

qactus.fr

An anonymously run website that publishes hoaxes and false information linked to the right-wing, conspiratorial movement QAnon.



Proceed with caution: This website severely violates basic journalistic standards.

Ownership and Financing

Qactus.fr does not disclose information about its ownership or financing. The website is hosted on the Wordpress blogging platform, which enables publishers to remain anonymous.

The site does not carry advertising.

Content

Qactus.fr (which means Qnews in French) calls itself “The informant” (“L’informateur.”) The website primarily promotes political conspiracy theories advanced by the right-wing, pro-Trump movement QAnon. A section called Who is Q Anon? (Qui est Q Anon?)” provides articles describing the main conspiratorial claims of the movement to French readers. The site’s logo resembles the crest of a Roman helmet, but with the colors of the French flag.

The QAnon movement first emerged in October 2017, after an anonymous figure called “Q” presented himself on the English-language message board 4chan as a U.S. government intelligence insider with access to classified information. His followers believe numerous fringe conspiracy theories and predictions made by Q, including that U.S. President Donald Trump is fighting a war against a secretive cabal called the “Deep State,” which is trying to undermine his presidency.

In 2018, Reddit said it had banned QAnon communities from its platform for, among other things, violating its rules against “inciting violence.” In July 2020, Twitter announced that it took down more than 7,000 accounts that were spreading QAnon messages as part of what Twitter called a “strong enforcement action on behavior that has the potential to lead to offline harm.” The same month, The New York Times reported that Facebook was “preparing to take similar steps to limit the reach of QAnon content.”

Score: 7.5/100

- ✗ Does not repeatedly publish false content (22points)
- ✗ Gathers and presents information responsibly (18)
- ✗ Regularly corrects or clarifies errors (12.5)
- ✗ Handles the difference between news and opinion responsibly (12.5)
- ✗ Avoids deceptive headlines (10)
- ✗ Website discloses ownership and financing (7.5)
- Clearly labels advertising (7.5)
- ✗ Reveals who's in charge, including any possible conflicts of interest (5)
- ✗ The site provides names of content creators, along with either contact or biographical information (5)

Criteria are listed in order of importance.

[More information.](#)

Many Qactus.fr articles claim that politicians and celebrities are involved in various kinds of criminal activities, in conjunction with the Deep State. The website also frequently shares negative stories about well-known liberal and establishment figures, with entire sections devoted to French President Emmanuel Macron, billionaire American investor and philanthropist George Soros, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates.

Stories are often republished from other QAnon-friendly websites, or cite anonymous posts supposedly written by Q on the message board 8kun. The site also promotes videos produced by francophone QAnon adherents, including YouTubers Alexis Cossette-Trudel, Silvano Trotta, and Mohamed Diallo.

Typical headlines have included “Q INFOS - Donald Trump is the first President of the United States who truly works for Peace and deserves the Nobel Peace Prize!” (“Q INFOS – Donald Trump est le premier Président des États-Unis qui travaille réellement pour la Paix et qui mériterait le Prix Nobel de la Paix !”); “Q SCOOP - French general stands up to Macron” (“Q SCOOP – Un général français défie Macron”); and “Q VIDEOS - D-Trump promises a total fight against human trafficking” (“Q VIDEOS – D-Trump promet une lutte totale contre le trafic des êtres humains”).

Credibility

The site itself regularly publishes false or unsubstantiated claims supposedly made by Q

and his supporters, including about the COVID-19 pandemic. But it primarily republishes content from websites that NewsGuard has found to be unreliable, including pro-QAnon site HO1.us, far-right site Medias-presse.info, and Canadian site Mondialisation.ca.

For example, in July 2020, the site republished a Mondialisation.ca story titled “Q SCOOP - No one died from the coronavirus” (“Q SCOOP – ‘Personne n’est mort du coronavirus”), which originally appeared in English on Off-Guardian.org. The article cited Bulgarian pathologist Stoian Alexov, who suggested that no deaths in Europe has been conclusively attributed to

the COVID-19 virus. “A high-profile European pathologist is reporting that he and his colleagues across Europe have not found any evidence of any deaths from the novel coronavirus on that continent,” the article said.

The article also claimed that “European pathologists have not identified any antibodies specific to SARS-CoV-2,” the virus that causes COVID-19. (“...les pathologistes européens n’ont identifié aucun anticorps spécifique du CoV-2 du SRAS.”)

Both claims are false. Governments throughout the world have collectively attributed hundreds of thousands of deaths to COVID-19. The French Ministry of Health said in a report published on July 24, 2020, that in Europe, more than 2.7 million people were confirmed to be infected with the virus and 201,444 people died. Moreover, numerous studies have identified antibodies associated with the virus in previously infected patients, including papers published in the journals *Nature* and *Nature Communications*, according to fact-checking health site Health Feedback.

Also in July 2020, the site published an article headlined “Q SCOOP - Alert When you do a Covid test...” (“Q SCOOP – Alert Quand tu fais un dépistage Covid...”) that claimed that taking a COVID-19 nasal swab test can damage the blood-brain barrier and cause an inflammation of the brain. The article featured a video from a pro-QAnon YouTube account in which a Canadian YouTuber stated: “This inflammation allows bacteria and other toxins to enter your brain and infect brain tissue... This can lead to an inflammation, which can make your case worse and sometimes even lead to death.” (“Cette inflammation permet aux bactéries et aux autres toxines d’entrer dans votre cerveau et d’infecter les tissus cérébraux... Ceci peut entraîner une inflammation ce qui empire votre cas et mène parfois même à la mort.”)

