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News, Resources and Useful Information for the Online Investigative and OSINT Professional from Toddington International Inc.



**Toddington International Inc.**

Online Research and Intelligence Newsletter

**OCTOBER 2018 EDITION**

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## Welcome to the Newsletter

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Welcome to the October 2018 edition of TII's Online Intelligence Newsletter. We are excited to announce the launch of our brand new classroom course, [Investigating Insurance Fraud Online](#), and the relaunch of our updated [Social Media Intelligence & Investigation](#) training, scheduled for the first quarter of 2019 in Vancouver, BC, and Toronto, ON.

In the world of OSINT and investigations, social media is a rich source of intelligence, and we are always looking for new ways to leverage the invaluable insight we can gain from the countless social platforms that are prolifically used everyday. This month's featured article is a contribution from [Echosec](#), outlining what 'social media monitoring' is, who is using it, and how it is being used today.

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**["Using the Internet as an Investigative Research Tool" – Completely Revised and Updated E-Learning Program Now Available](#)**

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**Take your online investigation and intelligence skills to new levels** with the most comprehensive and up-to-date internet research and investigation e-learning program available anywhere. [Using the Internet as an Investigative Research Tool™](#) is designed to enable investigators, researchers, and intelligence personnel to *find better online information, in less time, at less cost, with less risk™*.

For a fraction of the cost of classroom-based training, our flexible and interactive virtual classroom environment allows candidates to progress at their own pace and competency level, with a qualified personal instructor on hand at all times to ensure success. Initially launched in 1998, this highly-acclaimed and continually-updated online course has been successfully completed by well over eight thousand investigators and knowledge workers around the world.

**Enrollment takes only a few moments.** Online credit card payments are accepted, and group discounts and licensing options are available for five or more registrants. Visit the [course page](#) to find out more and instantly register, or [contact us](#) directly with any questions.

*Bonus: Tuition fee includes a one-year subscription to TII's Premium Resource Knowledge Base, a premium resource of some 4,000 deep web resources and sites (an additional \$299 value)!*

*As a federally certified educational institution in Canada, TII can provide Canadian students with a T2202A Tuition Tax Receipt.*

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## E-Learning Graduates

**Congratulations to the following students** who are among those who have successfully completed the 40-hour [Using the Internet as an Investigative Research Tool™](#) e-learning program with TII this month:

- Katalin Howard

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- Michael Watts
- Anneli Klagsmark
- Madison Hart
- Hannah Bergin
- Jeffrey Tillman
- Garrick Wilhelm
- Dominick Tamás
- Leasa Julien
- Jennifer Carr
- Lukas Pasco



## Social Media Monitoring 101: What Is Social Media Monitoring?

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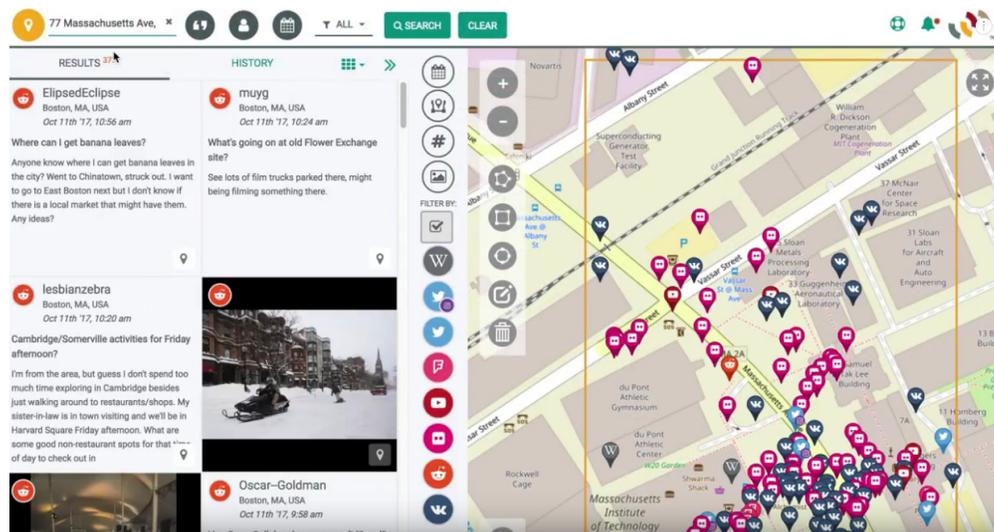


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## What Is Social Media Monitoring?

