

NewsGuard, new venture to combat 'fake news'

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'NewsGuard' is a new venture to provide 'reliability ratings' about media outlets

Two prominent American journalists announced plans Monday to launch a venture called NewsGuard which will provide online users with "reliability ratings" for media outlets.

NewsGuard's founders said they will hire dozens of experienced journalists to analyse the 7,500 news and information websites which are the "most accessed and shared" in the United States.

NewsGuard will launch ahead of the November mid-term elections in the United States, founders Steven Brill, who started Court TV among other ventures, and Gordon Crovitz, former publisher of The Wall Street Journal, said in a statement.

NewsGuard will provide green, yellow and red "reliability ratings" for [news sources](#), they said, with green being for trusted sources, yellow for those requiring caution, and red for "deliberate purveyors" of "fake news."

Brill and Crovitz said NewsGuard will provide "nutrition labels" for each of the 7,500 news sources it will review. These will be a more detailed analysis of each outlet and will explain why a publisher receives a green, yellow or red rating.

"In addition to alerting people to fake news," Crovitz said, "one of our key goals is to help consumers, including young people, know when to take news from certain sites with a grain of salt."

NewsGuard said it will license its ratings to social media and search engines and other news aggregators so they can add them to their feeds.

"Our goal is to help solve this problem now by using human beings—trained, experienced journalists—who will operate under a transparent, accountable process to apply basic common sense to a growing scourge that clearly cannot be solved by algorithms," Brill said.

"We are not going to make granular judgments about political leanings, or which of two legitimate news sites—Buzzfeed News or the Boston

Globe, for example—produces more reliable journalism," Crovitz said.

"But we will tell readers the Denver Post is a real newspaper and that the Denver Guardian exists only as a purveyor of fake [news](#)."

Brill and Crovitz said they had raised \$6 million for NewsGuard from 18 investors. The lead investor is the Publicis Groupe ad agency holding company.

"Advertisers care about the quality and credibility of the brands they support, and we are delighted to be the lead investor in NewsGuard as a key part of the solution to the crisis of [fake news](#)," Publicis Groupe chairman Maurice Levy said.

NewsGuard's founders said they hope to eventually expand beyond the United States.

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