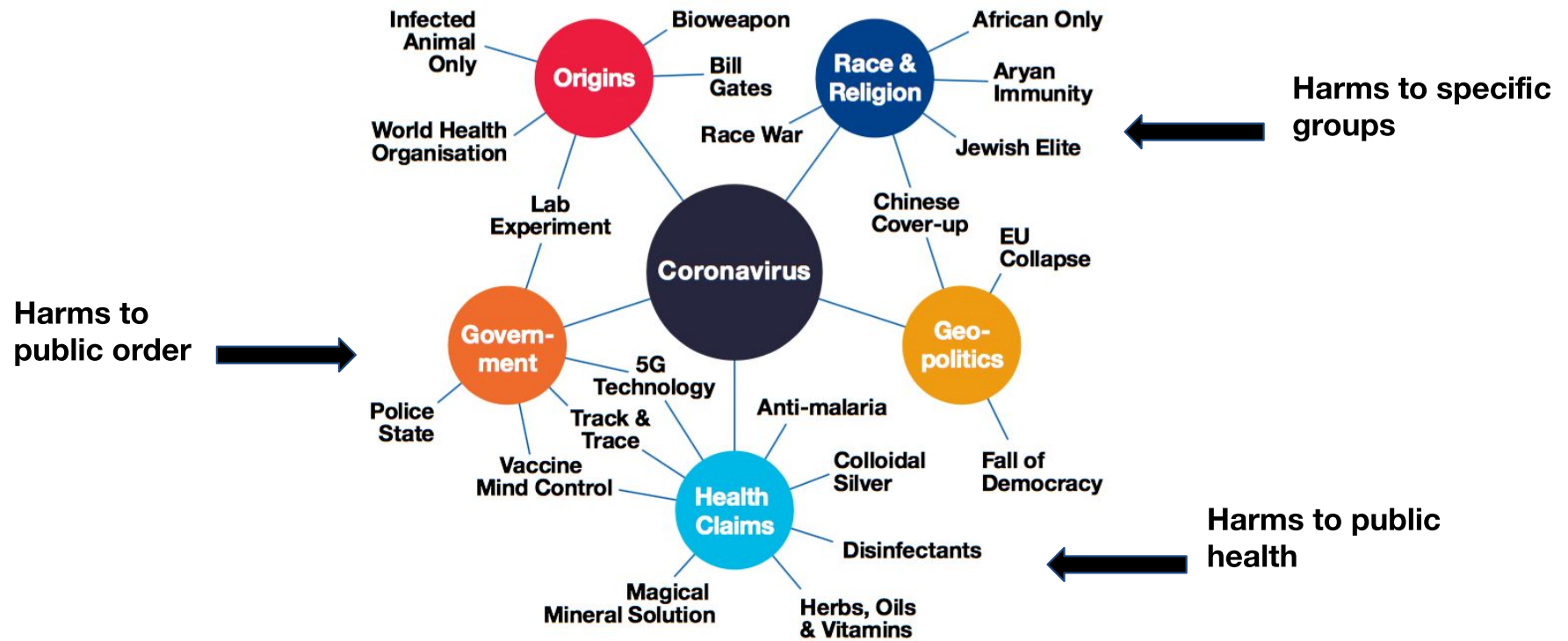


# Ad-funded COVID-19 Disinformation: Money, Brands and Tech

# COVID-19 disinformation has real world harms

GDI tracks top [adversarial narratives](#) on disinformation sites. COVID-19 narratives & harms include:



**GDI** It has cost countless lives - from [Iran to India to the US](#) and beyond....

...and it is being funded by advertising.

GDI estimates that advertisers will unwittingly provide:

**US\$25 Million\***

to nearly 500 English-language **coronavirus disinformation sites** in 2020.

**GDI**

\* Annualized run rate based on data gathered between January and June 2020 on 480 sites in English.

