FACT Toolkit

F **FIND:** Constantly monitor online news sources and publicly available social media posts to identify themes, discussions and stories promoting false or misleading content. This may be misinformation or disinformation.

A **ASSESS:** Determine the scale of engagement with the risk identified and establish whether it is appropriate to respond to the content. Flag to relevant press offices and special advisors, with a recommended approach to response.

C **CREATE:** Create appropriate content or share existing content with the aim of rebalancing the narrative and promoting official information. This may be a press office line, a social media post, or a more complex asset (such as a video).

T **TARGET:** Promote content across digital media to ensure information is accessible and highly visible to the public. This may involve paid-for and/or search advertising, targeted at those most at risk.
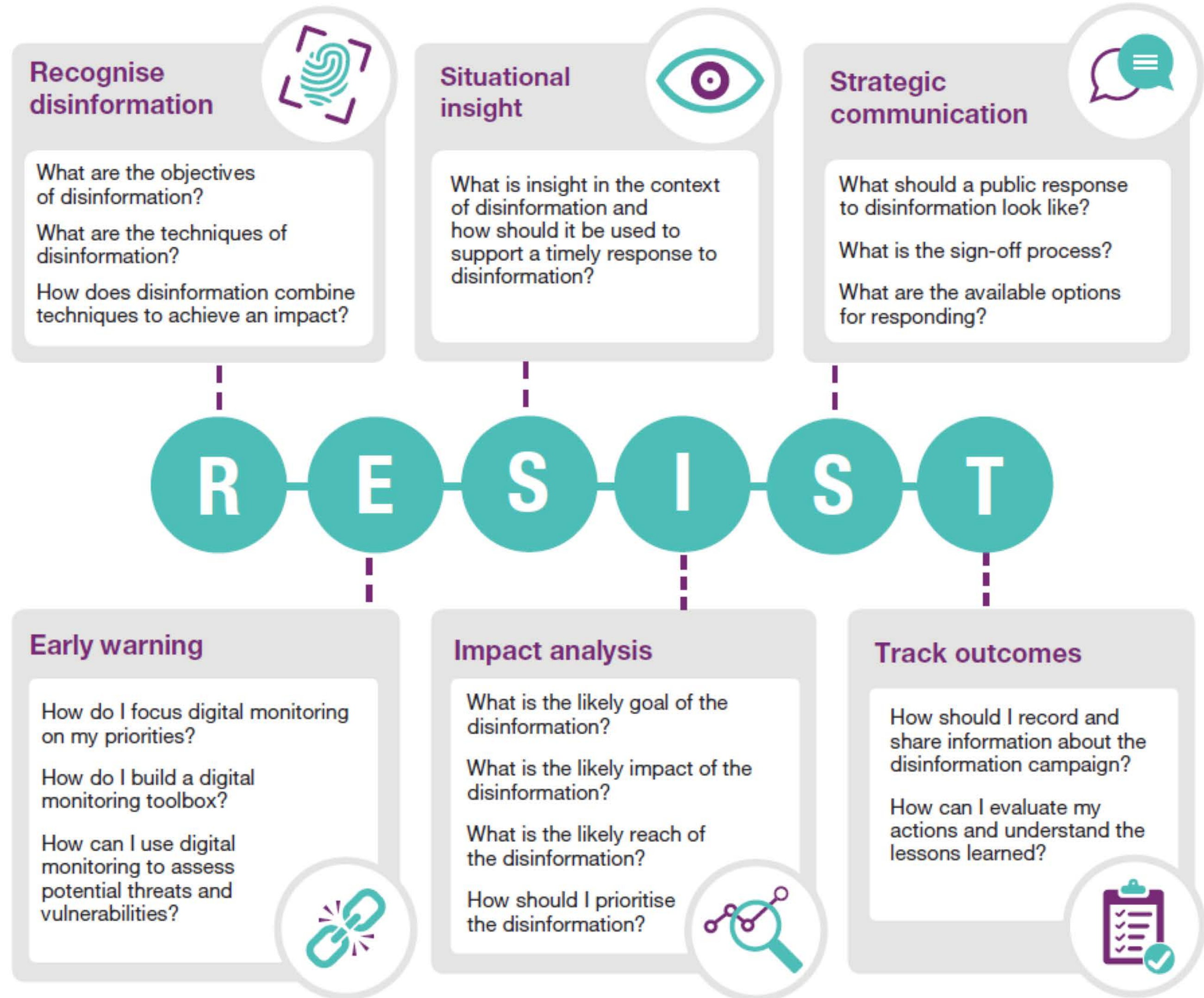
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Misinformation

or

Disinformation?

