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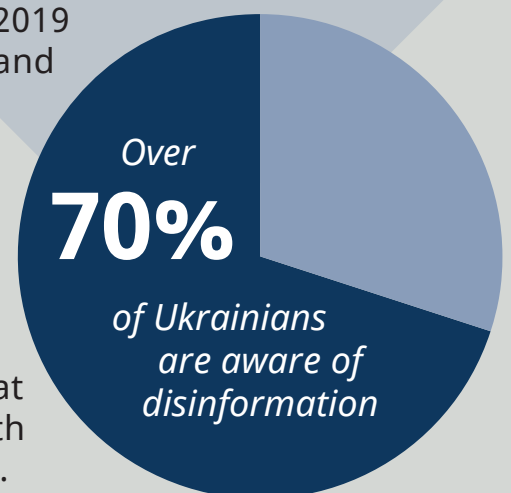
VIEWERS' CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS IMPROVE WITH SOCIAL MEDIA VIDEOS

Ukrainian online media Toronto TV won a grant from USAID's Media Program in Ukraine, implemented by Internews, to produce media literacy videos. They reached 6.6 million views on Instagram, using chat features to test viewers on key elements of critical thinking before and after viewing.



A Toronto TV quiz: "Test! Who owns the main Ukrainian TV channels?"

In the midst of an information war, Ukrainians of all ages need to know how to be resilient against malign Russian influence. According to Internews' annual Media Consumption Survey in 2019, over 70% of Ukrainians are aware of disinformation. However, according to a February 2019 poll conducted by Detector Media and the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, **65% of Ukrainians say they are not interested in consuming materials aimed at combating fake content and disinformation.** In this environment, finding a way to deliver media literacy education in a format that people will enjoy engaging with is both a challenge and a necessity.



In 2019, Toronto TV, known for its popular YouTube comedy show "#@)€? \$0," received a grant from USAID's Media Program in Ukraine to produce a series of media literacy-related short videos on Instagram Stories, Instagram TV, YouTube, and Facebook.

The experiment proved far more successful than anticipated. Toronto TV's videos had no paid advertising or promotion, yet each video initially reached **6-10,000 views on the Instagram TV platform.** This figure rose to **20,000 views** in a matter of months.

The team at Toronto TV decided to solicit rapid feedback on the effectiveness of their approach. They carried out a series of fun polls embedded in videos – integrated organically with the media literacy videos on Toronto TV's Instagram TV channel – to test their audience's skills in recognizing disinformation, hate speech, hidden advertising, clickbait, and bad journalistic practices.



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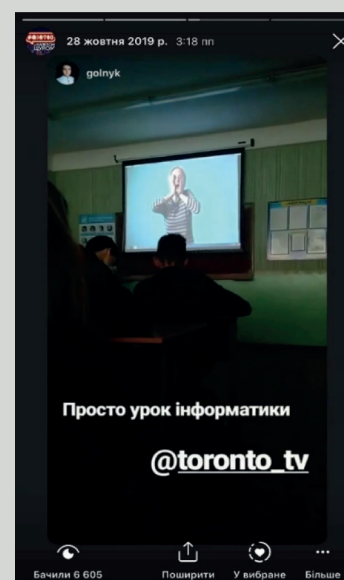
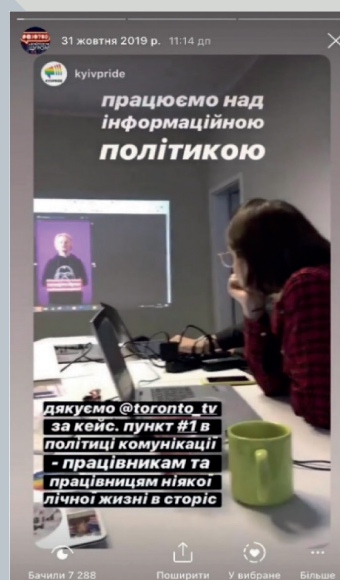
Дізнався, що таке джінса! Ще б мамі пояснити, що воно таке)))

Відповісти

"Now I know what hidden advertising is! I need to explain it to my mother :):)"

For example, at the outset of the project Toronto tested the audience's knowledge about the journalistic standard of verifying information with more than one source before posting vlogs about violations of this rule. Only **37% out of 5,300 respondents answered correctly**. In a similar test conducted at the end of the project, **88% of the 7,200 respondents gave correct responses**.

The ability of respondents to identify hidden advertising also improved, with correct answers increasing from 49% to 80%.



Toronto TV's videos being presented at, from left: the Council of Student Government in Chervonohrad, Lviv Oblast; the "Kyivpride" NGO; Chernihiv Secondary School during an Informatics class.

Before

49%

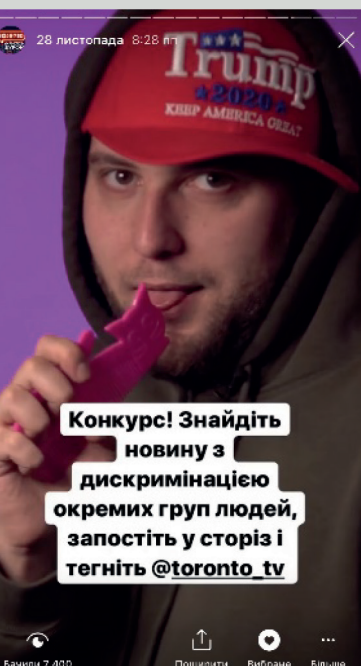
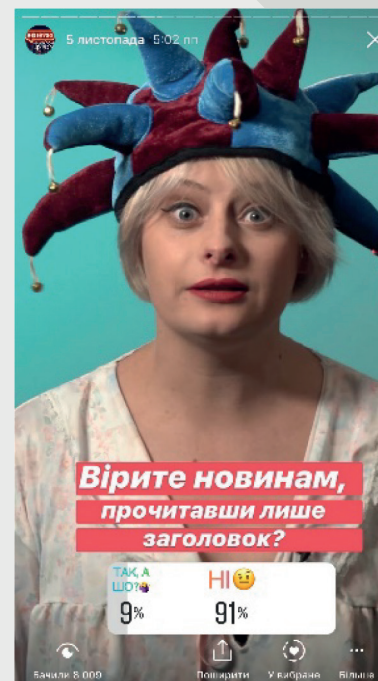
After

80%

The ability of respondents to identify hidden advertising

Without any prompting, Toronto TV's videos were adapted for use in trainings conducted by non-governmental organizations such as KyivPride and the Council of Student Government in Chervonohrad, as well as by the students and teachers at Borys Hrinchenko Kyiv University and Chernihiv Secondary School. Students tagged Toronto TV in their stories and posts when the content was used in class.

Toronto TV's media literacy videos are popular with **YouTube users aged 18-34** and **Instagram users aged 13-34**. This is an especially important demographic, as research by Internews, the National Democratic Institute, and others demonstrates the growing importance of social media in Ukraine both as a source of information to younger people and as a means for disseminating disinformation.



6 600 000 views

57 multimedia videos

Toronto TV's grant with Internews finished in January 2020, but they plan to continue producing media literacy videos as they have proven to be such a popular format. Its 57 multimedia videos have reached more than 6.6 million views since the initiative's launch in September 2019, and the audience continues to grow.