Case Study: Using OSINT to Assess Manufacturing Capacity

An investor is considering investing in a company that produces insulated coffee mugs called **Mug Shot**. The company claims to produce and sell **10,000 mugs per week**.

The investor hires an analyst to verify this claim. The analyst collects **open source intelligence (OSINT) and social media intelligence (SOCMINT)**:

- Photos from the company's **Facebook page** show a factory with **only one mug-making machine**.

- This machine is capable of producing **1,000 mugs per week**.

- Business records indicate the company is licensed to operate just **one machine**.

Analysis

Based on the OSINT gathered so far:

- The factory appears physically incapable of producing 10,000 mugs per week with the equipment shown.

- The business license only permits one machine, which further suggests the production claim may be **inflated or false**.

However, this information **alone may not be enough to conclude the company is lying**. Additional checks could strengthen the analysis:

Additional Information to Verify

1. **Other facilities:** Does Mug Shot have additional factories or outsourced production that are not shown in the Facebook photos?

2. **Production shifts:** Are multiple shifts run on the single machine to increase output?

3. **Inventory and sales records:** Check invoices, shipment logs, and supplier records for evidence of weekly production volumes.

4. **Third-party verification:** Speak with distributors, suppliers, or customers to cross-check claimed sales.

5. **Public filings or audits:** Annual reports, tax records, or regulatory filings may provide production numbers.

6. **Technological upgrades:** Could the machine shown be faster than assumed, or have attachments that increase production capacity?

Conclusion

- **OSINT can provide useful early insights** but should be **corroborated with other sources** before making financial decisions.

- Social media photos and licenses can highlight inconsistencies, but investors should always **verify claims through multiple channels**, including physical audits, financial records, and third-party intelligence.

- Relying solely on OSINT without additional verification could lead to **incorrect assumptions and investment risks**.

Key Lessons

1. OSINT is a **valuable tool** for initial investigations.

2. Always **cross-check OSINT findings** with other data sources.

3. Physical evidence, licenses, and social media posts can highlight discrepancies, but **additional context is needed**.

4. Analysts should consider **limitations of the data** and avoid drawing conclusions from a single source.