Disinformation is the **deliberate** creation and/or sharing of false information with
the intention to deceive and mislead audiences.

The **inadvertent** sharing of false information is referred to as misinformation.

From NSCT 'RESIST' toolkit

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RESIST for Disinformation

Recognise disinformation

What are the objectives of disinformation?

What are the techniques of disinformation?

How does disinformation combine techniques to achieve an impact?

Situational insight

What is insight in the context of disinformation and how should it be used to support a timely response to disinformation?

Strategic communication

What should a public response to disinformation look like?

What is the sign-off process?

What are the available options for responding?

RESIST

Early warning

How do I focus digital monitoring on my priorities?

How do I build a digital monitoring toolbox?

How can I use digital monitoring to assess potential threats and vulnerabilities?

Impact analysis

What is the likely goal of the disinformation?

What is the likely impact of the disinformation?

What is the likely reach of the disinformation?

How should I prioritise the disinformation?

Track outcomes

How should I record and share information about the disinformation campaign?

How can I evaluate my actions and understand the lessons learned?

Some social/search analysis 101 principles

Do you understand where the data is coming from?

Do you trust the data & filters?

What biases should you account for?

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Key q when designing Boolean searches

Which is worse?

Getting lots of stuff you didn't want?

or

Missing lots of stuff you might have wanted?

Boolean

Some worked examples

"Theresa May"
OR
"Prime Minister"

[_____] · 2m

Wow even David Moyes has more net worth than Imran Khan. Is this y'all's **prime minister?** 🤣

Prime Minister Choudhry Muhammad [_____] · 2m

Replying to [_____] and 10 others

لعنت بو اس خبیس عورت پر ....

🌐 Translate Tweet

[_____] · 2m

#UK Prime Minister Mays party conference apps #security #flaws #exposed personal details of government officials - #MarketWatch

There's lots of good how-to Boolean guides online.

Boolean

"Theresa May"
OR
("Prime Minister"
AND UK)

→

"Theresa May"
OR
("Prime Minister" AND (UK
OR "united kingdom" OR
brit*))

Boolean

(("Prime Minister"
OR "the PM")
AND (UK OR
"united kingdom"
OR brit*))

("Prime Minister" OR "the PM")
NOT (trudeau OR modi OR
khan....)

vs.

("Prime Minister" OR "the PM")
AND country:uk*

** = Or a location filter applied in your tool's interface. **Be careful.***

Both these x2 options are ok. Neither is clearly 'better'. Try them both. Try other things. Nothing is perfect.

Free Social Media / Search Analysis Tools: Guidance

The next few pages are a Civil Service themed introduction to useful free social media / search analysis tools.

It is not a comprehensive how-to guide. Those exist elsewhere online.

This gives pointers on how they can be useful for *our* work.

They're a start point: but there is no substitute for simply playing around with the tools, and asking yourself 'what is the tool doing here'?

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Google Trends

- Collects data about what people are searching for with Google.

- As Google is used for 90% of searches, Google Trends is a good approximation of *all* online searches.

- Searching usually indicates a person is interested, confused, or uncertain about a particular topic. This makes search data a useful complement to social media data, which is often a more public, emotional behaviour.

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What can Google Trends do for you?

#1: Tell you what searches have been recently trending in the UK

Go to https://trends.google.com/trends/**?geo=GB**

(the geo=GB bit makes sure you're just looking at the UK)

Scroll down to 'recently trending'

Click on 'More Trending Searches' to see previous days.

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'Trending'

Common mistake: 'Trending' is **not** the same as 'most common'

A search is 'trending' if it's been searched a lot more today than it was yesterday. Or, [as Google puts it](#), if the search "jumped significantly in traffic" in the last 24 hours.

(Or a lot more this week/month than it was last week/month, if that's the time period you're using).

So 'Brexit' is unlikely to be a trending search - because it's already a really common search, to (e.g.) double the number of searches for 'Brexit' a *lot* more people would have to search for it.

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What can Google Trends do for you?

