

Corpus Christi Naval Air Station Shooter Adam Alsahli:

Insights from his Social Media Accounts

Adam Alsahli, the Syrian-born man killed in his attempt to attack the Corpus Christi Naval Air Station on 21 May 2020 in what authorities have deemed a terrorist attack, had a prolific presence on social media, including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Telegram.

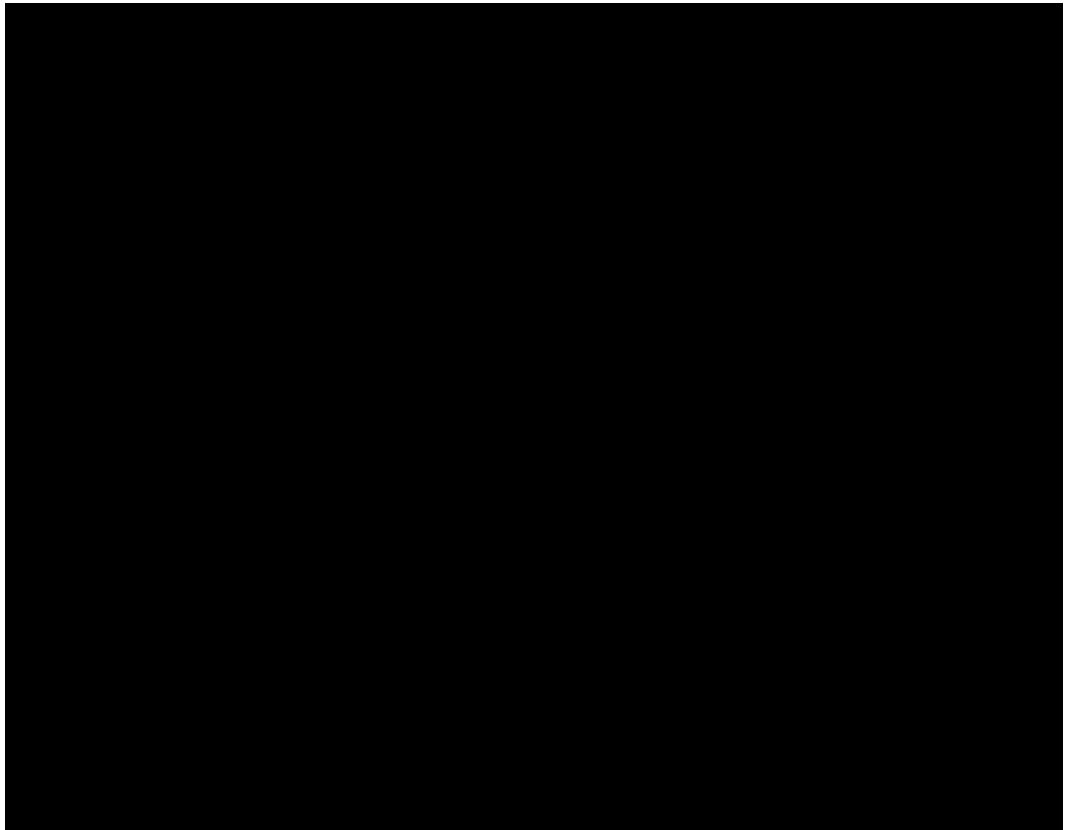
In addition to reflecting Islamic fundamentalism and extremism in his activities and comments on these social media platforms, investigators' reviews of these accounts can determine the strength and nature of his direct and indirect connections to other Persons of Interest.

Our law enforcement clients using Voyager technologies have emphasized the value of finding new leads for investigations, corroborating information from other sources, and identifying witnesses who clearly know and have interacted with criminal suspects, both in social media and in "real life." Also remarkable are the speed of collections, ease of use, and time savings for investigators and analysts.

The summary of Alsahli's social media activities and interactions below captures some of the advantages for law enforcement officials to use real-time, anonymized collection and analysis technologies for rapid investigations, as well as for proactive vetting and risk assessments prior to an event, to gain situational awareness about emerging and developing risks.

