

Using Babel Street Technology to Improve Counterintelligence Investigations

In late 2024, the U.S. federal prosecutors charged a deputy chief of staff to the New York State governor with spying for China.¹ The previous year, an IT administrator for the Department of State with Top Secret clearance was charged with “gathering or delivering national defense information to aid a foreign government.”²

Incidents like this demonstrate that counterintelligence — activities designed to spot or prevent spying, sabotage, or terrorism by an adversarial entity, whether internal or external — is vital to national security.

The counterintelligence landscape

The digital age has opened new pathways for adversaries to gather sensitive or classified information about governments. No one needs to cross a border to hack the computer systems storing government and military data and communications. Satellite images, heat maps, real-time videos and other media further aid adversarial operatives to obtain information from afar.

But new technologies also help the intelligence community better spot these bad actors. They enable tracking of perpetrators’ digital footprints. They can also empower analysts to monitor social media for posts indicating potential harmful acts by malicious insiders.

How Babel Street can help

Babel Street solutions help counterintelligence professionals spot individuals or organizations attempting to unlawfully gather or reveal information about national governments.

Babel Street Insights is an AI-powered data analytics platform that provides multilingual, persistent search of thousands of sources of publicly available and commercially available information (PAI/CAI) worldwide. These sources include hard-to-reach dark web marketplaces and forums.

Babel Street Match helps counterintelligence professionals link and match identities across disparate sources. It also identifies corporate name variations and uncovers potential corporate aliases.

Specific counterintelligence uses of Babel Street technology include:

- **Continuous vetting at scale.** Babel Street Insights helps government agencies fulfill the continuous vetting requirements of Trusted Workforce 2.0. Persistent search capabilities continuously append new information to a search term, regardless of whether an analyst is actively researching a subject. It can help surface an employee’s criminal activities or civil issues — such as bankruptcies — that may make an employee vulnerable to recruitment by an adversarial government. Insights’ social media monitoring capabilities further spotlight questionable behavior. Posts indicating that a government employee’s spending far exceeds his salary, or that he has taken unauthorized foreign trips, will interest counterintelligence analysts.
- **Vendor vetting.** Analysts can use Babel Street technology to detect whether companies seeking to do business with the government pose a risk from foreign ownership, control, or influence.
- **Identifying those seeking access to the United States.** Babel Street Match helps analysts determine whether someone entering the country is a threat actor or legitimate visitor.

Using Babel Street for counterintelligence investigations

Analysts performing counterintelligence risk assessments on individuals can do the following:

Analyze social media posts for potential risks

Babel Street Insights People Search uses identifiers to obtain public profile information about an individual, including email addresses, physical addresses, occupation, and much more. A new feature within People Search enables users to retrieve an individual's social media posts and documents and have them immediately analyzed for potential risks. The social media risk prioritization feature scores those risks according to the 13 categories outlined in the [U.S. Security Executive Agent Directive 4](#) (SEAD 4) guidelines.

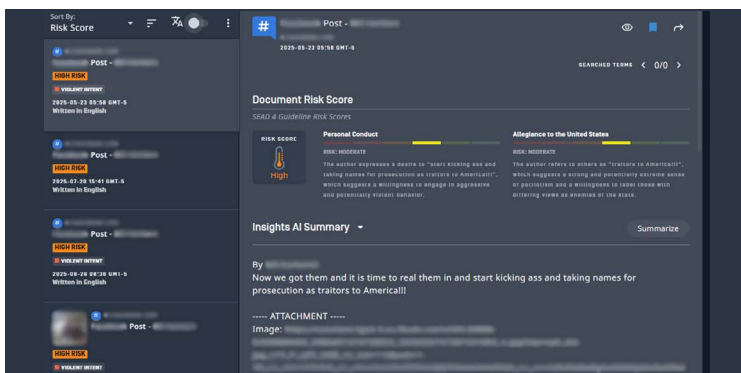


Figure 1: A document risk score for a user whose social media posts triggered numerous risk flags

Apply process to background checking and continuous evaluation

Use social media risk prioritization as part of a background check for new employees or for continuous vetting. Once risks are identified within Insights, users can focus on the highest risks. The platform retrieves all available social media posts associated with the individual and provide a short justification for each risk flag. This streamlines the vetting process and automates previously manual processes.

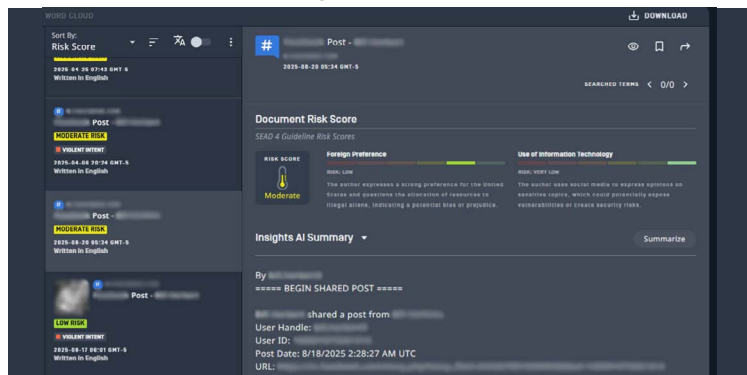


Figure 2: Users can filter search results to show those with the highest risk scores

Deepen the investigation

After identifying employees or candidates that pose risks to an organization, users can leverage other Babel Street capabilities to further investigate a person of interest. Whether it is conducting a Document Search for additional context or constructing a social media network graph, Babel Street solutions can help further enrich an investigation.

Endnotes

1. Pazmino, Gloria, "An alleged Chinese agent went undetected in New York state government for years. Why it may have taken so long for authorities to act," CNN, September 2024, <https://edition.cnn.com/2024/09/08/us/linda-sun-new-york-china-investigation/index.html>
2. United States Attorney's Office, Maryland Man Working for the Government Charged with Espionage, September 2023, <https://www.justice.gov/usao-dc/pr/maryland-man-working-government-charged-espionage-0>

Babel Street is the trusted technology partner for the world's most advanced identity intelligence and risk operations. The Babel Street Insights platform delivers advanced AI and data analytics solutions to close the Risk–Confidence Gap.

Babel Street provides unmatched, analysis-ready data regardless of language, proactive risk identification, 360-degree insights, high-speed automation, and seamless integration into existing systems. We empower government and commercial organizations to transform high-stakes identity and risk operations into a strategic advantage.

Learn more at babelstreet.com.