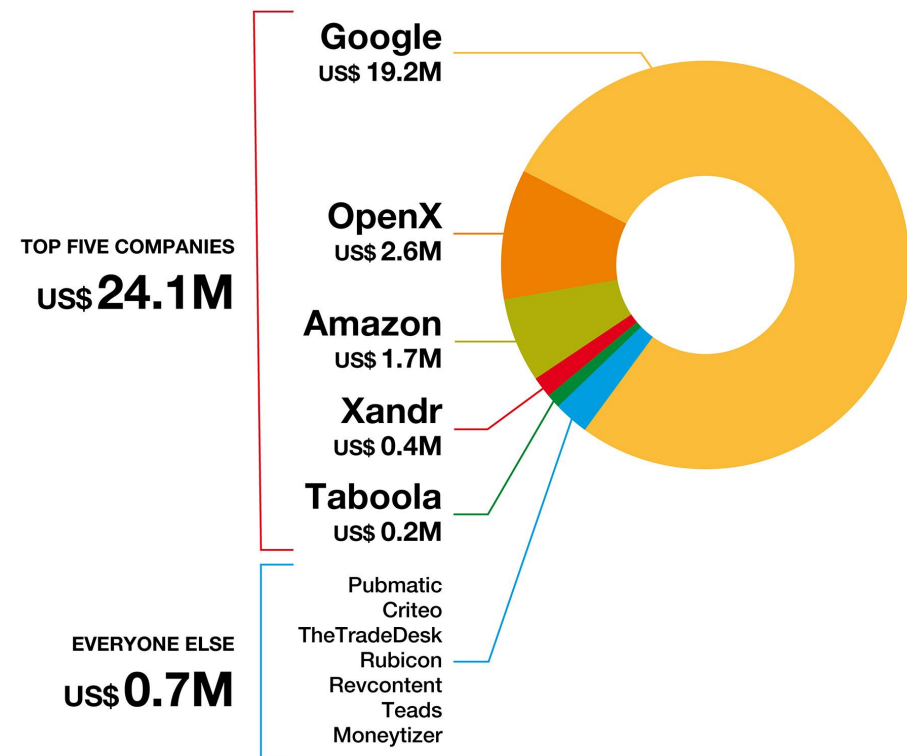
\* Excludes advertising against disinformation in all other languages.

\* Open web content only. Excludes advertising on disinformation on social media platforms and video platforms.

# Share of ad revenues generated from COVID-19 disinfo sites

## The top three companies Google\*, OpenX, Amazon:

- Generate **95% of ad revenues** to the site in our sample.
- Google ad services alone delivers US\$3 out of every US\$4 that these sites earn in ad revenues.



**GDI**

\* For Google, the ad shares & revenues for Google AdSense/AdX and Google DFP have been combined.

# An example of the ad funding of coronavirus conspiracy



**RUSSIA INSIDER**  
Epstein didn't kill himself

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MADE.COM  
Up next: Frühling  
Must entdecken

45 € 119 € 119 € 45 € 75 € 45 € 45 €

Support Russia Insider - Go Ad-Free!

## FBI Claims 'Neo-Nazi Plot' to Deliberately Infect Jews and Cops with COVID-19

The FBI has turned into an errand-boy for Jewish elites, as was amply demonstrated during the Russia-gate fiasco.

Eric Striker (National Justice) Fri, Mar 27, 2020 | 400 words 3,941 270

64 SHARES

THE JEWISH QUESTION

Russia Insider Tip Jar - Keep truth alive!

https://cat.nl.eu.criteo.com/delivery/ck.php?cppv=3&cpp=2Ju0vG0fSWOQ725...BXGQoo2ugcBmfVZPwLcpJgdrhw7mHe7EXWDbhQjgcepn09SNcLsGD2D1y1VYmg3KBe7DjnrSezJaEJYxFJ\_1yPJcKt4GICunkC4eXlviVINQe.

Advertiser Made.com inadvertently supporting disinformation about Covid19

Ad services provided by Criteo

GDI

# Brand ad examples

# MERCK ad delivered by Teads

< BACK Since 1997 **WND** A Free Press for a Free People

COMMENTARY

## THE ELITES

# Tony Fauci and the Trojan horse of tyranny

Exclusive: W. Scott Magill, M.D., sees a 'brilliantly engineered coordinated campaign' against U.S.

By **WND Guest Columnist**  
Published May 5, 2020 at 7:44pm

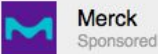
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**By W. Scott Magill, M.D.**

It is time to seriously question everything we are told regarding the physical and the cultural virus.

