



STATE OF NEW MEXICO
MAGGIE TOULOUSE OLIVER
SECRETARY OF STATE

2025 NASS IDEAS Award Application



State Office:

Office of the New Mexico Secretary of State

Contact + Project Lead:

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Program:

Seeing is No Longer Believing – Raising Awareness About Artificial Intelligence in Elections

Description:

In 2022, after the launch of improved artificial intelligence (AI) tools, such as Chat GPT, concerns became widespread among election officials about how AI tools could be used by malicious actors to manipulate election information and spread misinformation. The Office of the New Mexico Secretary of State launched a statewide public education campaign in 2024 about the potential risks associated with AI and deepfakes to raise awareness and empower voters with knowledge to make informed decisions during the 2024 elections and beyond.

Subject Area:

Elections

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The rapid rise of artificial intelligence (AI) tools in recent years presents both opportunities and challenges for election administrators as we navigate the impacts such tools will have on our democratic processes. On the one hand, AI tools can enhance election administration by potentially streamlining voter registration processes, improving ballot design, helping to detect cybersecurity threats in real-time, and more. Such advancements have the potential to make our elections more secure, accessible, and efficient. However, the misuse of AI also raises significant concerns, particularly in the areas of misinformation, deepfake technology, and voter suppression tactics. The ability of AI to create convincing but false narratives is of particular concern as such narratives could further erode public trust in election outcomes if not adequately addressed.

As certain AI tools became mainstream in 2023 – namely, after the launch of Chat GPT in November 2022 – the New Mexico Secretary of State’s Office began researching how our elections and the public’s trust in our election systems might be impacted. We quickly became concerned about the potential risks associated with AI and its potential impact on the manipulation of election information by malicious actors. Since 2020, New Mexico has been home to much mis- and disinformation about voting and elections, such as Otero County’s first in the nation attempt to [deny election certification](#), a [fake elector](#) scheme, and the in-state presence of [prominent election deniers](#).

In response to these growing concerns, our Office developed and launched the *Seeing is No Longer Believing* campaign – a statewide voter education effort to raise awareness about how AI tools might be used to manipulate election information and to empower voters with knowledge to make informed decisions during the 2024 elections and beyond. We began the campaign in November 2023, with the main body of resources deployed in May 2024, ahead of the Primary Election and continuing through the November General Election.

Our main campaign objectives were threefold: (1) Develop a comprehensive advertising strategy to effectively communicate the dangers of AI manipulation in the electoral process; (2) Create compelling

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and impactful ad content to educate and engage the general public about the risks associated with AI-driven election information manipulation; (3) Foster a sense of vigilance among voters, encouraging them to critically assess election-related information sources and to seek out trusted sources of election information, like from county clerks and the Secretary of State.

The campaign was strategically deployed across various media channels in New Mexico from May to November 2024. Our office developed the campaign in collaboration with [Esparza Advertising](#) and it broadcast on social media, television stations, radio, outdoor billboards, and in print publications throughout New Mexico in both English and Spanish. In addition to the paid advertising components, we developed resources for the public at the campaign's homepage at [SOS.NM.GOV/AI](#), such as an AI Quiz for New Mexico voters to test their knowledge about detecting deepfakes and downloadable one-pagers with strategies for recognizing AI-manipulated media.

Our Office committed approximately \$350,000 of budgeted funds to the campaign, with over \$276,000 being used on direct advertising and campaign materials. Overall, the campaign performed exceptionally well in 2024. The website accumulated over 30,000 users and 3,652 people took the AI Quiz, while there were 2,914 one-pagers downloaded. The social media ads gained over 1.6 million impressions, with a click thru rate (CTR) of 3.03%, far exceeding the national average CTR for Facebook/Instagram of 0.85%. Total digital impressions added up to over 3.3 million, while 430 television ads were deployed, along with over 1,300 statewide radio ads. Outdoor advertising impressions (billboards) totaled almost 1.1 million impressions, while our earned media push generated 27 interviews and over 50 published news articles.

Examples and overviews of the different campaign components are included in the "Supporting Materials" section at the end of this submission.

The *Seeing is No Longer Believing* campaign has been a great success for our Office and for the general public of New Mexico. By leveraging a strategic advertising partnership with Esparza Advertising, the campaign maximized its outreach while maintaining budget efficiency during an election year with expensive advertising rates. Utilizing a diverse mix of media types – including social media, television,

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radio, and print – ensured the campaign’s message reached a broad audience without over-reliance on expensive channels.

The campaign directly addressed the erosion of trust caused by misinformation and AI-generated falsehoods, fostering confidence in New Mexico’s voting and election systems. This kind of public education reduces the administrative challenges of countering post-election skepticism and complaints. Our emphasis on using trusted sources of election information – like county clerks and the Secretary of State’s Office – ensured voters understood how to access accurate election-related information.

The campaign has also positioned New Mexico as a leader in addressing AI challenges, offering a model for other states. New Mexicans were empowered with tools to identify AI-manipulated content and protect themselves from disinformation, while stakeholders, including media and advocacy groups, benefited from resources to combat misinformation, amplifying the campaign’s impact.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

Campaign Website

- <https://www.sos.nm.gov/ai/> (Includes educational materials, such as the AI Quiz and downloadable one-pager, plus examples of the advertising content)

Television Ads (English and Spanish)

- https://www.sos.nm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/NMSOS-Obviously-AI_ENGLISH.mp4
- https://www.sos.nm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/NMSOS-Obviously-AI_SPANISH.mp4

Earned Media Examples

- [KRQE TV | May 1, 2024](#)
- [Rio Rancho Observer | May 1, 2024](#)
- [Albuquerque Journal | May 5, 2024](#)
- [Las Cruces Bulletin | May 22, 2024](#)
- [KOAT TV | August 6, 2024](#)
- [Richard Eeds Radio Show | October 7, 2024](#)
- [KRQE TV | October 17, 2024](#)

