

Research Report

Authenticity in the Age of AI: Australia

April 2025

Adobe

In partnership with



About the research

In March 2025, Adobe and Advanis surveyed Australians to explore their confidence, competence and perspectives when navigating content online. With a focus on the impact of AI-generated content and deepfakes in an election year, the research reveals how well Australians are equipped to respond.

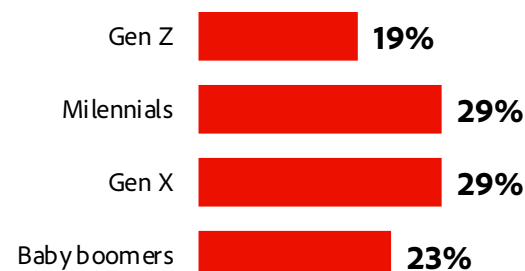
Conducted: March 2025

Who we spoke to

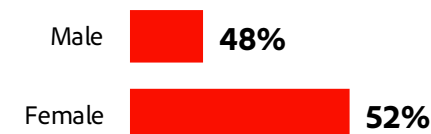
 **1,010** Australians



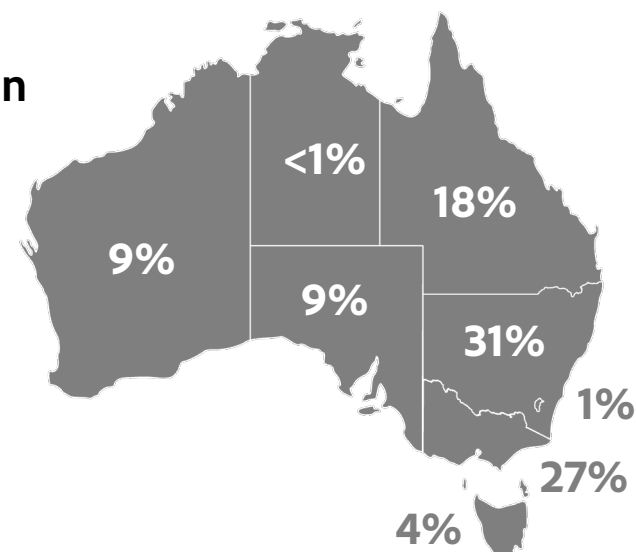
Generation



Gender



Location



Key insights at a glance

Authenticity in Age of AI: How Australian citizens and voters view harmful deepfakes in the age of AI



Widespread deepfake concerns before the election

Most Australians are concerned about the impact of harmful deepfakes on the federal election and democracy, and more than three quarters are seeing it increase.

77%

believe political-related deepfakes has risen in the past 3 months

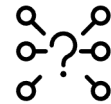


Online content impacts voter views

With more than two in three Australians saying online political information has changed their perception of a candidate or issue, it shows deepfakes have the potential to shape voter attitudes.

68%

have rethought a political candidate, policy or issue after encountering political information online



Consumers need help spotting harmful deepfakes

Consumers are uncertain about their ability to spot deepfakes and say greater transparency around content creation and editing can boost trust.

70%

say having additional context - like location, time produced, or edits made - increases their trust in election-related content



People expect public and private sector leaders to act

Australians support stronger action from governments, regulators and technology platform providers to help protect them from political and general deepfakes.

78%

back stricter regulations requiring clear labelling of AI-generated political content to protect voters

Section 1

The influence of harmful deepfakes on Australia's elections

Almost seven in 10 Australians are worried that harmful deepfakes will impact the election and our democracy, and most people believe it's on the rise