Advertisement - story continues below



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WND.com:  
**5 mn visits/month**  
source: Similarweb

# L'ORÉAL ad delivered by Amazon



## American Thinker

About Search Login Subscribe Donate More ▾

Americanthinker.com:  
**500K visits/month**  
source: Similarweb



L'ORÉAL MEN EXPERT  
BARBERCLUB  
STYLE LIKE AN EXPERT  
Mehr erfahren

Archives Home → Articles

Email | Print | 166 Comments | Like 1.5K | Tweet | Share 253

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May 19, 2020  
**Is Big Pharma Suppressing Hydroxychloroquine?**  
By Jon N. Hall



L'ORÉAL MEN EXPERT  
BARBERCLUB  
STYLE LIKE AN EXPERT  
Mehr erfahren

In the May 14 edition of her Fox News show, Laura Ingraham interviewed Dr. Ivette Lozano, a Texas physician, who was having trouble with a pharmacy that had refused to fill her off-label prescriptions for hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) without submitting to new red tape. It seems the Texas pharmacy board is requiring physicians to reveal patients' medical diagnoses before allowing pharmacies to dispense HCQ prescriptions.

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- Obamagate Must Result in Criminal Prosecutions
- Obama's De Facto Russian Collusion Co-Conspirators
- Phase Two in the Battle to Reopen America
- How the Democrat Establishment Assimilated the Enviro-Radicals
- Clean Energy Via Legislative Diktat
- Media in Panic Mode over Latest Presidential Polls
- The Shutdown/Reopen Wars and the New KKK
- You're Nonessential -- Keep Your Mouth Shut



L'ORÉAL MEN EXPERT  
HYDRA ENERGY  
HEALTHY LOOK SOFORT EFFEKT

Dr. Lozano's pharmacy must have been citing Title 22, Part 15, Chapter 291, Subchapter A, §291.30. However, if one goes to Texas Pharmacy Rules at the

Open: "https://www.amazon.de/stores/page/86335EBA-0F4D-4777-8E99-BAA26A7674F9?ingress=2&visitId=...420f-a136-2d1e8ba17603&tag=ss-de-21&ref=aap\_20538859304



veeAM

# ad delivered by Google

**RT QUESTION MORE** LIVE  15:42 GMT, Jul 07, 2020

News USA UK Sport Russia Business Op-ed **RT360** Shows Projects Podcasts

## MILITARY POLICE ARE RESPONDING TO ACTIVE SHOOTER SITUATION AT MARINE CORPS BASE IN CALIFORNIA

Home / Op-ed /

### What will 6 months of Covid-19 do to our society? Only certain thing is we'll be in a state... and the STATE will be IN CONTROL



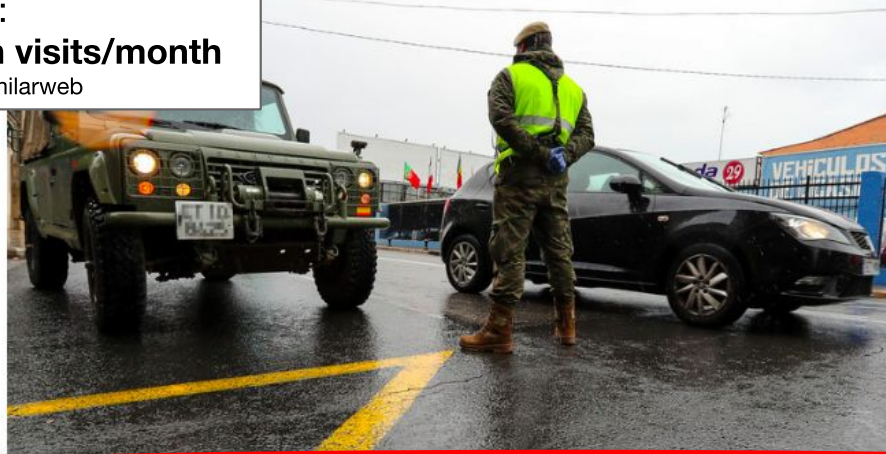
**Norman Lewis**

is a writer, speaker and consultant on innovation and technology, was most recently a Director at PriceWaterhouseCoopers, where he set up and led their crowdsourced innovation service. Follow him on Twitter @Norm\_Lewis

1 Apr 2020 09:19

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Rt.com:  
**128 mn visits/month**  
source: Similarweb