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Advertising Content

THE EASTERN NEW MEXICO NEWS
 Sunday, Aug 11, 2024 | Page 5A

ENMU sets Dawg Days activities

THE EASTERN NEW MEXICO NEWS — The Eastern New Mexico University (ENMU) is set to kick off its annual Dawg Days activities on Monday, Aug. 12, with a parade through the city of Lordsburg. The parade will feature a float carrying the ENMU marching band, cheerleaders, and students. The parade will start at 10 a.m. and will end at 12 p.m. in front of the ENMU building. The ENMU building is located at 1000 E. 1st St. in Lordsburg. The parade is a tradition that has been held for many years. It is a great way for the community to celebrate the school and its students. The ENMU building is a historic landmark in Lordsburg. It was built in 1912 and has been the home of the ENMU ever since. The building is a beautiful example of early 20th-century architecture. It has a large central tower and is surrounded by a courtyard. The building is a great place to visit for anyone interested in the history of the ENMU. The ENMU building is a great example of the school's commitment to excellence. It is a place where students can learn and grow. The ENMU building is a great place to visit for anyone interested in the history of the ENMU. The ENMU building is a great example of the school's commitment to excellence. It is a place where students can learn and grow.



LOCAL ROUNDUP

Freighters receive state grants
 The Western Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Development announced that it has awarded \$1.5 million in state grants to the freight industry. The grants are intended to support the development of freight infrastructure and to improve the efficiency of the freight system. The grants will be used to fund a variety of projects, including the construction of new freight facilities, the improvement of existing freight facilities, and the development of new freight routes. The grants are a significant investment in the freight industry and will help to ensure that the freight system is able to meet the needs of the state and the nation.

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FDIC

A.I. won't be so obvious this election season.

When in doubt, check it out.

Sometimes, artificial intelligence is obvious — even funny. This election season, A.I. won't be so obvious. And it definitely won't be funny. With A.I. tools, you can make anyone say or do anything. Those "deepfakes" will be everywhere. Be a smart voter and learn how to spot A.I. misinformation.

SOS.NM.GOV/AI

easternnewmexiconews.com
 Your source for local news and sports

ABOVE: Print ad in the Eastern New Mexico News
 RIGHT: Billboard example in rural New Mexico

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Campaign Impacts Overview

Website Results

Total Users:
30,562

Total Sessions:
37,743

Events:
AI Quiz: 3,652
Guides Downloaded: 2,914

*Website data is only displaying information for
www.sos.nm.gov/AI/



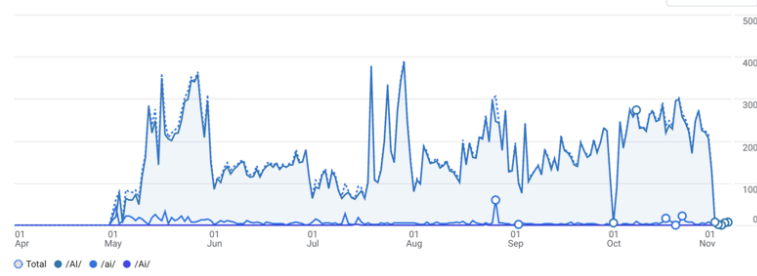
AI

Seeing is No Longer Believing —
 A.I. images, videos and audio clips are everywhere this election season. Don't get fooled.

In 2024, just about anyone can create a realistic A.I. image, video or audio clip. These "deepfakes" are faster and easier than ever to make using software on the internet. This election season, be a smart voter and media consumer. Learn how to spot A.I. misinformation and when in doubt, check it out.



Active users by Page path and screen class over time



esparza advertising + digital



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Campaign Impacts Overview (Continued)

Social Results

Total Impressions:
1,657,369

Total Clicks:
50,267

Total Click Thru Rate (CTR):
3.03%

Average CPC:
\$0.51

*National Average CTR for Facebook: 0.85%

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In 2024, you can make anyone say anything with the click of a button. Don't fall for A.I. generated misinformation this ...See more

SPONSORED BY NEW MEXICO **Confirmed organization**

A.I. won't be so obvious this election season.

WHEN IN DOUBT CHECK IT OUT

sos.nm.gov
Seeing is No Longer Believing **Learn more**

836 459 comments 345 shares

Like Comment Share

Instagram

nm_sos Sponsored

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WHEN IN DOUBT CHECK IT OUT

Learn more

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Campaign Impacts Overview (Continued)

Print Results

- Prime Time Monthly Magazine
- Farmington Daily Times
- Las Cruces Sun-News
- Carlsbad Current-Argus
- Roswell Daily Record
- Gallup Independent
- Santa Fe New Mexican
- Rio Grande Sun
- Eastern New Mexico News
- Deming Headlight
- Silver City Daily Press
- Valencia County New Bulletin

Estimated Impressions:

98,551

ADOPTABLE PETS OF THE MONTH

RONNIE
 All pets have been health-checked, spayed/neutered, microchipped, vaccinated, and loved.
 AnimalHumaneNM.org
 Email: info@animalhumaneNM.org
 Call: Main Campus: 505-255-5823 or Westside Shelter: (505) 323-PETS (7387)

LOKI
 Pet ID: 37154
 Gender: Male
 Age: 14 years 7 months
 Breed: Domestic Shorthair
 Size: 13.59 lbs
 Location: Main Campus

OLIVE
 Pet ID: 51933
 Gender: Female
 Age: 5 years 2 months
 Breed: Domestic Shorthair
 Size: 8 lbs
 Location: Main Campus

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