Social media monitoring is the practice of gathering and overseeing public activity on social media. Monitoring tools are designed to aggregate publicly available data from multiple networks, and display it in a format that is digestible by the end user.

Social media monitoring tools pull information from a range of social networks as well as some traditional media outlets. These tools do not have access to private data.



Click image above to view video.

## Managing, monitoring, and listening – what's the difference?

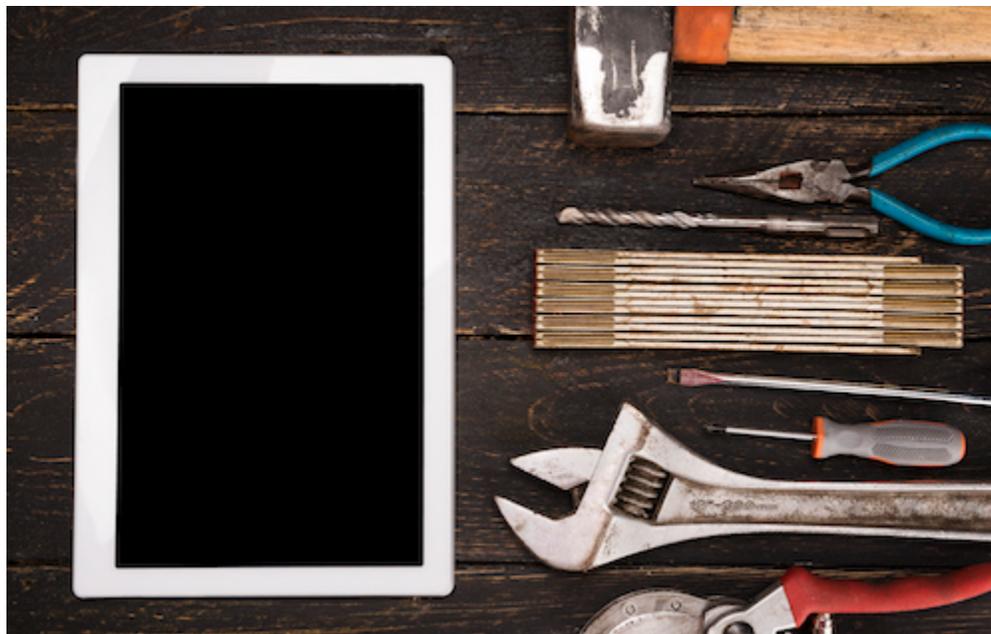
Social media managing tends to refer to the upkeep of your own social media accounts through outreach and response to various events. Many platforms perform both tasks at varying degrees of efficacy. Social monitoring refers to the process of finding and aggregating individual mentions on social media, whereas listening is collecting broader data and analyzing it to interpret trends and extract insights to drive decisions.

Companies use social media monitoring to respond to questions and comments from their audience and community. If you've ever complained to a company in a Tweet and received a response, it's likely they used a monitoring tool to find it. Some smaller organizations still use the native platforms to do this, but most companies have multiple social accounts which makes managing each channel individually a tedious task. What's more, different social platforms detect different types of content; some have the capability to unravel shortened urls and [detect content that Twitter or other native platforms do not](#).

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Social listening expands from specific interactions and takes a broader look at the behavior of users on social media to better understand trends, regional preferences, and consumer decisions. Listening tools compile data from a range of networks to form a birds eye view of events, regions, demographic, or other criteria. While very different, social monitoring and listening are both integral parts of a complete social media insight gathering process.