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#### FROM OUR PARTNERS



Sacha Baron Cohen Proves Once Again How Dumb People Really Are



Did Maxwell 'Kill Herself' By Getting

[https://googleads.g.doubleclick.net/acik?sa=l&ai=CQoEn55cEX6KNEbSV7\\_UPsi-fkAzqv\\_i5XebLifLACoyUvdigGBABIO7VICVgIfwrgYwHoAHjz5m\\_A8gBAuACAKoDAcqDCKoEIAJp0m1AUuYacD-Nlaa...](https://googleads.g.doubleclick.net/acik?sa=l&ai=CQoEn55cEX6KNEbSV7_UPsi-fkAzqv_i5XebLifLACoyUvdigGBABIO7VICVgIfwrgYwHoAHjz5m_A8gBAuACAKoDAcqDCKoEIAJp0m1AUuYacD-Nlaa...)

**Note: Story debunked by EU External Action Service:**  
<https://euvsdisinfo.eu/report/authoritarian-trends-in-the-covid-19-lockdown-are-a-harbinger-of-the-future/>

# Canon ad delivered by Google



HOME CAMPAIGN 2020 THE SWAMP - CULTURE - GUNS NATIONAL SECURITY ECONOMY WATCH SUBSCRIBE



STATES

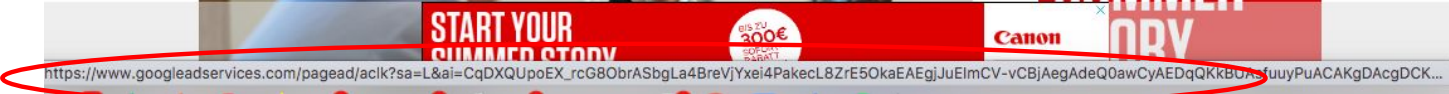
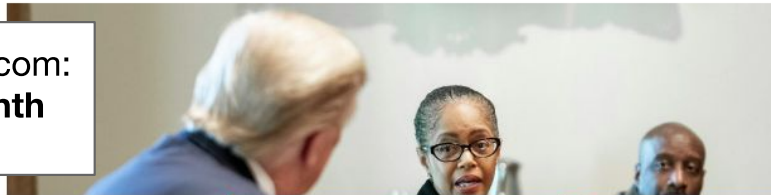
## Democrats Will Censure Lawmaker Who Credited Trump After Her Life Was Saved Due to Hydroxychloroquine

Sick and bizarre behavior from Michigan Democrats.



Published 2 months ago on Apr 23, 2020  
By Shane Trejo

Bigleaguepolitics.com:  
770k visitors/month  
source: Similarweb





# SEAT ad by Taboola

HOME HEALTH

## US Begins To Implement WHO "Contact Tracing" To Forcibly Remove People From Their Homes?

TOPICS: Lockdown Spiro Skouras  
MAY 7, 2020

**ACTIVIST POST: CONTACT TRACING IS A HORSE**

Activistpost.com:  
**500k visits/month**  
source: Similarweb

This report is a follow-up to one where I cover how Michael Ryan of the WHO stated in a press briefing how the WHO (which is of course in the pocket of Bill Gates) now believes it is time to start removing people from their homes.

I know many people, especially those of you who are in the US, think that could never happen here ... well, those are probably the same people who thought just a couple months ago that it would be impossible to lockdown the entire country because people would never put up with it and because we have rights... right? This is being said even as we are ON lockdown.

For those of you who can't wait for the government to lift the lockdowns, as many states are preparin...

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung ON Wilson

**Jeder Computer wird zu einer Kommandozentrale, sobald man World of...**  
World of Tanks

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Seat

**Hausverkauf? Die Gratis-Rechner ze viel für Ihre Immo**  
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## China Admits to Destroying Early Coronavirus Samples But Insists It's Not a Cover-up

By Jim Hoft  
Published May 16, 2020 at 2:58pm  
81 Comments

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Shi Zhengli 97%

Shi Zhengli at the Wuhan Virology Lab

TRENDING

Driver Involved in I-5 Seattle Collision of Female Protesters at 1:30 in Morning Is Doxxed -- Antifa Calls Him "Racist Monster" but He's Black

