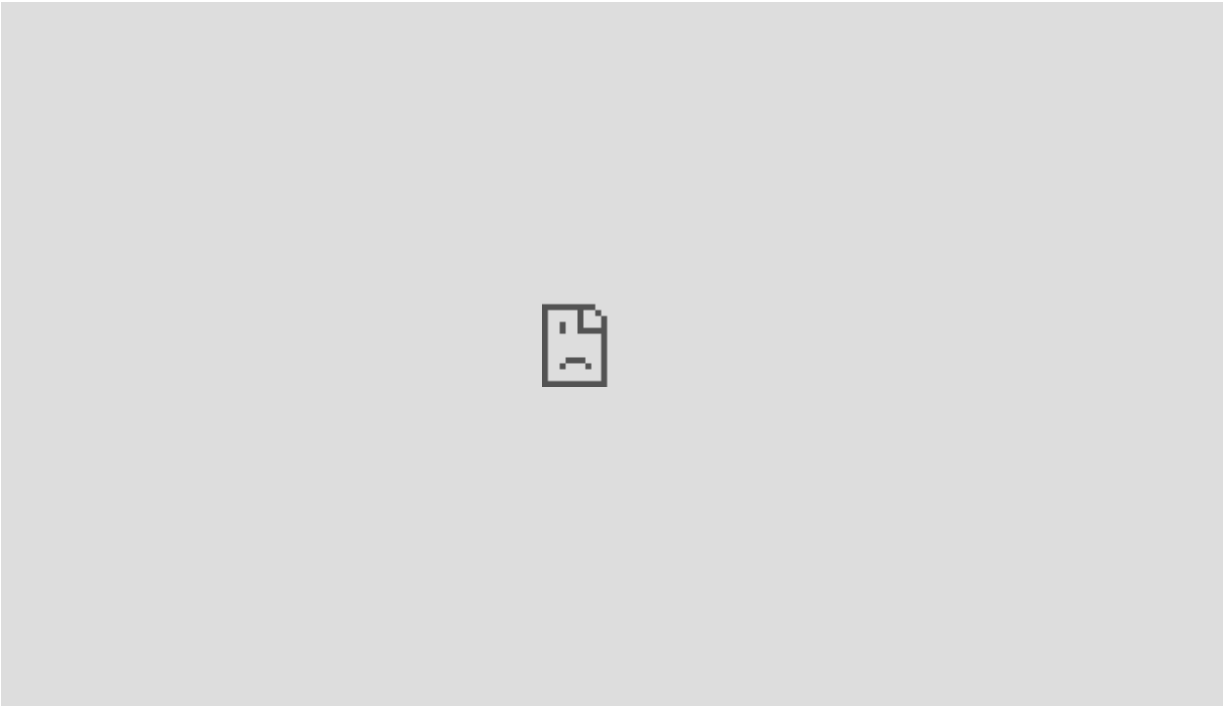


Zuckerberg Mentor: We Must Make Voters Think What We Want Them To Think



12 Jun 2018 | Washington, D.C. | **865**

Technology investor and former mentor to Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg, Roger McNamee says consumers should not be given the ability to decide what is fake news, arguing that “leaving it to the audience to make those picks is how we got here” during an event on free speech, “misinformation”, and the need for transparency.

“Einstein had a great thing, right, when he said you can’t solve a problem using the same tools that got you into the problem in the first place,” McNamee told the audience after Breitbart News asked his panel — “The Effects of Information Bottlenecks: Propaganda, Misinformation, Loss of Privacy” — why users shouldn’t be allowed to decide what fake news is and whether the implication is users are too stupid.

“The problem with this whole thing is not that people are stupid, it is that they’ve been taught to prefer sensation over substance. They’ve been taught to favor trending over durable,” McNamee, managing director of Elevation Partners, countered.

During the panel’s discussion, however, McNamee emphasized his concern about the “misplaced trust in technology” and the concentration of power “in the hands of a few people.”

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"One of the things that really concerns me is this misplaced trust in technology." @Moonalice
#BreakingTheNews

8:37 AM - Jun 12, 2018

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"All of these issues are about too much power being concentrated in the hands of a few people."

@Moonalice #BreakingTheNews

8:53 AM - Jun 12, 2018

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Full transcript:

Question: On this whole question of fake news and the need for algorithms and transparency, why not just let users decide what's fake news on their own? Is the implication that they're too stupid otherwise?

