



## SEARCH HIGH-TECH CRIME TRAINING SERVICES

### TRAINING ANNOUNCEMENT

# Online Investigations: Tools, Tips, and Techniques

The constant evolution of technology and its use by criminals is a challenge investigators face on a daily basis. Law enforcement is hard-pressed to stay on top of technological trends; new ways for people to share information online seem to crop up every day. Agencies struggle to get their personnel the knowledge, skills, and capabilities they need to incorporate technology into their investigations. Investigators have an urgent need to learn how to search for, locate, save, and replicate online information relating to all areas of crime.

While most investigators today have a working knowledge of the Internet, they may not be aware of the many free tools available that can take that basic knowledge and turn it into something more robust. And while these tools help to streamline and enhance investigations, they are not considered too high-tech or advanced for the basic investigator

to master. For instance, using strategically placed punctuation ("Boolean operators," they're called) in a Google search can dramatically change the number of resulting hits from something that is astronomical to something that is more manageable.

*Online Investigations: Tools, Tips, and Techniques* is a two-day course designed for **all** investigators, whether their work is in high-tech crime, gangs, homicide, vice, property crimes, narcotics, or other details. This course is non-technical in nature, and all investigators—regardless of their technical background—will gain the skills and knowledge they need to enhance their online investigations.

In this course, we introduce investigators to the SEARCH Investigative Toolbar, which is an Internet browser application that contains resources available for conducting online, cellular

telephone, and wireless investigations. Students learn how to install and use the toolbar and see how it can lead to more efficient investigations.

Another important set of tools for investigators are called "portable apps," which are essentially all of a user's favorite computer programs, bookmarks, settings, and email stored conveniently on a thumb drive. These portable apps come in very handy when investigators are working in the field and have no access to an undercover computer, or if they have to use multiple computers as part of their job. We have assembled a collection of portable apps that we deem essential for any investigator's toolkit and in this course we provide each student with a portable app thumb drive that they can take with them in the field.

The ever-growing popularity of social networking websites has created a vast network of investigative resources. Not only can information

(More)

**Enrollment in each course is limited to 24 persons.  
Register today at [www.search.org/programs/hightech/](http://www.search.org/programs/hightech/)**

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about suspects, victims, witnesses, and possible co-conspirators be obtained, but a virtual goldmine of evidence of various criminal activities can be unearthed. Facebook and MySpace combined have more than 500 million user profiles that can be tapped for critical information, evidence, and leads. In this course, we teach investigators how to locate information, find linkages between people, and use the sites for law enforcement purposes.

**Topics:**

- Advanced Google searching
- Using Firefox for investigations, including add-ons and the SEARCH Investigative Toolbar
- Using portable applications for investigations
- The process required to conduct successful online investigations
- Digital officer safety
- Successfully searching, locating, and replicating information from social networking profiles
- The variations and history of social networking
- Creating social networking profiles

One of the primary missions of SEARCH is to provide cutting-edge High Technology Crime Investigation training to law enforcement officers nationwide. Check the SEARCH High-Tech Crime web site for course eligibility details, course calendar, and fees: <http://www.search.org/programs/hightech/>.