GP DAY IN HISTORY

1940

7 JUL

<https://adssettings.google.com/whythisad?reasons=AB3afGEAAAWJW1tbW10sW251bGwsmh0dHBzOj8vZ29vZ2x1YWRzLm9uZG91YmxlY2xpY2submV0L3BhZ2VhZC9jb252ZXJzaW9uLz9haT1Dc...>

TheGatewayPundit.com:  
**18.6 mn visits/month**

source: Similarweb

# BMA (British Medical Association) ad served by Google

The screenshot shows the Global Research website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'About', 'Contact', 'Membership', 'Store', 'Donate', 'Archives', and regional links for 'USA', 'Canada', 'Latin America', 'Africa', 'Middle East', 'Europe', 'Russia', 'Asia', and 'Oceania'. The main header includes the 'Global Research' logo and a search bar. Below the header, there is a secondary navigation bar with categories like 'US Nato War', 'Economy', 'Civil Rights', 'Environment', 'Poverty', 'Media', 'Justice', '9/11', 'War Crimes', 'Militarization', 'History', and 'Science'. The main content area features a 'Latest News & Top Stories' sidebar on the left and a central article. The article is titled 'Compulsory Vaccination That Genetically Alters the Human Body ... No Longer a "Human Being"?' by Prof. Claudia von Werthof. A red circle highlights a purple advertisement for 'Dr Diary' for consultants and SAS doctors, which is positioned above the article title. A red oval highlights the URL at the bottom of the page: <https://adsettings.google.com/whythisad?reasons=AB3afGEEAAATW1tbW251bGwsWzIsMTMsMzddLG51bGwsbnVsbC0cnVIXSxbbnVsbCwiaHR0cHM6Iy9nb29ncG9hZHMuzY5kb3VibGVjbGJjay5uZXQvcGFncFk2NvbnZlcnNpb24vP2FpPUNQbkdlczFQelh0bW1HWWp0YlplDLXU1Q...>

Globalresearch.ca:  
3 mn visits/month  
source: Similarweb

<https://doctordairy/.bma.org.uk/>

# wayfair ad delivered by Revcontent

The screenshot shows the DC Dirty Laundry website with a green navigation bar. The main article is titled "Colorado: Bill Requires 'Re-Education' For Parents Who Refuse Coronavirus Vaccine" by Mac Slavo, dated June 14, 2020. The article features a large image of a hand in a white glove holding a syringe over a pile of red pills. A blue advertisement for HotelsCombined is visible on the right side of the article. Below the article, a Wayfair advertisement for a "Statue Decorative Cat" is displayed, showing a red and black cat statue. The ad includes the text "Popular in Land Berlin" and "Statue Decorative Cat - 29,99 €". At the bottom of the page, a URL is circled in red: <https://trends.revcontent.com/click.php?d=B54mMMIFK5jyFVZDYfWcYXf9y89yyfP4eajbAkI7MQZeaW2vK%2BmGxgOsvJHP5ZPDEFjCLiic3dJ%2FwaWlqucsQMAhh0sZgkwXA2C5Qycj7Dr4>

The screenshot shows a Wayfair product page for a "Statue Decorative Cat" by Happy Larry. The product is a red and black cat statue with a price of 28,99 € (originally 33,99 €) and a 15% discount. The page includes a search bar, navigation links for various home decor categories, and a "Statue Decorative Cat" product listing with a 5-star rating and 54 reviews. The text "Bis -60% Rabatt | Zum SSV" is visible at the top.

