Tackling disinformation with OSS

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About us

- Self-funded NGO created in 2019
- Federate the Francophone OSINT scene
- Assist newsroom and activists
- to train journalists!
- Promote young journalists
- Set up philanthropic projects (Syria, West Africa...)

260 members (and still counting...)
Some of our work

- **Green Blood** - ForbiddenStories
- **Game of drones** - BBC
- **Wagner** - French TV
- **War crimes in Ukraine** - Swiss TV
- Inforos [1 & 2] - Self-published
About me

- Co-founder
- Former Judicial Investigator
- OSS enthusiast and evangelist
- Techy but not coder
- Swiss army knife, lazy and curious
You said **Disinformation?**

- **Disinformation** is false information deliberately spread to deceive people.
- **Ben Nimmo’s 4 Ds**: Dismiss, Distract, Distort, and Dismay.
- An art for several threat actors - Example: [DoppelGanger](#).
- War, Health, politic, economy... Mostly covers everything!
- Internet and the web as the greatest echo chamber!
Qactus, A french Qanon?

- QAnon, an american political conspiracy theory and political movement. Far-Right. 2017
- Antisemitic, Conspiracist, Antivaxx...
- Presence on several platforms
- Translated content (automatic)
- 5/7 articles a day...
We first need a **Methodology**!

- The **ABCDE Framework**, a good start!
  - Actor: Who?
  - Behavior: How
  - Content: What
  - Degree: the scale
  - Effect: the effects (easy, one, uh?)
We first need a **Methodology**!

- What’s Qactus?
- What’s its audience?
- What’s its environment/ecosystem?
- What’s its influence?
- What’s its motivation?

And last but not least:

- Who is behind Qactus?
Environment? A sweet combo!

- **Hyphe**: to build web corpus by crawling data from the web and generate networks!

It’s a long process (few hours...), with some limitations (Clouflare...) but IT WORKS pretty well*

*Actually not on my computer though...
Environment? A sweet combo!

- **Gephi** (of course!) : to explore and analyze graphs!

Use the modularity algorithm to determine subcommunities...
Environment? A sweet combo!

- **Retina**: to dynamically display graphs on a webpage!
- Hyphe + Gephi + Retina
- A mix of different sources (good for SEO...)
Influence? A good scraper!

- **Snscrape**: to scrape twitter with plenty of data!
- Caveat: dunno if it will still work next week...
- `snscrape --jsonl twitter-search ‘qactus.fr’ > qactus.json`
Influence? DataCleansing!

- **OpenRefine**: DataCleansing with no code!
- Powerful tool, especially for clustering.
Influence? Visualisation!

- R & Tidyverse: An easy language for statistics!
- Easy syntax, quick overview, very convenient for prototyping and reproducibility.
- (But you can use Python...)

- snscrape+refine+Tidyverse
Motivation? A web browser!

- Firefox: @openfacto we strongly encourage the use of a privacy-oriented browser...
- Finding the motivation was easy: adsbygoogle!

- Firefox
Identity? another combo!

- **Holehe**+**GHunt**+**Sherlock** = **Epieos**
- Searching for nicknames and mail combinations on websites.
- (We also used some leaks...)

- **Firefox**
Let's wrap this up!

- The myth of a single tool in OSINT...
- A retired IT technician in a lost town in France
- Complotist in a bubble of influence
- Earns approx 4000$ /m writing crap.
- Outing him is important (we know who you are)
Why OpenSource Software?

- Powerful
- Adaptable
- Privacy
- Reproducibility
- Most of the time free. Journos & NGO are not wealthy...
- So THANK YOU Y’ALL! You Rock!
A last one? **Collaboration!**

- **OpenCTI** & **Disarm**: Disinformation & CTI approach
- Data capitalization and sharing
- Collaboration is the key.
Thank you

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