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Open Source Intelligence and Social Media

Abstract:
Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) has been widely acknowledged as a critical source of valuable and cost efficient intelligence that is derived from publicly available sources. With the rise of prominent social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter that record and expose a multitude of data sets including personally identifiable information, it becomes necessary to examine what social media has to offer OSINT. One major obstacle, however, is that OSINT analysts are often met with privacy restrictions that serve both to protect the privacy of individuals and to protect the economic livelihood of the social media platform. While many OSINT tools dealing with social media focus on extracting information from one particular social network, in this work we theorize that information can be collected more completely by collecting information in a piecewise manner over a variety of social media platforms and then mapping respective network identities to "true identities" using a set of heuristics, social graph exploration, and existing deanonymization techniques. Ultimately, this work proposes a system for widespread monitoring and targeted identification of malicious parties using honeynet techniques.