Under Investigation
Social Media Use by Law Enforcement

What Investigative Activities Are Done Via Social Media?

- Identify associates affiliated with persons of interest
- Identify location of criminal activity
- Gather photos or statements to corroborate evidence
- Identify criminal activity
- Identify persons of interest
- Solving tips on crimes
- Anticipating crimes that may be occurring
- Understanding criminal networks
- Use info from social media as probable cause for search warrants

When challenged, social media as evidence for search warrants holds up in court 87% of the time

Which Social Media Sites Are Used for Investigations At Least Monthly?

- Facebook
- YouTube
- Twitter

Stop Right There
Why isn't social media used in investigations?

- Don’t have enough knowledge to use: 33%
- Don’t have enough time to use: 17%
- Agency policy: 12%
- Don’t believe the information is useful: 4%

Who Is Using Social Media for Investigative Purposes?

- Federal: 81%
- State: 71%
- Local: 82%
- Rank & File: 79%
- Supervisory: 85%

Agencies serving smaller populations and with fewer sworn personnel use social media more often

- 85% usage in cities under 50K
- 76% usage in cities 51-100K
- 78% usage in cities over 100K

When is social media used for investigative purposes?

- True Crime Stories: Social media is a valuable tool because you are able to see the activities of a target in his comfort zone. Targets often show their most valuable information in reference of travel, hobbies, places visited, functions, appointments, relationships, family members, etc.
- Stop Right There: Why isn't social media used in investigations? - Federal: 81% State: 71% Local: 82% Rank & File: 79% Supervisory: 85%

Training Day

- How do law enforcement professionals learn to use social media?
- Self-trained by getting on and navigating social media sites
- Brought knowledge from personal use
- Working with a colleague who uses social media
- With information from the general media or online
- At a seminar or conference that was dedicated to social media

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