McNamee: So, here's what the problem is: Facebook and Google are like [a] magician doing a card trick. You pick your friends, you pick the links you link on, and you think to yourself, 'I have agency here'.

That is not actually what's going on. There are literally, at any moment in time, a million things Facebook could put in your newsfeed that would be appropriate. They pick the 20 designed — in their mind — to have the highest probability of causing an outrage cycle, because outrage is what gets you to be most engaged, to share the most, spend the most time, and see the most ads.

So Facebook's strategy of getting rid of journalism in the newsfeed and promoting groups and family and friends is based on this issue that you trust what your friends send you.

The problem with that trust is that the sources of the material that the friends are sending, the quality of that, has collapsed, right, as disinformation has replaced information economy.

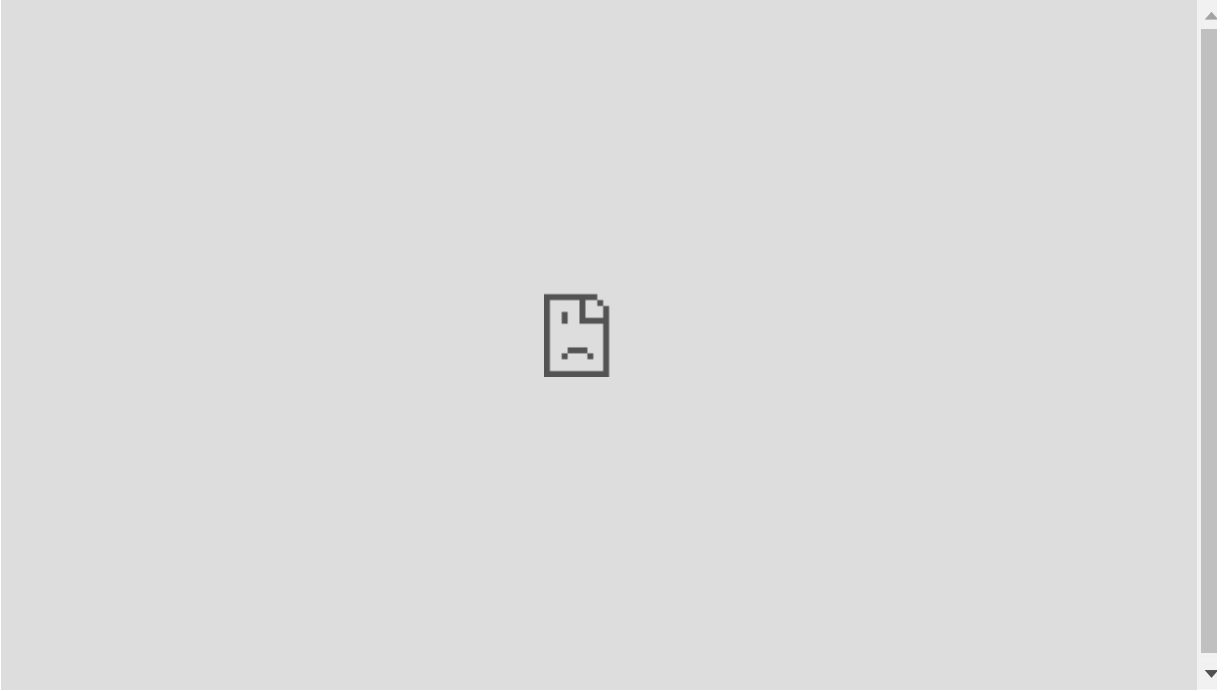
And we now know, thanks to MIT, that [content] spreads 70 percent further and it goes six times as fast if its disinformation over real information.

So the problem with this whole thing is not that people are stupid, it is that they've been taught to prefer sensation over substance. They've been taught to favor trending over durable. And, my simple observation on this is that **leaving it to the audience to make those picks is how we got here.**

So, Einstein had a great thing, right, when he said **you can't solve a problem using the same tools that got you into the problem in the first place.** *[emphasis added]*

[Hosted](#) by Open Markets Institute, the event “Breaking the News: Free Speech & Democracy in the age of Platform Monopoly” featured a number of keynote speakers and panelists from the tech and journalism industries, as well as politicians and legal experts.

Watch the full panel discussion below:



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