

## TOP LINE

In regard to the coronavirus, information can be a literal life-saver – when it is true. Mis- or Disinformation, during a pandemic, can be used to cause a snowball effect to damage the targeted audience. This type of effect is referred to as an infodemic and is commonly utilized at times of crisis to sow instability.

Misinformation is unintentionally false or misleading. Disinformation is intentionally false or misleading. Conflicting information has been historically magnified in times of uncertainty. National, and International, actors have contributed to the portrayal pandemic response, social unrest, election security, and extreme weather (This snowball effect was recently documented in Netflix’s “The Social Dilemma”). Recently, under scrutiny, is the White House’s shifting narrative of the timeline and nature of President Trump’s Covid-19 infection and hospitalization.

Sunday’s news was dominated by President Trump’s motorcade to greet supporters outside Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. However, this occurred against the notable backdrop of yet another revision by the President’s doctors and White House officials to the President’s Covid infection timeline, contradicting earlier versions of events. Even after being released from Walter Reed to the White House Monday evening, the timeline and nature of the President’s illness remains unclear; this raises the potential for the spread of false information as the week proceeds.

Despite an initial dip, the markets were relatively unfazed by the President’s illness and hospitalization. Nevertheless, business leaders should prepare for the likelihood of increased volatility. Additionally, fluctuations in consumer confidence has the potential to influence demand across markets.

### *Question to Consider:*

*How should business leaders prepare for potential market uncertainty against a backdrop of misinformation and disinformation surrounding the pandemic, social unrest and election results?*

## COVID-19: THE HIGHLIGHTS

Nine U.S. states set single day Covid-19 infection records last week; hospitalization rates also continued to climb in line with past increases in infection rates. Experts continue to warn that the United States should prepare for a Covid surge in coming weeks and months as the weather cools and more Americans remain indoors. Covid cases have increased across the U.S. since mid-September alongside the

reopening of schools, restaurants, and entertainment spaces – and an increase in indoor activities – all undertaken prior to a flattening of the Covid curve.

## **BEYOND THE NOISE: THE NEW NORMAL**

False information has become a feature on social media, in part because [false information spreads faster and more broadly than true information](#). This effect is more pronounced with political news than other categories of information. False information surrounding the upcoming 2020 U.S. Presidential Election comes from both within and outside the U.S.; however, [deliberate amplification of misinformation already on social media sites creates the opportunity for aggressive disinformation campaigns](#). While social media companies are taking steps to limit the spread of false information, in many cases, such posts are removed or labeled only after they have spread widely undermining the effectiveness of these new policies. Beyond social media, businesses have the opportunity to establish policies to manage the integrity of information flows; reminding people of the importance of accuracy has been demonstrated to improve the quality of information shared.

### **TRUSTED RESOURCES: for numbers & guidance**

[Johns Hopkins University](#) – Coronavirus Resource Center

[World Health Organization](#) – COVID-19 Pandemic

[Center for Disease Control](#) – Coronavirus (COVID-19)

*Please contact Secure Source International at [info@securesource.com](mailto:info@securesource.com) to schedule a leadership roundtable with our intelligence and security experts to dive into these topics and discuss security and safety related best-practices..*