DCDirtyLaundry:  
**278K visits/month**  
source: Similarweb

# Methodology

# Methodology of ad revenue estimates

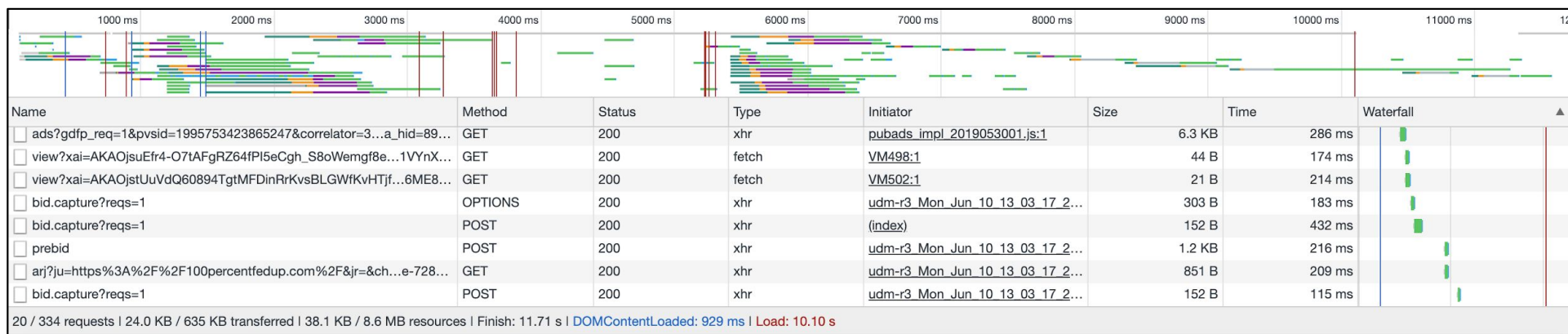
We identified 480 English language sites from our database of disinforming domains which had the highest density of coronavirus disinfo as a % of total content **and** carried advertising. This served as the basis for all the analysis and calculation of ad revenues. These disinformation sites are of concern due to the harms that they create in this public health crisis.\*

The revenue estimates are based on the following assumptions:

1. Estimated web traffic, based on public sources.
2. Assumption of 1 ad impression per pageview.
3. An average RPM (revenue per 1000 impressions) of US\$ 0.70.
4. If multiple ad tech companies are detected servicing a page, the estimated revenue is divided equally between.
5. Annualized run rate calculated on data gathered between January and June 2020 (6 months).



To understand who is serving these ads, we automatically crawled domains in our sample and identified ad servers / ad networks used to deliver the online ads



# Caveats and market considerations

## **Caveats:**

Accurate estimates of online ad revenue are very hard to discern for anyone outside of the ecosystem given the opacity of the online market. Without active collaboration from the adtech companies involved, it is not possible for GDI to know:

- Which company wins an ad auction. When multiple ad tech companies were detected servicing a page, the estimated revenue was divided equally between them. This will overestimate revenues for some ad tech companies and underestimate it for others.
- RPM metrics (Revenue Per Mille)
  - Traffic volumes to the site, which are changing every day.
  - Position of the ad on the page, which will influence the click-through-rate and demand.

## **Market considerations:**

We acknowledge the unique nature of the last few months have made estimating revenue even harder with major factors driving potential underestimates and overestimates:

- A spike in web traffic due to people being confined to their homes and searching for news.
- Potential ad spend decline due to the challenging economic environment.

## **Our estimates are conservative**

1. Majority of sites have 2 or 3 ads on each page, each of which will have a different RPM. GDI assumes only a single ad.
2. Market estimates of RPM range from US\$ 0.01 to +US\$ 3.00. GDI assumes only US\$ 0.70
3. GDI analysis excludes content on walled gardens such as social media and video.
4. We considered only content in the English language.

**These estimates are likely to be the tip of the iceberg.**

# Disinformation about COVID-19 has real world harms

GDI tracks the top [adversarial narratives](#) promoted by high risk disinformation sites. These include:

Harm to specific groups	Harm to public order	Harm to public health
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Conspiracy theories on origin of the pandemic.</li> <li>b. Minorities more susceptible/ take less precautions/ spread it more.</li> <li>c. Anti WHO.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Lockdown protests.</li> <li>b. Virus as population control.</li> <li>c. Attacks on 5G masts and engineers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Anti covid vaccination.</li> <li>b. Bunk cures.</li> <li>c. Anti facemasks.</li> </ul>

**It has already cost lives...**

**Studies linking coronavirus disinformation to behaviour during the pandemic:**

**GDI**

1. Impact of Fox news host commentary on Covid19 infection/death rates [https://bfi.uchicago.edu/wp-content/uploads/BFI\\_WP\\_202044.pdf](https://bfi.uchicago.edu/wp-content/uploads/BFI_WP_202044.pdf)
2. Social media usage and behaviour during lockdown <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/news/social-media-use-linked-to-belief-in-covid-19-conspiracies-and-breaking-lockdown-rules>

For more information:

[info@disinformationindex.org](mailto:info@disinformationindex.org)