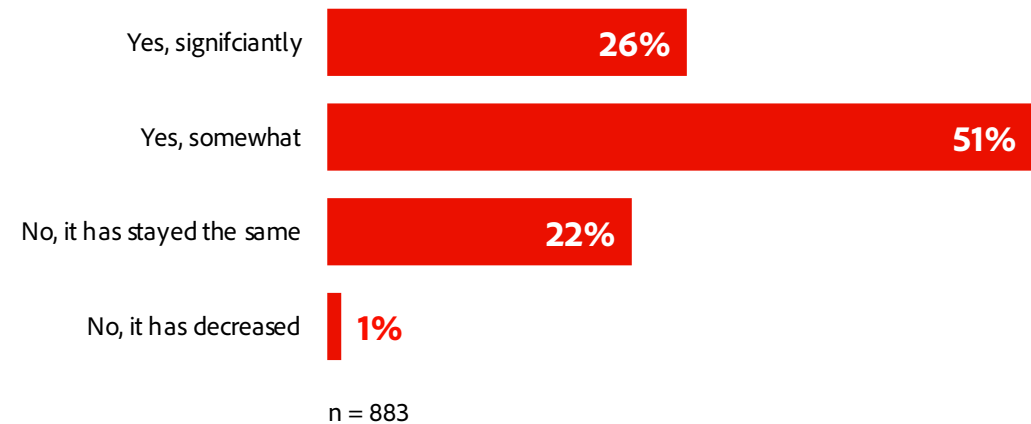
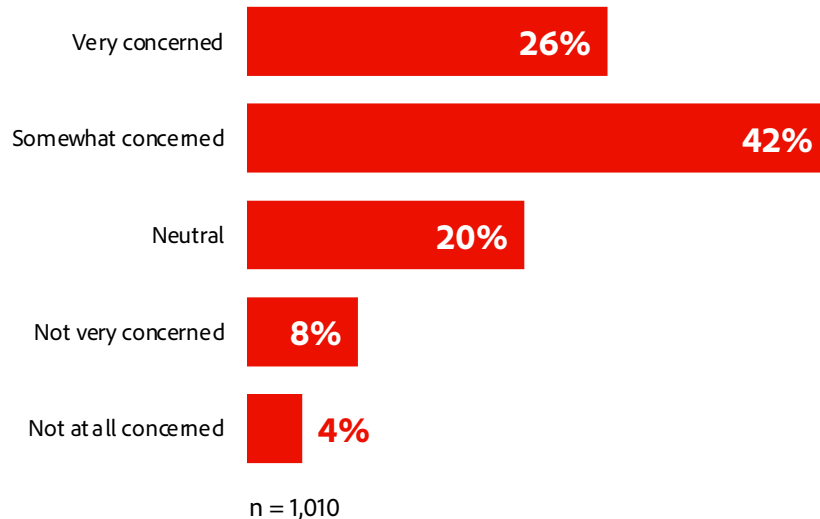
69%

of Australians are concerned about the impact of harmful deepfakes on the upcoming federal election and our democratic processes.



77%

of Australians believe the amount of election-related deepfakes has increased in the past three months. Over **1 in 4** see a significant increase.

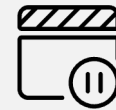


Few Australians are truly confident they can spot political deepfakes online with risks seen broadly across the multi-media landscape



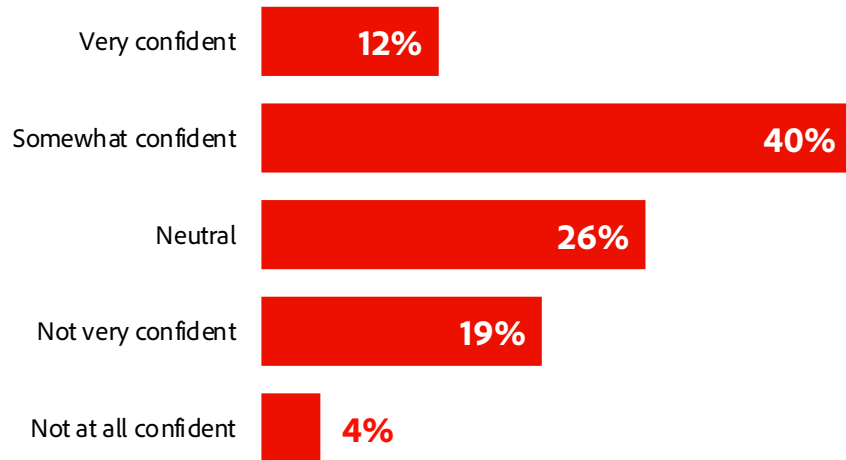
12%

of Australians are very confident in their ability to detect deepfakes in political content, including AI-generated images, videos and audio.

