

TII Quick Guide To: Geo-Location Search

Geo-location service providers come in many forms; mapping programs that display image, post, and text locations are just some of the variations. The following is a list of guidance when conducting searches on these types of systems.

GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR USING GEO-LOCATION SYSTEMS

Associated materials usually consist of text, images, hashtags, account links, and website hyperlinks
Associated materials are from accounts, profiles, or devices that are open to public viewing and have location services turned on
Geo-location websites are capable of searching specific locations manually, or setting alerts for when postings occur
Searches of locations need to be specific, often requiring a detailed latitude/longitude found in mapping programs
Successful searches often require searching specific time periods rather than open-ended searches
High density population areas require searches in one-month or even one-week time periods
Low density population areas can use searches with one-year or multi-month time periods
High density population areas require small search areas, usually less than 250 meters in diameter
Low density population areas can use searches with between 500 meters and up to 5 km diameter
Search results should be prompted by scrolling to the bottom of the page to ensure that all search results are displaying
Search results can be sorted using keywords, usernames, and source type on most geo-location service providers
Geo-location websites are capable of searching specific locations manually, or setting alerts for when postings occur
Searches of locations need to be specific, often requiring a detailed latitude/longitude found in mapping programs
The date and location of postings shown in results are not always the actual date of the image or the actual location of the image
Testing indicates that geo-location programs can find results as old as 2009, but can still miss results that can be found with other programs (i.e., a direct search of Twitter will find more results than a search for Twitter results using a geolocation program alone); as a result, search processes should use multiple systems for best results



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GUIDANCE FOR USING THE ECHOSEC GEO-LOCATION SYSTEM

Road and aerial mapping used by Echosec may be several years old; check Google Maps or Bing Maps for more current versions

Set the date range back to search from at least 01 Jan 2008 to the present date before entering an address or geo-location area

This program is able to search for Twitter and Instagram results even if their geolocation services are off

This program can search for results from up to ten social networking sources, each of which can be selectively turned on or off

Mapping used by Echosec offers both road and aerial views, plus the cursor lat-long position, for greater reporting accuracy



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