It is impossible for a nasal swab to damage the blood-brain barrier, a layer of cells that protects the central nervous system, medical experts say. The nasal swab used for COVID-19 testing is inserted through the nostril of the patient and collects a sample of secretions

from the nasopharynx, an area between the nose and the throat, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the New England Journal of Medicine. Multiple health experts told 20 Minutes fact-checkers and The Associated Press that this area is separated from the blood brain barrier by layers of muscle, fascia, and bone.

Qactus.fr has also promoted the long-debunked conspiracy theory that former U.S. President Barack Obama is not a natural-born U.S. citizen.

In June 2020, the site republished a story from Senegalese news site SeneNews.com, which falsely asserted that Obama was born in the Kenyan city of Mombasa. The article cited Obama's estranged half-brother, Malik Obama, who tweeted an image of what he said was a copy of a birth certificate issued by a Kenyan hospital. "Malik Obama posted a document on Twitter that he presents as President Obama's birth certificate. The certificate, with the heading 'Coast Province General Hospital, Mombassa (sic), British Protectorate of Kenya,' presents Barack Hussein Obama as an African native," the article said. ("Malik Obama a publié sur Twitter un document qu'il présente comme le certificat de naissance du président Obama. Le certificat, avec l'en-tête 'Hôpital général de la province côtière, Mombassa (sic), protectorat britannique du Kenya', présente Barack Hussein Obama comme un natif d'Afrique.")

The article does not mention that the image tweeted by Malik Obama was debunked years before as a forgery, after a man named Lucas Smith tried to sell the fake birth certificate on eBay in 2009. A copy of Obama's Hawaii birth certificate is available at [ObamaWhiteHouse.archives.gov](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov).

In June 2020, the site republished an article from far-right Swiss site LesObservateurs.ch that claimed that in 2014, Soros told German newspaper Bild, "I'm going to bring down the United States by funding Black Hate groups. We'll put them into a mental trap and make them blame white people. The Black community is the easiest to manipulate."

There is no evidence that the quote cited in the article was published in Bild, or in any other publication. A spokesman for Bild told fact-checking organization Lead Stories that the newspaper did not interview Soros in 2014 and that the quote never appeared in that publication. The Open Society Foundations, Soros's organization, told PolitiFact in June 2020 that Soros never said anything like the quote attributed to him.

Because Qactus.fr has frequently promoted hoaxes and debunked conspiracy theories, NewsGuard has determined that the site repeatedly publishes false content, fails to gather and present information responsibly, and does not avoid deceptive headlines.

Qactus.fr does not publish a corrections policy and NewsGuard did not find corrections on the website.

Qactus.fr does not label opinionated content and does not describe an overall political perspective.

Nevertheless, it frequently includes right-wing and conspiracy-oriented opinion in its news coverage.

For example, in a May 2020 article referring to the “Deep State,” the site wrote: “These coward Satanists have severely underestimated the tenacity and brilliance of President Trump and the Alliance, with the enthusiastic support of the digital army Q of global Patriots. The Deep State should be scared.” (“Ces lâches satanistes ont sous-estimé sévèrement la ténacité et la brillance du président Trump et de l’Alliance, avec le soutien enthousiaste de l’armée numérique Q des Patriotes du monde. L’état profond devrait être effrayé.”) The article was labelled “Q NEWS” in the headline.

In June 2020, an article titled “Q NEWS - When the media and political system manipulates the post-lockdown phase” (“Q INFOS – Quand le système politico-médiatique manipule le déconfinement”) stated: “Targeting Donald Trump’s presidency, the George Floyd affair comes at the right time, in France, to distract from the catastrophic handling of the health crisis by the government in place. This diversionary tactic leaves nothing to chance. It divides people rather

than unites them against their executioners.” (“Visant la présidence de Donald Trump, l’affaire George Floyd tombe à point nommé, en France, pour faire oublier la gestion catastrophique de la crise sanitaire par le gouvernement en place. Cette entreprise de diversion ne doit rien au hasard. Elle divise le peuple au lieu qu’il s’unisse face à ses bourreaux.”)

Because Qactus.fr frequently publishes unlabeled opinion in news articles, advancing an agenda it does not disclose, NewsGuard has determined that the site does not handle the difference between news and opinion responsibly.

Qactus.fr did not respond to two emails from NewsGuard seeking comment on the articles cited above, its handling of opinion, and its approach to corrections.

Transparency

Qactus.fr does not disclose its ownership and does not reveal who is in charge of content. Readers can contact Qactus.fr using an email address on the homepage.

The site does not identify its editorial staff. Many articles do not include author names.

Qactus.fr did not respond to two emails requesting comment about the lack of information regarding its ownership, leadership, and content creators.

The website does not run advertising.

History

Qactus was first launched at the web address QactusInformateur.wordpress.com, according to the Internet Archive Wayback Machine. The oldest article on the site is dated March 2020.

The domain name Qactus.fr was created in May 2020.

Written by: [Sophia Tewa](#)

Edited by: [Eric Effron](#), [Chine Labbe](#), [Yves Clarisse](#)

Send feedback to NewsGuard: [Click Here](#)

Sources

Ownership and
Financing

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Content

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Transparency

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History

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