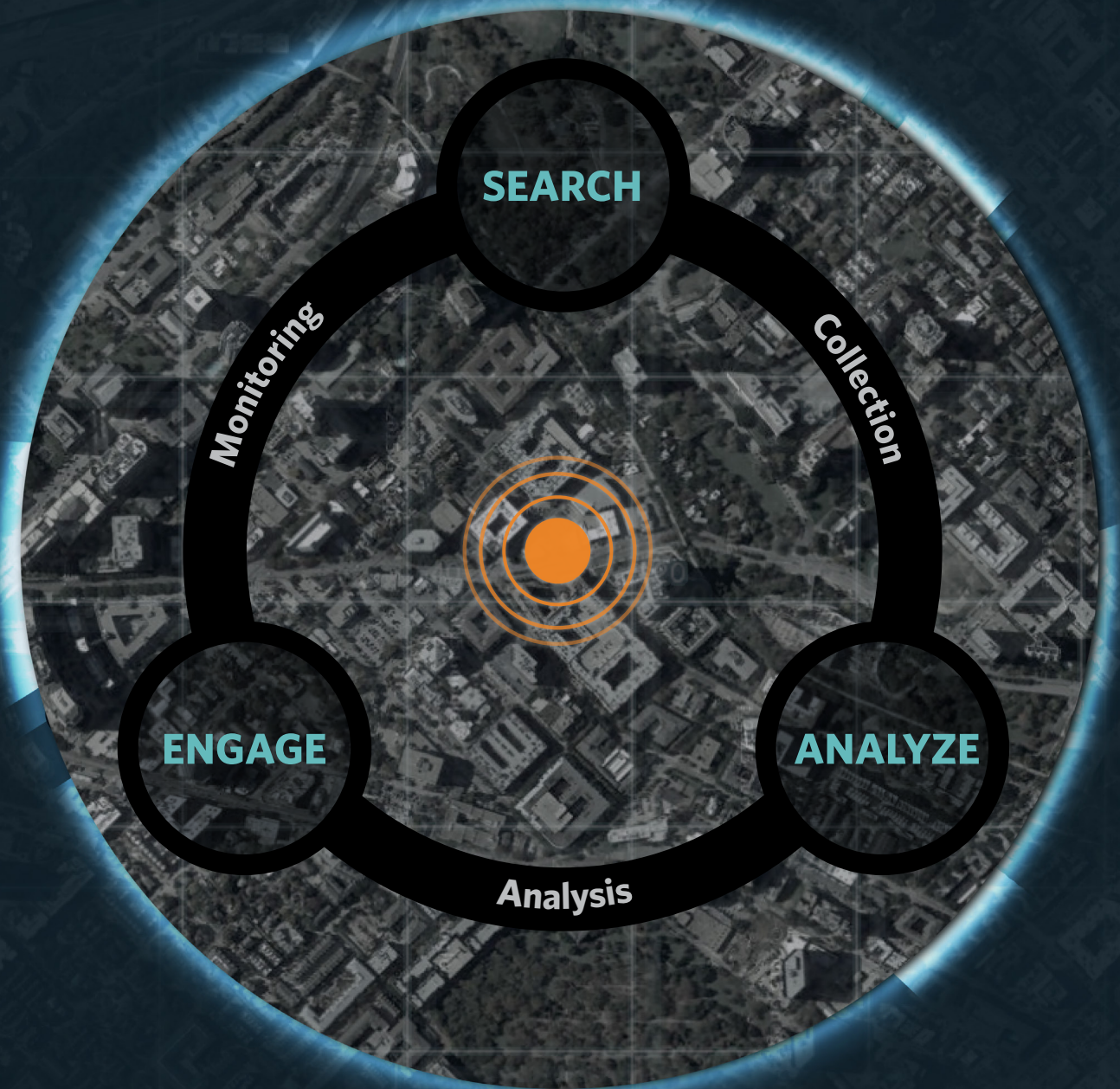




COBWEBS
TECHNOLOGIES



Tangles



CASE STUDY

Preventing Terrorism in Central America

How Tangles helped an intelligence organization from Central America to identify a terrorist threat and prevent a potential attack.

Introduction

The content being generated on the web keeps expanding on daily basis. Social networks, forums, blogs, news sites are the source of everything that is taking place on the virtual world.

The huge amounts of data being generated makes it almost impossible for the intelligence analyst to keep track of everything that is going on in the web. It is challenging to gather, process, prioritize and take action on the right piece of data and it's easy to get lost in the huge amounts of available data.

Background

A special unit of a central American country gathered intelligence that makes them think that there is a multi-national terrorist organization from the middle east that is trying to recruit immigrants and local people in order to carry on attacks on some governmental institutions as a protest to the country's support against global terrorism.

They contacted us to give them support with the use of Tangles and be able to monitor the virtual activity on the web in order to try to identify the local connections, gather as much intelligence as possible and anticipate to the threat of a terror attack.

