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Intelligence Analysis in the Age of Automation

There is currently a trend to increase automation and Artificial Intelligence (AI) for intelligence analysis. Automation and AI are extremely useful for routine or mundane tasks; however, AI cannot prepare a nuanced in-depth threat assessment or build personal relationships. These relationships can be a key source of critical intelligence. The adversary continues to "cultivate" sources (personal relationships), based on placement, access, and exploitable vulnerabilities.

Intelligence Analysis still needs a "human" factor. There is a concern of removing humans from the targeting process (e.g., drone warfare) and moving toward automated intelligence analysis because AI ultimately means a computer would make final targeting decisions. In other words, analysts would put copious amount of data into a computer and rely on the computer's analysis. This should give any decision maker pause.

In order to be truly predictive in your analysis, humans need to make the ultimate decisions. These decisions are driven by various motivational factors depending on the adversary or cyber threat actor: criminal, activist, or nation station. A team of intelligence analysts not only understands the adversaries' operational capabilities and tools but leverages its cultural knowledge of the opponent. Without having a sufficient cultural awareness and understanding its historical context, you cannot anticipate attacks or deploy countermeasures to maximum effect.

Sources

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