



OSINT FOUNDATION

The role of OSINT in national security

Elevating OSINT tradecraft within the intelligence community will strengthen the government's use of this powerful data source

Eliot Jardines | OSINT Foundation



From the very beginning, open-source intelligence has been a precursor and enabler for the other intelligence disciplines. A great deal of basic information is necessary to direct the targeting of potential assets for the other disciplines, and publicly available information (PAI) and OSINT have always been the starting point.

As the least intrusive means of collecting intelligence, OSINT allows the intelligence community to maximize its use of more clandestine capabilities, which are precious and come with significant risk. For example, signals intelligence and geospatial intelligence rely heavily on PAI and commercially available information (CAI).

Although they have always been substantial, PAI and CAI have exploded with the advent of new technologies and social media. Artificial intelligence is now augmenting the collection and analysis of huge volumes of data, and as a result, OSINT has never been more

important to the intelligence community. AI relieves OSINT practitioners of their data-sifting function and lets them quickly add significant value in terms of timely intelligence to policymakers and warfighters.

A highly specialized discipline

OSINT has changed dramatically over the years to become a highly specialized discipline. Barbara Alexander and I launched the OSINT Foundation in 2022 because we had long seen the need for a professional association for OSINT practitioners. The organization's mission is to promote OSINT tradecraft, elevate the discipline and develop the practitioner community to benefit the national security of the United States.

The foundation's professional development activities include webinars, an OSINT Tech Expo and an annual Teaching OSINT Summit, which brings together leaders in academia, industry and the government to talk about best

practices in OSINT training. To formalize tradecraft, we develop standards through a variety of committees comprised of OSINT experts who have decades of experience. If a standard exists within the intelligence community, we adopt it. Otherwise, we create one with member input and publish the final document on our website so it can be freely accessed and used, even for commercial purposes. We want to share the standards so when we use a particular term, we all know exactly what it means.

An important part of promoting those standards is recognizing the individuals and organizations that excel in meeting them. We host an annual awards reception where we recognize the OSINT practitioner of the year, as well as the OSINT trainer of the year and the OSINT catalyst of the year—somebody who supports the OSINT mission without being a collector, analyst or trainer. We also recognize an OSINT unit, product and innovation of the year.



AI relieves OSINT practitioners of their data-sifting function and lets them quickly add significant value in terms of timely intelligence to policymakers and warfighters.”

Funding that matches OSINT demand

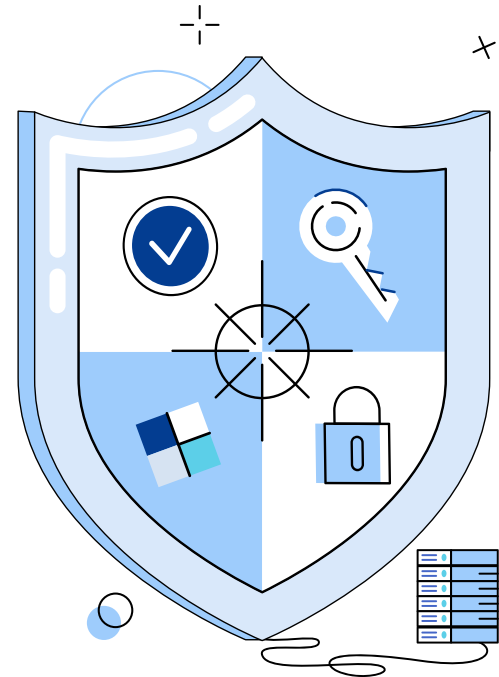
The OSINT Foundation is also developing a professional certification based on intelligence community standards that will be more transparent and dramatically less expensive than commercial certifications. And if folks already have government training in OSINT, we will accept that certification into our structure.

Finally, the Foundation is a tireless advocate for adequate OSINT budgets and positions at all intelligence community agencies. In the early 2000s, when I was assistant deputy director of national intelligence for open source, the OSINT budget was far larger than it is today. Jason Barrett, the intelligence community's OSINT

executive at the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, has publicly stated that at least 20% of the citations in the President's Daily Brief are derived from OSINT, yet OSINT accounts for only 0.5% of the overall intelligence budget.

We at the OSINT Foundation believe government funding must match the growing demand for OSINT in the intelligence community, and we will continue to advocate for the discipline and its practitioners, who provide vital contributions to national security. ■

Eliot Jardines is executive director of the OSINT Foundation.



ESTABLISHED 2022 | NON-PROFIT | 650+ MEMBERS

The Professional Association for National Security OSINT Practitioners - uniquely non-profit, non-partisan, and vendor-neutral

In an age of information overload, the next national security advantage won't always come from a classified vault. It is increasingly coming from what's already public, if we know how to find it, verify it, and act.

ENABLING NATIONAL SECURITY

Our Mission: Promote open-source intelligence tradecraft, elevate the discipline, and develop the practitioner community to advance the national security of the United States.

JOIN THE PROFESSIONALS SHAPING THE FUTURE OF OSINT

www.osintfoundation.com



OSINT Foundation Awards Reception