#2: Give you search volumes & top/trending related search volumes for a particular term(s)

Go to https://trends.google.com/trends/explore

Related queries ?		Top ▾ ⬇ <> ⤴
1	brexit news	100
2	brexit party	75
3	brexit latest	62
4	latest brexit news	29
5	uk	27

‹ Showing 1–5 of 25 queries ›

● **brexit** Search term   ⋮   ● **theresa may** Search term   ⋮   ＋ Add comparison

United Kingdom ▾   Past 7 days ▾   All categories ▾   Web Search ▾

Interest over time ?   ⬇ <> ⤴

Related queries ?		Top ▾ ⬇ <> ⤴
1	brexit	100
2	theresa may brexit	100
3	theresa may news	76
4	uk	33
5	corbyn	27

‹ Showing 1–5 of 25 queries ›

Volumes

Google doesn't give *actual* numbers of searches. Only volumes *relative* to a benchmark. It's fairly obvious what that means when you try it out, but if you want more detail it's explained here.

(Actually, there is one way to get rough numbers - if the search features in 'recently trending' Google gives you an estimate).

So it's useful to have a consistent topic for comparison. As you saw on previous slide, we use 'brexit'- that gets a lot of searches on a regular basis, so if an HMG topic is outperforming Brexit then that's significant.

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Final warning

Google Trends looks really simple, but there's lots going on 'under the hood' which makes it easy to misinterpret.

E.g. it can look like a search is really popular in a particular geographical region. But that might just be because the region is small.

Ideally read and understand these pages. But failing that, just be careful of not over-confidently reporting findings.

Also it uses different search terms (or 'Boolean') to other tools.

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Tweetdeck

- You may know it as 'that tool which allows you to see multiple Twitter streams at once'.

- But it also has some very useful search and filtering capabilities...