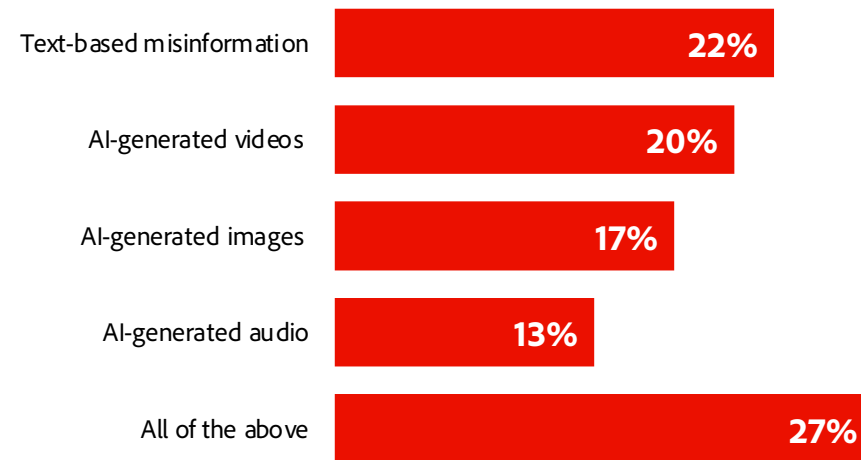


27%

of Australians say text, and AI-generated videos, images and audio all pose a risk for spreading misleading content in Australian politics.

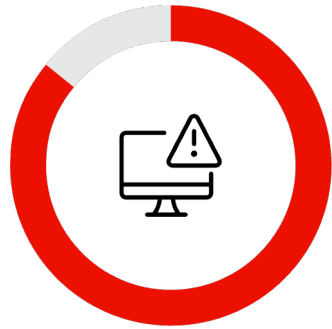


n = 1,010



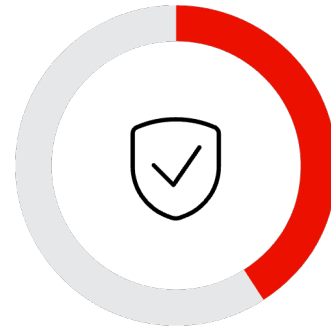
n = 1,010

The rise of generative AI has heightened scepticism about whether content is real or fake



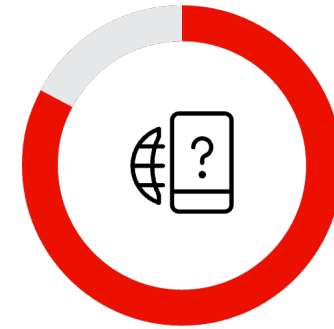
86%

of Australians believe the rise of AI and generative AI has made it more difficult to tell whether digital content is real.



41%

are confident that they can tell whether digital content is AI-generated. This rises to **61%** of Gen Z and falls to **30%** for Baby Boomers.



83%

agree that it is hard to verify that online content is trustworthy. The equal highest proportion globally.

Social media is the top driver of harmful deepfakes, but many Australians believe that the threat can come from politicians to news outlets and foreign state actors

