person interaction. That's why we consistently visit newsrooms around the world."

Citing instance, she informed, "FIRSTDRAFTNEWS is a journalist's guide to working with social sources."

In his turn at the interactive session, Mr Alvin Tan, Head of Public Policy, South-East Asia Facebook also highlighted on their mission.

Mr Tan averred, "We're disrupting economic incentives for false news. The low quality pages with malicious contents and meant for shopping and harming society are disrupted. We want that the people should see less this kind of contents. Hence, we prevent such kind of content."

On Facebook's second and third objectives of their mission, he said, "Facebook is not only a platform for building new products, but also we're helping people feel informed."

“We’re also taking utmost care against clickbait headlines and false news detection” he informed.

(N.B: Clickbait is a pejorative term describing web content that is aimed at generating online advertising revenue, especially at the expense of quality or accuracy, relying on sensationalist headlines to attract click-throughs and to encourage forwarding of the material over online social networks.)

“Also Facebook shares related articles for more information. It also aims at improved reporting, imparting education against false news. It has an Asia Pacific News Literacy Group,” Mr Tan further informed the participants at the special symposium.