Tweetdeck: Useful Commands

- Use the 'plus' sign to add a new column to your deck. Some particularly useful column types are circled below. Try them all out.
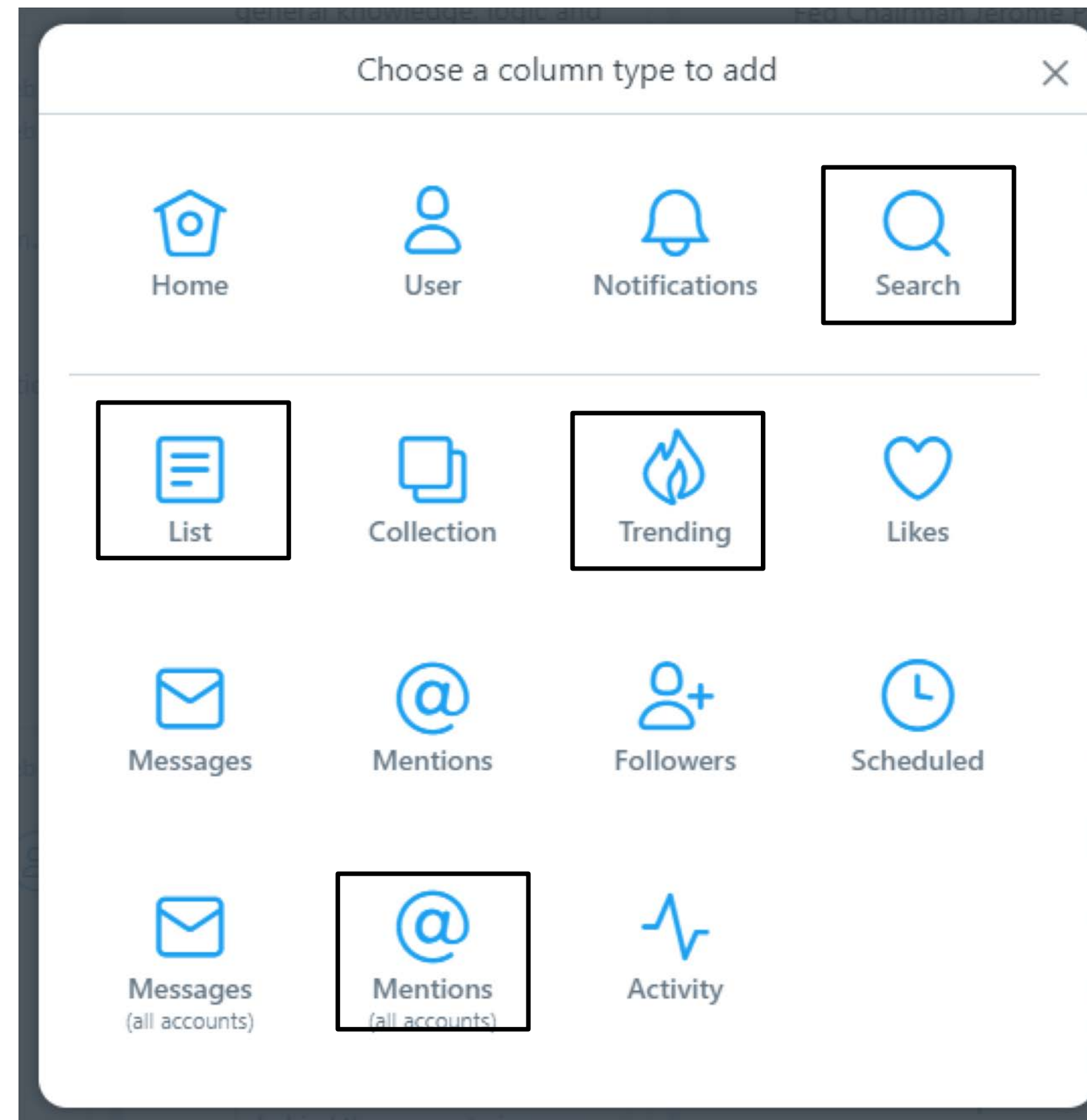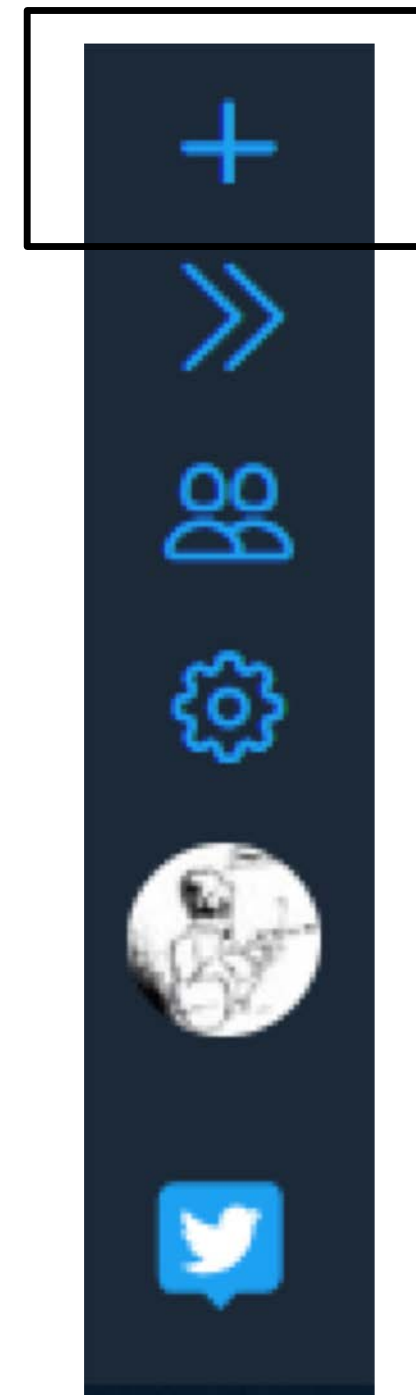
Tweetdeck: Useful Commands

- The 'search' column is particularly useful. You can use Boolean for really precise searches - consult our guide.

- Some types of column have useful **filters**. We've circled the button you use to open those up. Try them out for different columns.

- You can use filters creatively, e.g. finding the top tweet on a given subject by going to increasing the minimum number of retweets until only one tweet is left.

