Social media monitoring

The OISNT technique that I am choosing to write about is known as social media monitoring. This technique is used to analyze data coming from different social media platforms and use this data to make inferences and answer questions. The reason why this technique is so popular is because billions of users access the internet daily and share information across many different social media networks. This is important because more users mean more data that can be used and analyzed for a wide range of purposes. Some of the purposes of social media monitoring include competitive analysis, crisis management, audience insight, etc. You can monitor social media by using a variety of tools that analyze data from websites. One of the ways that I performed social media monitoring was by using snap map, a feature in Snapchat that uses geolocation to organize public posts across the platform. I used this feature to find out some of the news during the start of the bombing in Gaza. I first started Snapchat and scrolled to snap map. I then found the location of Gaza and Israel and searched through the different posts around the areas that were affected by the violence. I was then able to come up with an idea of what was going on around there. I saw where certain areas had the most damage in the videos that were posted compared to other areas. This form of OISNT works well because you get to find information first had from the perspective of whoever is uploading videos in a particular area.

https://osintteam.blog/social-media-osint-a-comprehensive-guide-to-gathering-intelligence-from-social-media-platforms-b5dbb8d83f14

Web scraping stands out as a key OSINT technique, involving automated tools that sift through websites, extracting valuable data for analysis. This method starts with identifying the target websites and specifying the information needed. Once configured, the scraping tools navigate through the web pages, collecting relevant content such as text, images, or links. This amassed data undergoes processing and analysis to uncover insights, aiding tasks like market research, trend analysis, or competitor monitoring. While powerful, practitioners must navigate legal and ethical considerations, ensuring compliance with website terms of service and refraining from accessing restricted data.

https://medium.com/@investigator515/webscraping-osint-a-beginners-guide-bec9ef686dd

OSINT is used to collect information that is available in public systems. The information is extracted from different sources where people volunteering gave out their data through posting such social media. Therefore, the process is cheap since organizations and individuals can quickly get data available in the public domain. Primary beneficiaries of OSINT can be government intelligence units, private businesses, and individuals. It can collect important information about organizations, communities, or individuals. Organizations can use OSINT to gather data on competitors, market trends, and cyber threats to monitor and shape their public brands. Individuals can use it to advance their private goals, such as protecting themselves against cyber-attacks.

The OSINT techniques are divided into three broad collection categories: Passive, semi-passive, and active search. The passive approach is gathering publicly available data without involving the source or the target of the search. Active involves using different tools and techniques to collect data directly from the target. It may involve initiating activities that will prompt a response from the target. Semi-passive uses active approaches like direct communication and engagement to supplement passive collection. This is especially useful when the investigator wants to verify and fix missing information in data collected through a passive approach. Most of the OSINT methods use passive collection techniques. These techniques include social media monitoring, online search, website analysis, specialized tools such as social media toolkits, website domain search, and others. Social media monitoring is gathering information on social media posts, trends and comments on platforms like X, Facebook, LinkedIn, TikTok, among others. Online search uses browsers and search engines to collect information from different sources. The search may be filtered based on what the researcher is interested in. On the other hand, website analysis involves checking a site for information such as page content, organization data, metadata, contacts, organization and activities that the site engages. Specialized tools use algorithms to mine, aggregate and visualize the data to reveal meaningful data. For instance, NodeXL is used to analyze tweets on the X platform. Domain search looks for IP addresses, security certificates, ownership, contacts, and histories like registration dates and activities and affiliated entities. The investigating entity can use one or more techniques depending on the objectives and goals of the present OSINT and the purpose of conducting the investigation.