intellihub.com

A website that has promoted false and unsubstantiated conspiracy theories about the Wuhan coronavirus outbreak and the Sept. 11 attacks.

Ownership and Financing

The website does not clearly disclose its ownership. Shepard Ambellas is identified on the site as its founder, director, and editor-in-chief, but not as its owner.

An archived version of the website from 2013 refers to a private company called Unbound Media Group LLC in its copyright language. Ambellas is listed as the manager of Unbound Media Group, which is registered in Hilo, Hawaii. According to the website of the Hawaii Department of Commerce & Consumer Affairs, Unbound Media Group has not filed an annual report with the state since December 2016.

Ambellas’ biography on the site describes him as an activist, journalist, filmmaker, film producer, and radio talk show host. He has contributed articles to the conspiracy news website InfoWars.com.

The site runs advertisements.

Content

According to the site’s About page, intellihub.com “is an independent news outlet covering a variety of topics such as politics, the economy, the surveillance state, liberal corporate media bias, and much more.”

Many stories cover conspiracy theories and politics, running under headlines such as “The impeachment force is a distraction from the deep state,” “Civil war RISK, state by state: is your state likely to be drawn into kinetic conflict as the rule of law disintegrates across America?,” and “You are the slave property of a company called the United States of America – must watch.”

The site divides its articles into five sections: Opinion, Politics, Overwatch, Sci-Tech, and Lifestyle.

Along with the site’s original content, it also republishes articles from other sites that NewsGuard has found to have published false content, including InfoWars.com, NaturalNews.com, ZeroHedge.com, and ActivistPost.com.

Credibility

Intellihub has repeatedly spread false and unsubstantiated conspiracy theories, including multiple false claims related to the Wuhan coronavirus outbreak.

A January 2020 article that Intellihub republished from InfoWars.com was headlined “Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, others, predicted 65 million deaths from Coronavirus in simulation ran 3 months ago.” The article claimed that, “The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation co-hosted a pandemic exercise in late 2019 that simulated a global coronavirus outbreak.”

The Gates Foundation did participate in a simulated emergency preparedness exercise in October 2019. However, according to FactCheck.org, the exercise involved a mock coronavirus with different features than the Wuhan coronavirus, and it did not include a prediction that 65 million people would die, as the headline on Intellihub claimed.

“For the scenario, we modeled a fictional coronavirus pandemic, but we explicitly stated that it was not a prediction,” the John Hopkins Center for Health Security, which co-hosted the event, said in a January 2020 statement. “Instead, the exercise served to highlight preparedness and response challenges that would likely arise in a very severe pandemic. We are not now predicting that the nCoV-2019 outbreak will kill 65 million people.”

The same article also made false claims that the Gates Foundation funds “the group who owns the patent to the deadly virus and are working on a vaccine to solve the crisis.”

The foundation has provided funding to the U.K.-based Pirbright Institute, a medical research institute focused on animal health which owns a patent to a weaker strain of coronavirus that affects chickens, not humans. Pirbright also said in a January 2020 article posted on its website that the institute has not yet developed a vaccine based on that patent.

Another January 2020 article, headlined “300,000 may already be infected with Coronavirus,” stated that, “According to some projections, there might be up to 300,000 cases in China; without providing any source for that claim.

As of Jan. 28, 2020, the date the article was published on Intellihub, the World Health Organization had reported there were 4,593 confirmed cases of Wuhan coronavirus worldwide.

Other coronavirus stories the site published in 2020 have relied on only a single social
Intellihub has also promoted false claims about the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks. A January 2020 article titled "Were shoulder-fired missiles launched from the Woolworth building on 9/11?" claimed that "footage captured on an MSNBC live feed during the attack shows what appears to be a portable shoulder-fire missile (possibly two) being launched from the rooftop terrace of the Woolworth building toward the World Trade Center complex as the north tower collapsed and was reduced to a pile of smoldering rubble."

An investigation by the U.S. National Institute of Standards and Technology, published in December 2005, concluded that impact of hijacked airplanes and subsequent fires caused the collapse of the World Trade Center towers.

A June 2019 article headlined "U.S. military assets used to attack Pentagon on 9/11: Video proof," began, "It looks like the United States government has some explaining to do after video evidence has surfaced showing U.S. assets including a large military plane and live warhead-tipped cruise missile being used to attack the Pentagon on September 11, 2001."

The site has also published older false claims, which were prominently featured on the homepage in 2020, that former U.S. President Barack Obama's U.S. birth certificate was forged. A December 2016 article, which appeared in the "Most Popular" section on the homepage in 2020, was titled "Obama's birth certificate proven a forgery, fraudulently fabricated document, by forensic investigators on two continents." The article summarized the findings of an investigation led by Maricopa County, Arizona, Sheriff Joe Arpaio, who publicly renewed the false charges in 2016, stating that Obama's birth certificate is "an elaborate forgery."

The validity of Obama's birth certificate, which he released in 2008 and in 2011, has been confirmed numerous times by the state of Hawaii, where he was born.

Intellihub editor-in-chief Shepard Ambellas defended the Obama article in an email to NewsGuard, saying that the story was based on a "mainstream" news report. "Also it was proven by forensic investigators," Ambellas wrote. "Also, how many hours have you analyzed Obama's birth certificate? None? Exactly, I have over 200."

Ambellas did not comment on other examples of the site's content cited by NewsGuard, saying in another email, "I could care less about your publication. Also, I am an opinion journalist."

Because Intellihub has repeatedly promoted false and unsubstantiated claims in its articles and headlines, NewsGuard has determined the site repeatedly publishes false content, fails to gather and present information responsibly, and does not avoid deceptive headlines.

Intellihub does not articulate its approach to correcting errors and NewsGuard did not find any corrections. Ambellas did not respond to NewsGuard's question asking how the site corrects errors.

The site's About Us page discloses the site's point of view, saying "Intellihub stands opiniated against the Establishment power structure and the documented liberal and globalist bias which runs rampant throughout most of the corporate news media."

Because the site's articles reflect this disclosed perspective, and because the website does not label any of its articles as news, NewsGuard has determined that intellihub.com does not handle the difference between news and opinion responsibly.

Transparency
Intellihub does not disclose its ownership. Ambellas is identified on the site's About page as its founder, director, and editor-in-chief. His email address is provided on the Contact Us page.

The site is inconsistent about providing information about its content creators. Biographical and contact information is provided only for Ambellas. The rest of Intellihub's original articles are credited only to "Staff Writer" or name authors, without providing their contact or biographical information.

Ambellas did not answer NewsGuard's questions about the site's lack of information on ownership and content creators.

Advertisements are distinguished from editorial content.

History
Internet registration records show that intellihub.com's domain was registered in 2001. Ambellas' biography on the site says that Intellihub was established in 2013.

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Sources