InfluenceMap

EU Disinfo Lab Conference #Disinfo2021

Faye Holder, Program Manager, InfluenceMap. October 2021.
About InfluenceMap

- Think tank founded in 2015
- Global team of 35, London HQ with NYC, Tokyo offices
- Core program assesses the corporate sector on climate lobbying
- We work extensively with the media, campaigners, financial institutions, corporations & policymakers
Climate Change Counter Movement

- An ecosystem of organisations and individuals that operate using monetary resources and discourse of power to shape the public and policy [non]response to climate change

- The corporate world, ‘public relations’ firms, foundations, conservative, libertarian and partisan think tanks, advocacy groups, contrarian scientists, and the media. (McKie, 2021)
50 Shades of Climate Misinformation

- Climate disinformation and misinformation refers to deceptive or misleading content that:
  - Undermines the existence or impacts of climate change, the unequivocal human influence on climate change, and the need for corresponding urgent action according to the IPCC scientific consensus and in line with the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement;
  - Misrepresents scientific data, including by omission or cherry-picking, in order to erode trust in climate science, climate-focused institutions, experts, and solutions; or
  - Falsely publicises efforts as supportive of climate goals that in fact contribute to climate warming or contravene the scientific consensus on mitigation or adaptation.
Climate Change & Digital Advertising: Climate Science Disinformation

In the first half of 2020, there were at least 51 ads that contained climate disinformation on Facebook’s platforms. Only 1 had been taken down. With 8 million impressions, this equates to around 70 million impressions since the Paris Agreement.

Ad distribution favours rural states in the US.
Climate Change & Digital Advertising: Climate Science Disinformation

- **Turning Point USA**
  - Sponsored • Paid for by Turning Point USA
  - Charlie Kirk is So Right... Conservatives Are Pro-Science, While Leftists Are Pro-Panic! Climate Change Is A HOAX! #ThinkForYourself #EarthDay

- **Life: Powered**
  - Sponsored • Paid for by Texas Public Policy Foundation
  - Hurricane season is here. Think manmade climate change is going to make severe weather worse? Think again.

  Atmospheric scientist, meteorologist, and former director of the National Hurricane Center shares the real facts about hurricanes:

  - Amount spent (USD): <$200
  - Estimated audience size: 100K-500K people

- **PragerU**
  - Sponsored • Paid for by PragerU
  - Does the data validate those who say humans are causing the earth to catastrophically warm?

  - Amount spent (USD): $600-$699
  - Estimated audience size: >1M people
CC & DA: The Oil & Gas Sector’s Digital Advertising Strategy

Climate Change and Digital Advertising: Key findings

At least $9,597,376 spent by 25 oil and gas organizations on 25,174 Facebook ads resulting in 431,983,462 impressions
CC & DA: The Oil & Gas Sector’s Digital Advertising Strategy

Community & Economy

Patriotic Energy mix

Pragmatic Energy Mix

Climate Solutions**
‘Gas is Green’ = 7000 ads, seen 70 million times
Corporate Capture of Climate Policy: TEN-E

- Special status for existing fossil gas projects
- Consider a long-term role for fossil gas “as a step to full decarbonization need to switch to natural gas from energy intensive fuels”

- “It is providing industry and households with access to secure, reliable and affordable energy”
- “Natural gas, due to its low emissions compared to oil and coal, is considered as an energy source with the potential to contribute significantly to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the medium and long-term”

Industry, Research and Energy Committee Amendments: Continued special status for fossil gas, allowing for quicker approval processes and easier access to private funding.
Political advertising spend:

Spend on social issues, election, and political ads on Facebook in 2020

(For the ads included in this research)
American Petroleum Institute (API) Facebook Ad Spend

API Facebook ad spend in the US ($ USD) per day. Shown as a 7 week running average.
Conclusion

- Climate misinformation operates on a spectrum.
- Climate misinformation is used by many different players in different format, but for the same end goal.
- It is important we contest and remove these source of mis/disinformation where we can in order to achieve Paris-Aligned climate policy.
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