- **Be careful of the location filter**. Twitter location is not very accurate.
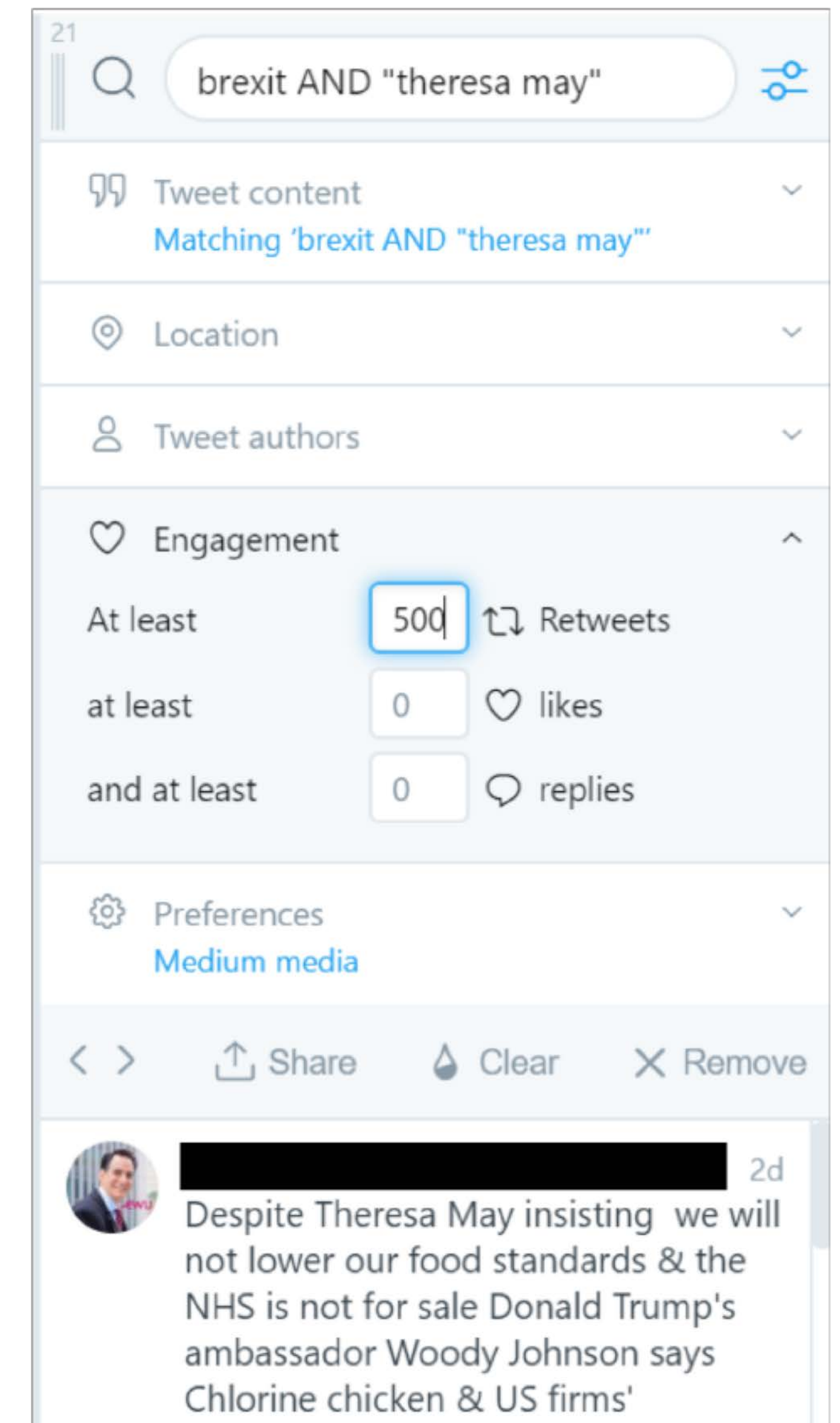
Facebook Search

- HMG activity - whether content or monitoring - often focuses on Twitter, It is not entirely clear why,

- Facebook has a much larger, and more active, user base than Twitter - and often gives quite a different picture to Twitter.

  - For example, Brexit is often more discussed on Twitter but the environment and education often feature more on Facebook.

- Most Facebook activity is private, however Facebook search may point you to public pages / posts where relevant topics are being discussed.

- Though not free, Buzzsumo and NewsWhip are good for analysing Facebook.

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Facebook Search

- The search bar is at the top of your Facebook home screen.You can use Boolean for precise searches.

- Once you've done your search, a filter bar appears on the left. This has some useful commands - particularly 'choose a source' (shown right).