### What Kind Of Technology Do These Tools Use?



Some social media monitoring and listening tools are owned or partially owned by the social media providers, which is how they offer access to the data to aggregate and display. Other tools have agreements with the social networks and are granted permission to access data through a public API.

### Who's Using Social Monitoring? How Are They Using It?

Medium to large companies, retail businesses, international brands, corporate security companies, journalists, news outlets, hotel chains, and financial analysts – you name it, and [social media intelligence is most likely a core part](#) of their base research process.

Brands – [Today's brands use social media monitoring](#) in a number of ways, from finding and leveraging user generated content, discovering hyper-local trends and influencers, and managing online reputation.

### Security

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process. From handling [event security](#), executive protection, asset management, facilities management, and risk mitigation.

## Journalism

Social media is the fastest way to find out what's actually happening surrounding an event and who is involved. News leaders depend on it to determine the scope and severity of breaking news events to [build a comprehensive story](#).

## Finance

From financial analysts to insurance companies, social media analysis is essential for staying on top of market-altering events, understanding current market trends, and monitoring investments and assets.

## Hospitality

In hospitality, the customer is everything. Hotels and restaurants use social listening and monitoring to engage with customers and personalize their experience.

## Data Driven Insights From Social Media

Data is everywhere. Every time we fill a form online, ask for directions on Google Maps, rate a hotel, or let our phones count our steps for us, we contribute to the enormous libraries of data floating around the world. All this data provides companies with the information points needed to sell us more, feed us more, and nudge us into making certain decisions. Imagine how much data is out there now that everything from shopping to booking a ride to the airport is done online. It's a lot.

As data has multiplied, the ability to analyze this data and turn it into actionable insights has become increasingly valuable. We need to be able to understand this data in order to make deadlines, move the needle, and close the deal. Billions of data points, even when broken down into an analytics dashboard is not an ideal format for digesting information. Brand managers, security teams, financial analysts, and journalists need something they can interpret and act on quickly.

One of the ways companies are leveraging data to drive their business decisions is with social media monitoring platforms. Social media provides a tremendous wealth of information as people using these platforms publicly share their opinions, photos, and videos.

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with machine learning, we have created systems and algorithms to derive some degree of insight from the data found in social media. Many monitoring platforms can decipher things like sentiment, demographics, and regional behaviours, although these features should be taken with a grain of salt. Sentiment analysis, for example, has become widely accepted in its current state when many companies have actually deemed it too flawed to implement. Many data analysis features have become industry standard because although they're often flawed, they help construct a general picture of a situation.

Deriving high quality insights from data analysis is a task that hasn't yet been mastered by automated tools and machine learning. Partly because algorithms lack human understanding and can't detect subtleties like sarcasm (which social media is chock full of), but also because what may be a valuable insight for a sports team will likely be useless to a financial institution. Each set of insights needs to be catered very specifically to each use case, brand, team, and project. For true insight to be delivered, there has to be a human element.

There are limits to what social media monitoring tools can do. The people using these tools; brand managers, security teams, financial analysts and journalists still need to add their own human insights to truly understand a situation. It is the job of social media monitoring platforms to help them find what they're looking for faster, to make this job as easy as possible.

## **Which Networks Can Be Monitored?**

Depending on where you are in the world, some social networks might seem more relevant than others. In the US, most people think of Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram as the core platforms. However, there are many more networks to be counted as user activity varies across the globe. For businesses trying to spread awareness and stay on top of current events, it is essential to cast as wide a net as possible.

### **Twitter**

Twitter users want to be heard, which means most of the content posted is public. This makes Twitter a very good source of open data, and a very important network for most companies to pay attention to.

### **Facebook/Instagram**

Facebook/Instagram is inarguably a rich source of social data. They also have a rigorous terms of service and selection process for what companies access that

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Ekosec are happy to advocate for you so you can access public data from these sites in your monitoring suite.

