CO SOS RESCU

Countering Disinformation

Mitigating Physical Threats
RESCU TEAM

• Founded July 2020

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CO SOS Countering Disinformation

• Countering disinformation on the electoral process must be a priority

• Democracy depends on it. Biggest challenge we’ve faced in decades

• If not addressed, it will be hard to maintain confidence in one of—if not the most—fundamental building block of our country
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Strategic Objective—Build Societal Resilience by:

• Shedding Light on / Increasing Awareness of Disinformation

• Promoting / Directing Folks to Trusted Voices
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• Shedding Light / Increasing Awareness, Promoting / Directing Folks to Trusted Voices is Priority.

• Research / allies’ experience shows these two tactics are critical to building resilience

• Can counter disinformation themes—and we do—but it is hard

  • Elections are complex. Government is slow. Disinformation is easy. Lies travel halfway around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes

• Goal is ensuring when Boulder17 or Alimosa14 post on elections—folks ignore it and visit county clerks or secretary of state
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How do we do this?

1. Created PSA campaign
   - Sheds light on the threat, pushes folks to trusted voices
   - Catchy, plays off local issues. Love it or hate it—**you will remember it**—that is the goal
     - Could not/not be regular government forget about it communications. **Had to stick**
   - Ran social media and digital (local, rural newspaper) ads, placed in DMVs
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“/70 traffic is my favorite winter activity.”

OPINIONS ARE FUN. FACTS ARE BETTER.

Opinion 1: Go to GoVoteColorado.gov for official election information.

“Flip-flops are all-season footwear.”

OPINIONS ARE FUN. FACTS ARE BETTER.

Opinion 2: Go to Go Vote Colorado.gov for facts on registering, voting safely and election information.
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“Coyotes make great pets.”

OPINIONS ARE FUN. FACTS ARE BETTER.

Visit GoVoteColorado.gov to learn why Colorado’s elections are reliable and secure.

“The two most important food groups are not barley and hops.”

OPINIONS ARE FUN. FACTS ARE BETTER.

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"Pueblo...Hatch...a chile is a chile."

OPINIONS ARE FUN. FACTS ARE BETTER.

Visit GoVoteColorado.gov to learn why Colorado’s elections are reliable and secure.

"Bull riding is just like riding a bike."

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2. Developed in house social media campaign – and amplification network
   • Free, helps extend reach
   • Groups from across the spectrum—unions to chambers to atheists to religious
   • Trusted Voice Tuesday

3. Google Ads
   • Ran before and after election—still running today
   • If folks search for elections they will have the option of visiting our website
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4. Created website to shed light, highlight trusted voices, and more
   • Election Integrity and Security (state.co.us)

5. Blue Check Marks
   • Work hard to verify as many county clerk social media handles as possible
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• Many other parts of the problem need to be addressed

  • Whistleblower indicates, for example, social media companies pushing content that increases divisiveness, decreases trust—and harms young women

  • Decline of journalism, particularly local

  • And more
CO SOS Mitigating Physical Threats

• Republican and Democratic election officials in CO—at the local and state levels—are facing threats.

• Mitigating these threats, ensuring election officials feel safe also must be a priority.

• Democracy similarly depends on it.
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• RESCU Took Multiple Steps, To Include, But Not Limited to:

  • Developed 25 minute required video training for election officials on identifying and reporting threats.

  • Designed lanyards for election officials with guidance on spotting / reporting threats.

  • Constantly, repeatedly, incessantly, promoted awareness of DHS’ physical security reviews with 64 clerks, and facilitated visits.

  • Developed grant program for counties to fill security needs.