The biggest drivers of political deepfakes



53%

Social media platforms



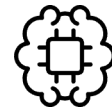
47%

Individuals spreading harmful deepfakes



43%

Politicians and political parties



42%

AI-generated content



30%

News organisations



22%

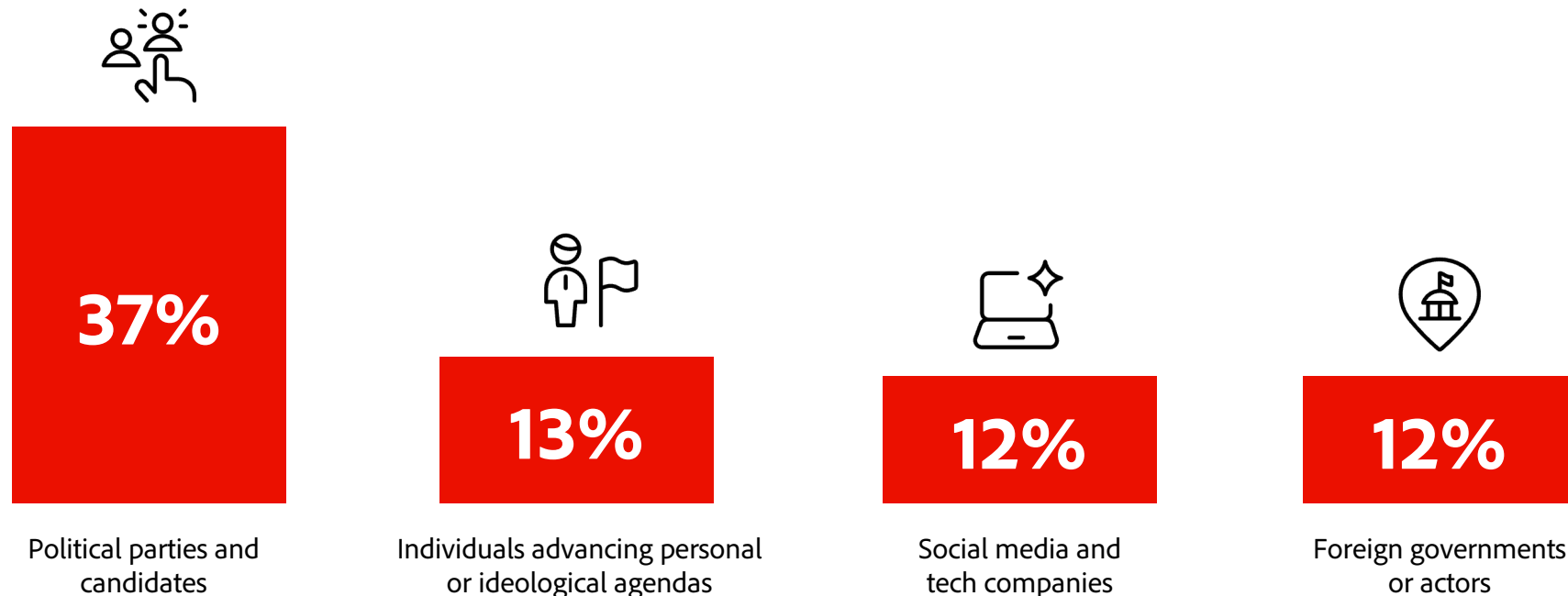
Foreign actors or governments

With some major social media platforms like Facebook and X reducing content moderation, **74%** of Australians believe it's now more important to be able to spot harmful deepfakes themselves

n = 938

People believe that political parties and candidates have the most to gain from using harmful deepfakes to influence election outcomes

Australians views on who has the most to gain from using harmful deepfakes to influence Australian elections



Most people's opinions have been shaped or strengthened by online political content. Despite this influence, most are ignoring or even sharing suspected deepfakes while 1 in 4 are fact-checking



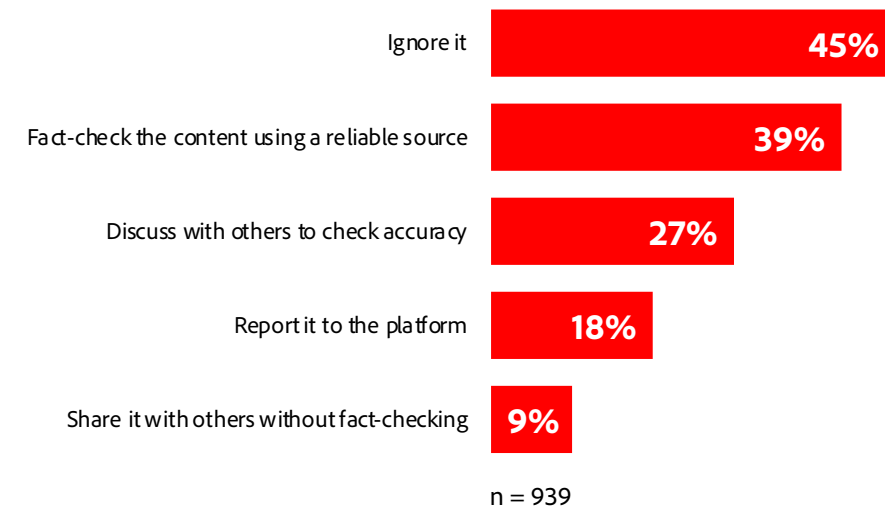
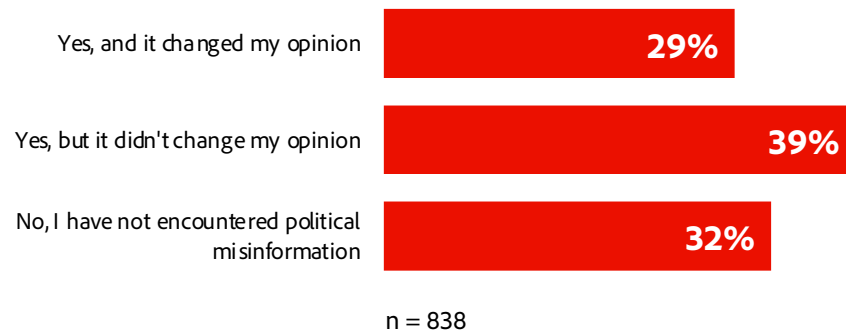
68%