Search Warrant Returns for Facebook and Instagram accounts: Voyager's Genesis technology allows law enforcement officials to parse the data that is in pdf format from search warrants of Facebook and Instagram accounts. This allows law enforcement agencies to load pdf's that are the equivalent of hundreds of thousands of pages for immediate access to the full information and data within those accounts, including IP/geo-locational addresses for user log-ons, as well as the details of messenger chats and exchanges of media and text by the user with others on those two platforms. Our law enforcement clients have praised this capability for the great time-savings and automated analytic and investigative insights provided, as well as the lead information generated for immediate onward collections of open source data in social media. For Alsahli's Facebook and Instagram accounts, search warrant returns would likely provide a wealth of insights and information to understand his activities, connections, and the evolution of his mindset and radicalization.

Facebook account: Open source coverage of Adam Alsahli's Facebook account (User ID: [REDACTED]) shows 31 posts between November 2017 and January 2018, 29 of which are pictures with Islamic themes. Due to his shared posts with three other Facebook users in November 2017, these three Facebook users might know Alsahli, have had other interactions with him outside social media, or been connecting in the same Islamist circles and forums:



Rapid Risk Assessment – Connections to Islamists or solidarity with Islamist content:

VoyagerCheck allows our clients to gain immediate insights about a social media user's ties to or affinity for Islamic fundamentalism or extremism. The results are color coded (green, orange, and red), based on Artificial Intelligence calibrations, to allow for a result within minutes that does not require any intervention or assessments by an analyst or investigator. This provides a flag or indication for further vetting or investigation, before an incident has occurred, as part of an effort to put in place a "trip wire" to indicate emerging threats.

For the case of Alsahli and those cited above, just checking his social media URL in this system yields "orange" for him, "red" for [REDACTED] "red" for [REDACTED] and "orange" for [REDACTED]

Instagram: Alsahli appears to have had at least six Instagram accounts, with four still “active” in the sense that they had not been shut down. Our “Genesis” capability would provide law enforcement with full insights and details on the data in information on those accounts, if obtained by search warrant.

The cross-referencing of his social media accounts between Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Telegram is a frequent phenomenon among those active on social media, and allows the investigator to rapidly identify affiliated and associated accounts, and then collect all that is publicly available on those accounts and their direct and indirect connections, for a more complete view of a Person of Interest.

Alsahli’s choice for his Instagram accounts of the name [REDACTED] appears to reflect his pride in and identification with his Arab heritage.

Profile 1 - [REDACTED]

- 2,994 connections
- 52 following, 2,966 followers
 - o 25 both “following” and “followers.” Most profiles are in Arabic, and Voyager’s capability allows for immediate and complete translation of Arabia and more than 100 other foreign languages. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] In general, most of the mutual followers/followings appear to be accounts publishing religious content (hadiths, videos), with a few that appear to be actual “personal” accounts, [REDACTED]

- o Two connections mention “USA” in their profiles.

- [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Profile 2 - [REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- This profile follows a significantly higher number of profiles (353), and is followed by 134. Only 12 are two-way connections (followers and following). Most other two-way connections appear to be religious accounts.

Profile 3 - [REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- 100 following, 157 followers. 21 two-way connections. This account seems to have more actual personal accounts as two-way connections than the other accounts (along with the religious hadith accounts).

Profile 4 - [REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- 144 following, 154 followers; 28 two-way connections
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

Group Analysis of these four Instagram Accounts

- Taking all four of these Instagram accounts and viewing them as a Group, there is a total of 254 Instagram accounts that link to at least two of the four accounts, including 25 Instagram account connected to all four accounts.

Twitter: Although Twitter closed the accounts of Alsahli soon after the terrorist attack at the Naval Air Station on 21 May, we were able to cover two of his Twitter accounts. One of these accounts was active until 2017, and the second one was active until 18 May 2020. The majority of his posts deal with Islam, with the last post made 12:26 am on 18 May 2020. He expressed his support for the mujahideen in many of his posts. The indirect connections of these two Twitter accounts to previously-collected Islamist accounts show heavy overlap between his Twitter universe and that of other Islamic fundamentalists and extremists, including to the extremist imams Turaifi and Qunaibi.

[REDACTED]