- Looking at the likes, shares, and comments of posts can give a sense of how news is spreading and being responded to
  - But if you're analysing comments respect people's privacy, and don't quote directly.
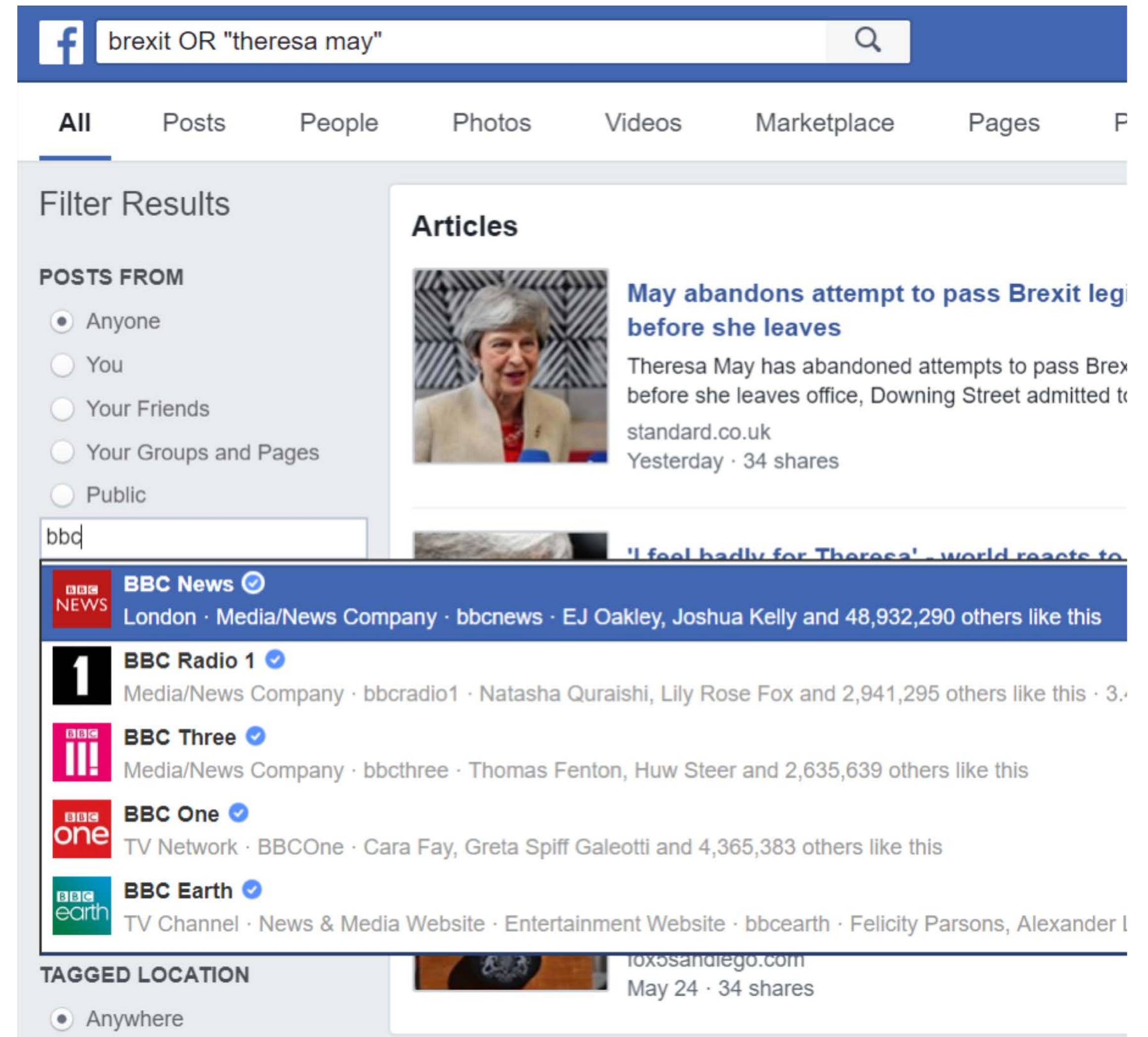
Some others to try...

These are paid-for tools with some free functions you may find useful. Have a play.

But bear in mind, without full access, always treat the data with suspicion. As you should always do anyway.

- Buzzsumo - for Facebook and Twitter

- Redditsearch.io - for reddit (free)

- Hashtracking & Ritetag - for Twitter / Instagram hashtags

- Answerthepublic - for searches

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Paid targeting options

- Demographics
- Location
- Keywords
- Languages
- Interests
- Behaviours

Also choose where your ads will be displayed - but be careful

For support use HMG's media buyer (or, if rapid response needed, the RRU)

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Track your results

Metrics provided by tools:

- Views, link clicks, impressions…
- Which matches your objectives best?
- Check their reliability (see social analysis 101 slide)

Other metrics:

- Does the false narrative stop spreading?
- Do phrases from your press line / content start spreading?
- Are other people 'helping' you rebut mis/disinformation?
- …

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What can you do <u>right</u> now?

(Don't leave these to the next crisis...)

- Sign up to MMU Social Headlines

- Distribute **FACT** toolkits

- Arrange time to practise using free tools

- Ensure your existing content is easily accessible, and you have good templates/contacts for quickly creating new content

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