Using Social Media for Global Security

The rapid development of appealing new social applications has created a large audience for these services over the past few years. For instance, Facebook now has more than 1.28 billion monthly active users as of 31 March 2014.1 Millions also use other platforms such as Twitter, YouTube and Flickr. People also connect by instant messaging and text messaging and through blogs and instant messengers, such as WhatsApp, Line and Skype.

There are many books discussing aspects of social media. However, there are few books that show government decision makers, security analysts and activists how to use social media to improve security locally, nationally and globally in a cost-effective manner.

The two authors of this book are technology, behavior and security professionals. Ravi Gupta is an entrepreneur who develops and commercializes technologies that use biological principles. He has created social media platforms, data processing algorithms and crowdsourcing techniques to understand and solve security problems. Hugh Brooks, a security consultant for public and private clients, has produced innovative solutions for crowd-driven applications, behavior modeling, mobile health and education, and cybersecurity.

This book is targeted to security professionals and provides a variety of content from other books on social media and global security. Complementing existing research books, Using Social Media for Global Security offers new insights on how social media can improve and influence global security matters by analyzing open source intelligence, examining how to utilize crowdsourcing technologies, and exploring the ethical concerns associated with social media and activism.

The book is concise and organized into four parts, which include providing demographic information about social media users, crowdsourcing implementation, analyzing social media data and building crowdsourcing platforms.

It also shows how social media data can be analyzed to map the social networks of terrorists and sex traffickers and forecast attacks and famines. This book also explains how social media can be used to help catch murderers, coordinate disaster relief and collect intelligence about drug smuggling.

Although the detailed nature of this book makes it slightly complex, readers will be able to take away a strong sense of the relationship between social media and security. The strengths of this book are its ability to bridge two seemingly disparate fields (social media and international security); explain social media platforms, their implications and opportunities; and discuss thought-provoking controversial stories and issues with numerous real-world examples.

As social media are changing at a rapid rate, the estimated shelf-life of this book is three to five years. But as one of the first books of its kind, Using Social Media for Global Security is a worthwhile read. It clearly shows how social media, an agent of change, can be a tool for security.

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EDITOR’S NOTE

Using Social Media for Global Security is available from the ISACA Bookstore. For information, see the ISACA Bookstore Supplement in this Journal, visit www.isaca.org/bookstore, email bookstore@isaca.org or telephone +1.847.660.5650.