## **Reddit**

Reddit is a social news aggregation, web content rating, and discussion website.

In February 2018, Reddit had 542 million monthly visitors – 234 million of those were unique users, ranking as the #4 most visited website in U.S. and #6 in the world, according to Alexa.

Reddit content is divided into categories (subreddits). Redditors upvote and downvote content so the most popular content is always visible on the front page.

Known for its open nature and diverse user community, its demographic allows for wide-ranging subject areas that receive much attention, as well as the ability for smaller subreddits to serve more niche purposes.

## **Youtube & Vimeo**

Youtube and Vimeo are a great source of User Generated Content. With permissions from the content owner, many companies now leverage this type of content (UGC) as a sense of authenticity in their marketing efforts. In addition to being a cheaper alternative to creating content from scratch, consumers are much more willing to accept the ideas of a fan or a customer, rather than the company itself. Companies can also find vloggers to help them promote their products and services.

## **Periscope & Snapmaps**

Gives viewers the ability to see exactly what is happening anywhere through live video streams. During the Turkish coup, Periscope users were streaming up to the minute video that showed the world exactly what was happening as it happened.

## **VK**

Vkontakte is the largest social media networking site in Russia, ranking higher than Instagram and Twitter in it's user count. While being relatively unknown in North America, VK has more than 60 million Russian users and over 460 million users worldwide.

## **Flickr**

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The photo sharing site of choice for many professional photographers, Flickr is a great source of user generated content, especially useful for brands and marketers. Combining this data with geographic location data creates an especially interesting data set for the tourism industry.

### **Foursquare & Wikipedia**

Point of interest data from sources like Wikipedia and Foursquare can be incredibly useful for learning characteristics of unfamiliar parts of the world. This type of data helps deliver hyper-local information about areas to discover things like:

- Where are the popular nightlife locations nearby?
- What is the castle looking thing?
- What was that building used for before it collapsed in the earthquake?

Accessing this information as an individual can certainly be informative and helpful in decision-making about where to go for breakfast, but the information is exponentially more powerful when viewed with a location-based software.

### **Traditional News**

Bringing traditional news sources to a social monitoring and listening suite is extremely helpful for use cases like public relations and marketing. It allows users to see press releases and other news items pertaining to their clients.

## **Social Media Monitoring Across Industries**

### **Hospitality**

The Hospitality industry is all about creating a tailored experience for each guest. Personalization has always been important for restaurants and hotels, and the rise of social media has made it even more interesting. With social monitoring and listening tools, hotels and restaurants can respond quickly to guests in an effort to provide better experiences more likely to shared across the internet. In recent years It has become all the more commonplace for hotels to include personal touches like champagne or chocolates for their guests, based on their tastes.

### **Public Relations**

The fastest moving PR pitfalls happen on social media. As well as the Twitter-

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brand fans. Social media users can spin a minor spelling error into a viral disaster in seconds. Many companies leverage social monitoring platforms to find these mistakes early in order to stay on top of their reputation.

## **Retail**

Social monitoring & listening are essential for the retail industry. Using geofencing to understand what is being posted from within the retail properties themselves adds another layer of value to the more common practice of listening for brand mentions. Customers may be complaining about bad service without actually mentioning the store name or associated hashtags. With location-first social listening platforms, retail and other brick and mortars can filter social posts by geographic area, as well as by words in the posts. Retailers are also able to use these tools to deliver hyper-local advertising to the right audience. Geofencing specific areas, ie. cities or neighbourhoods, and targeting their ads to the active Twitter users in that area is a strategy that is quickly growing in popularity. This ability is especially valuable to businesses that are opening shops in new locations, to understand the trends in the area and get the desired message out to a local market that they may not be familiar with.