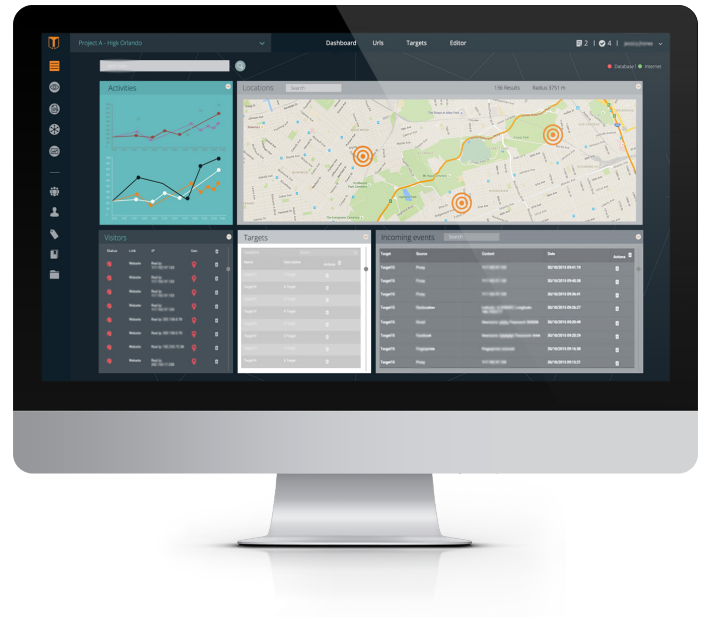
Process

1. Planning & Direction

- A plan for the investigation was created. We decided to focus on the main social networks being used in the country of interest: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Flickr as well as some local forums associated to suspicious organizations that the local special unit provided.
- Conditions under which the data will be monitored and considered suspicious or a potential threat were defined: area of interest and a specified list of keywords.
- Alerts for these conditions were created. Different alerts for when the analysis will be conducted were also defined in the Tangles system.

2. Collection & Monitoring

- We defined in the system that it will be constantly monitoring the mentioned web sources in order to have real time information regarding the conditions chosen on step 1.



3. Processing & Exploitation

- The system started sending alerts under the defined conditions. Then the analysts started to process them to understand the full picture of the investigation:
 - Most Active people on the area of interest talking about terrorism related content.
 - Main Influencers (religious leaders, respected figures, etc.)
 - Main groups that could be a potential nest of terror.
 - Radicalized people living in the country of interest.
 - People from the country of interest with connections in the other country: traveled there, had family there, were originally from there or had multiple friends that were originally from that country.
- Once all the raw data has been collected, our system converted and normalized it through various methods, including decryption, language translations, and data reduction into a usable form that analysts could interpret, export into other databases, and compare with data from other systems.

4. Analysis & Production

a. Based on the different statistics and information that we obtained from the analyzed content we were able to produce valuable intelligence. We kept investigating in all the mentioned web sources and selected some key actors that we wanted to know more about.

b. From all the information retrieved from the monitoring done during a week the system helped us to identify 10 main targets who had different connections to the defined conditions and 4 groups (three of them being closed hidden groups on Facebook) that we decided to know more.

c. The investigation continued by doing a target analysis of all these accounts trying to understand as much as we could about them:

- Places traveled.
- Friends/connections and where they are from.
- Groups they are members of and do a full profiling of these group members understanding the composition.
- Interests of the targets, topics they talk about, sentiment on the entities being mentioned by them.

d. On the 4 groups we identified things such as:

- Main actors.
- Top Publishers, commenters.
- Composition of their members and profiling on them.

5. Conclusion

a. Thanks to the analyzed information the system identified the potential recruiter (local connection) who happened to be a religious leader. We got to the conclusion after identifying multiple accounts talking about religious extremism, negative sentiments against the government and glorifying actions taking place in territories of conflict by a terrorist organization. After a deep analysis on these profiles we found multiple connections with this person by seeing links between them and some of his family members (not to him directly) but also to a common religious place where this religious leader is active.

b. We also gave information that helped to the detention of some of these potential terrorists and after the detention things such as weapons and various materials to build explosives were found.

c. Two immigrants originally from the country where this terrorist group is very active that were living in the central American country were also detained as we considered they were serving as facilitators and a link between the two terror groups from both countries.

d. Of course, before getting to all these conclusions the analysts had to validate data reliability, create a profiling for the different persons being analyzed and connect the dots between individual pieces of information to decide what should be done.



About Cobwebs Technologies

Cobwebs Technologies brings many years of vast experience in the global intelligence market.

The company team is comprised of experienced people from military and intelligence agencies as well as technological industries. Our extensive experience in WEB intelligence, gained through years of active participation in projects in this field, has enabled us to identify the lack of adequate intelligence solutions to cope with the current technological challenges.

We offer innovative cutting edge systems for both national security agencies and private sectors. Our solutions pinpoint web relations, criminal activities and terrorist threats with a click of a button. We work with clients from all over the world, assisting them on investigations and analysis of targeted data. We provide a range of products, starting from complete end-to-end solution up to professional services and detailed analyst reports.

Want to learn more about our web intelligence platform and capabilities?
Please visit: www.cobwebstech.com
or contact the local sales representative for a demo.