of Australians have rethought a political candidate, policy or issue after encountering political information online. It's changed opinions for almost **1 in 3**.



45%

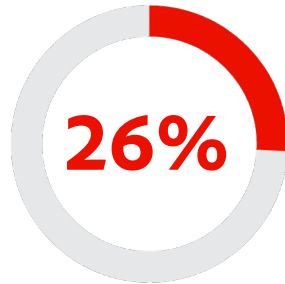
of Australians say they ignore suspected deepfakes about the Australian election online and **9%** share it without fact-checking.



Section 2

Restoring trust in online political content

Harmful deepfakes are introducing doubts for all digital political content, but being transparent about how content is created can boost trust



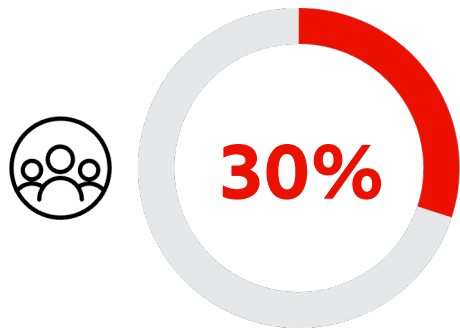
of Australians are less likely to trust any political information online due to harmful deepfakes, while **20%** rely more on traditional news, **19%** fact-check more often and **15%** avoid discussing politics altogether.



of Australians say having additional context – like location, time produced, or edits made – increases their trust in election-related content. **72%** believe this information is important to enable fact-checking.

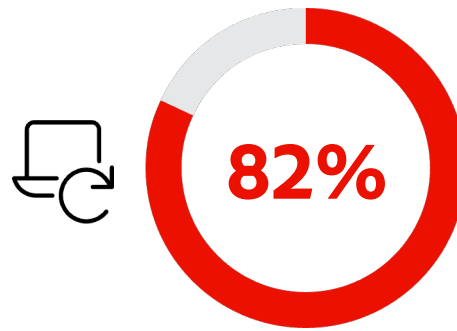


Australians are calling on stronger action from government and want more voter protection against AI-generated deepfakes



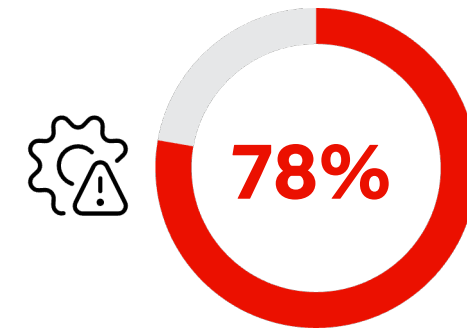
of Australians think the Australian Government should take the lead in stemming harmful deepfakes during the election.

- Election regulators (16%)
- Political parties and candidates (12%)
- Social media platforms (12%)



Believe the government isn't doing enough to protect people from harmful deepfakes and AI-generated deception in political content.

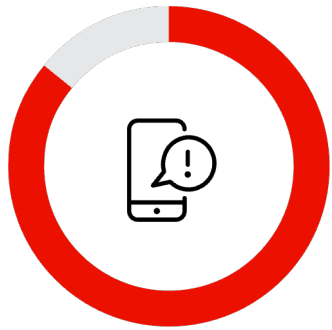
- Believe they are doing enough (18%)



Support stricter regulations requiring AI-generated political content to be clearly labelled to protect voters.