## **Media and Journalism**

When news breaks, location-based social media tools are indispensable. Media outlets rely heavily on social media to assess the impact, scope, and people involved in situations as they happen. Seeing situations through multiple perspectives, as is possible through pulling together hundreds of social posts surrounding an event, helps journalists piece together a complete story. Understanding the story through social media also helps emergency services teams activate quickly and implement the needed response. Geofencing physical locations is like having thousands of extra eyes on the ground. If news is breaking in an area, the people on the ground will often post a photo before they flee the scene.

## **Financial Services**

Social media, like the financial market, never sleeps. Twitter and Reddit are often the first place people go to discover market changes, and get real-time information about what's happening in the market. Financial analysts and insurance providers use social listening to understand and assess risk situations, such as natural disasters or political unrest in order to make better decisions affecting stakeholders and policyholders. Social monitoring and listening tools give businesses the ability to engage with their customers wherever they are in

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media to make their messages more relevant, more meaningful, and more precise than ever. Thanks to our culture of sharing, companies across all industries can make better decisions.

## Security

The applications for social monitoring and listening in the security industry are countless. Open source intelligence (OSINT) is an integral component to security and investigations. Event security, risk management, facilities and Executive Protection teams are all leveraging geofencing technology to ensure they are as informed as possible.

## Why Location Matters

Social media, when combined with location, connects people to places, marketers to audiences and financiers to funds. Technology that maps social media opens up a world of possibilities.

In a Smart City, loaded with social data, sensors and the Internet of Things, the goal is connectivity. Being digitally well connected improves our efficiency and experiences. It's rare that we go to a new city and not have free, high-speed wifi in the downtown core. It's rare to go to a new restaurant, that we've checked out on Yelp, and not experience great food and service.

For retail it is not "Location, Location, Location" anymore. Instead, it is more like: Where am I relative to that location? Who am I relative to that location? Can that Uber get me to that 5 star, in 15 minutes, so I can make my meeting at 12:25 the afternoon?

In exchange for experience, speed, preferential treatment and better free services, there is a trade off. This trade off, which is being questioned by users more and more often, usually comes in the form of giving up some of your personal information. This has led to many of us use fake accounts or names. This must be frustrating for people like the new world marketers out there. They have not realized that:

- Your location is your identity, not your app that says you were born in 1903.
- Location is the defining feature of your persona in a Smart World.

Information like location history is fundamental in shaping the way we see the world, it is the baseline that defines change and sets our future expectations for

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experiences turn into stories that are most often shaped in the environment of time. Places craft personas.

So, if we are going to improve the relationship between humans and their space, we must view location as a key differentiator and build technologies with location at their centre before we can jump off in the evolution of retail, marketing, journalism or finance platforms.

*[Echosec](#) is a location-based social media aggregation platform. Combining public posts with geographic data, Echosec collects real-time, user-driven information which supports industries ranging from retail, hospitality, journalism and security. For more information, contact the Echosec team [here](#) or request a [demo](#).*

## Upcoming Select Worldwide Training Dates

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### **Advanced Internet Intelligence & Online Investigations**

**2018**

*Only two weeks away:*

[November 5-7, 2018, Toronto, ON](#)

[December 11-13, 2018, Dubai](#)

**2019**

[March 18-19, 2019, Toronto, ON](#)

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[March 25–26, 2019, Vancouver, BC](#)

*Early-bird pricing available for a limited time*

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## **Social Media Intelligence & Investigation**

[January 17–18, 2019, Toronto, ON](#)

*Early-bird pricing available for a limited time*

[January 24–25, 2019, Vancouver, BC](#)

*Early-bird pricing available for a limited time*

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## **Investigating Insurance Fraud Online**

[February 4–5, 2019, Toronto, ON](#)

*Early-bird pricing available for a limited time*

[February 25–26, 2019, Vancouver, BC](#)

*Early-bird pricing available for a limited time*

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***TII is pleased to offer a number of specialized and customizable in-house training programs for both the public and private sector in a variety of formats. We also have available a number of expert speakers available. To learn more about what we can do to empower your workforce, [contact us](#).***

## **Resources for the OSINT Professional**

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<https://socialcatfish.com/reverse-image-search> – A tool that may help verify a person's online identity using images, email addresses, phone numbers and online profiles

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comprehensive, newly released guide for collecting online evidence for users of Hunchly and those interested in OSINT

<https://toolbox.google.com/datasetsearch> – A Google tool (in beta) that enables users to find datasets stored across thousands of repositories across the Web

<https://what3words.com> – Interesting service for finding locations that "divides the world into a grid of 3m x 3m squares and assigns each one a unique 3 word address"

<https://circleboom.com> – Twitter management tool, finds unfollowers, fake accounts, spammers, etc. Free and paid versions available

<https://www.startpage.com> – Google powered search without the tracking

<https://pipl.com> – World's largest people search engine, search over 3 billion people

<https://www.sec.gov/edgar/searchedgar/legacy/companysearch.html> – Securities and Exchange Commission company search tool

<https://foursquare.com> – Location discovery application

<https://www.blockchain.com/explorer> – Bitcoin block explorer

<https://whoisology.com> – Domain name lookups

<https://www.earthcam.com> – Global network of live streaming webcams from around the world

## More Online Training

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### **Open Source Intelligence for Financial Investigators (Newly Updated)** **40-Hour E-Learning Program**

Essential for all financial institutions and corporations required to comply with the *European Union Fourth Anti-Money Laundering (AML) Directive* and similar legislation, or otherwise engaging in enhanced due diligence activities, this

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latest tools and techniques required to effectively gather online OSINT, with the aim of enhancing compliance activities and minimizing potentially detrimental risks to an organization — both quickly and accurately. **Sign up or learn more [here](#).**

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## **Introduction to Intelligence Analysis 40-Hour E-Learning Program**

This program provides a rich and interesting opportunity to explore the key concepts and intellectual foundations which inform intelligence analysis activity. Students will develop awareness of, and experience in, using common tools and methodologies to conduct analysis assignments, as well as learn how to fashion one's insights and ideas in a way that communicates effectively to clients and other intelligence consumers. **Sign up or learn more [here](#).**

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## **Criminal Intelligence Analysis 40-Hour E-Learning Program**

This program is designed to equip aspiring and inexperienced analysts, as well as other interested law enforcement and investigative professionals, with the knowledge and skills required to undertake criminal intelligence analysis work, and to understand criminal intelligence analysis products when encountered. **Sign up or learn more [here](#).**

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## **Strategic Intelligence Analysis 40-Hour E-Learning Program**

This program is intended for professionals working in public sector enforcement, intelligence, national security, and regulatory compliance roles, or those aspiring to do so. Students will be equipped with the skills and knowledge required to effectively conceive, plan, and implement strategic analysis projects, and deliver impactful strategic advice to clients and other end users. **Sign up or learn more [here](#).**

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## **"How-Tos" and Articles of Interest for the OSINT Professional**

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[The importance of critical thinking: "Fixed mindsets might be why we don't understand statistics"](#)

[Data from wearables provides valuable clues to investigators: "How Jamal Khashoggi's Apple Watch Could Solve His Disappearance"](#)

["Pro-privacy search engine DuckDuckGo hits 30M daily searches, up 50% in a year"](#)

["Criminals used Bitcoin to launder \\$2.5B in dirty money, data shows"](#)

[More on wearables: "Police Use Fitbit Data to Charge 90-Year-Old Man in Stepdaughter's Killing"](#)

["Google+ users, upset over data leak, sue Google"](#)

["How 50 Million Facebook Users Were Hacked"](#)

[An analysis of popular VPNs and whether they live up to their privacy claims](#)

["Richmond Mounties seize database servers allegedly being sold on Craigslist and containing private data"](#)

["Here's how to set up and use a VPN"](#)

[The new version of Chrome shares your browsing history with Google when you check your Google email](#)

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