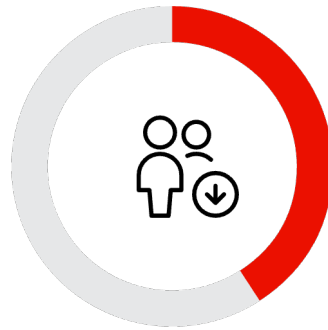
- Strongly support (46%)
- Somewhat support (32%)
- Neutral (16%)
- Oppose (7%)

Consumers also want social media platforms to do more to combat harmful deepfakes, with many already turning away



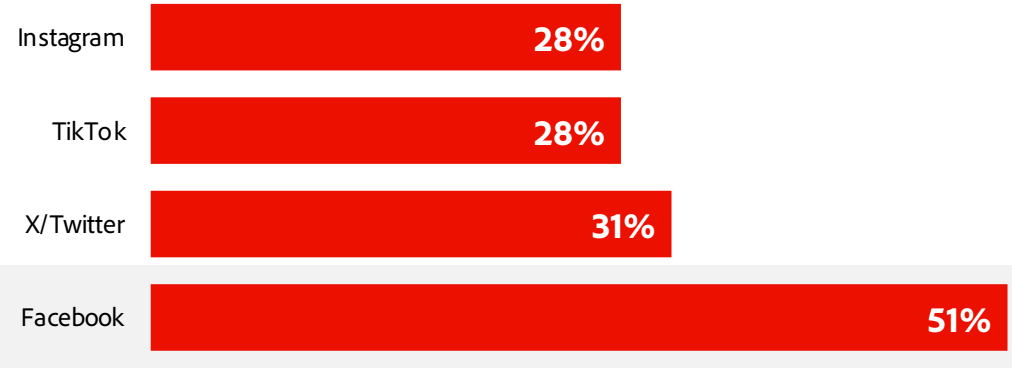
86%

think social media platforms need stricter measures towards harmful deepfakes.



45%

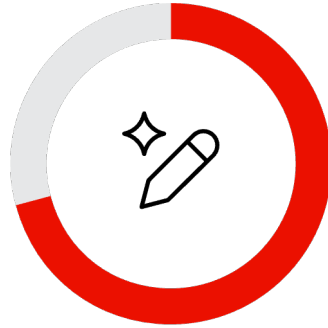
have reduced social media usage due to deepfake concerns, particularly the following platforms:



Facebook is ranked by **29%** as the platform encountering the most amount of harmful deepfakes.

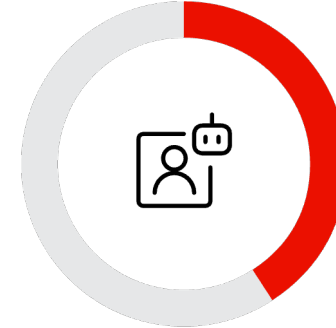
n = 456

Political or not, consumers want transparency in any AI-generated content with most lacking skills to identify it themselves



71%

feel that it is at least somewhat important to know if digital content was edited using generative AI or wholly generated using AI (**70%**).



41%

are at least somewhat confident in their ability to decipher whether digital content has been wholly created with AI – particularly Gen Z (**61%**) and Millennials (**49%**).

Not all Australians are familiar with transparency labels but agree attribution details are essential to cut through the noise



53%

are familiar with the concept of AI labelling for digital content, particularly Gen Z (**86%**)



74%

say it's at least somewhat important to see labels on AI edited or generated digital content



81%

of those (**39%**) who have come across AI labelled content, found it helpful

Certain use cases are particularly important for transparency labels:



86%

agree photos or videos edited with AI should be tagged with the appropriate label



82%

say that attribution information for event coverage of a major news event or global crisis would be beneficial

Section 2

Practical takeaways

On the road to trust



Organisations and political parties can boost trust with transparency

Most Australians say that transparency around where and how AI-generated content is used can help instil greater trust.



There are ways to enable citizens on their fact-checking missions

Using tools like labelling, tagging, and embedded content credentials can help Australians more easily track the origins and integrity of the content they consume.



It's important to consider content credentials in the age of multi-modal AI

Australians are aware that deepfakes can appear in both written, audio and visual formats. Ensuring sources can be revealed across formats is key.



There's an opportunity to increase grassroots AI education and literacy

With many still unsure how to verify content, public and private sector organisations have a role to play in helping Australians upskill and empower themselves.

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