

Eric Evans
with
Bradly McNamara

Darker Clouds

Digital Exploitation

Eric Evans is the DEA Unit Chief of Investigative Technology's Digital Exploitation Unit, researching and development of emerging digital technologies. Eric is responsible for overseeing the research, development, and implementation of new digital technologies DEA wide, domestically and globally, leading personnel to create innovative digital solutions, services, and platforms of artificial intelligence (AI), big data, digital forensics, and cloud computing.

DEA Digital Exploitation Unit (STE)

- DEA Digital Exploitation: OSINT, AI, and Applied Casework for Investigators
- Digital exploitation, AI-driven OSINT, and real-case narcotics and fugitive investigations.

Target Audience and Prerequisites

- Sworn law enforcement, analysts, and digital investigators working narcotics, fugitive, and complex investigations.
- Basic computer literacy required; prior OSINT or forensics experience recommended but not mandatory.

Foundations of Digital Exploitation

- Key topics: Definition of digital exploitation, investigative uses, exploitation specialist vs. hacker, how exploit OSINT differs from traditional OSINT, legal concerns.
- Technical skills: Working with repositories, virtual machines, investigative bots, web scraping basics, and Google dorking for targeted data discovery.

AI, LLMs, and Data Exploitation

- Key topics: Demystifying artificial intelligence, understanding large language models, containers, and SaaS platforms for investigative use.
- Practical focus: Using AI tools in contained environments, building digital patterns of life, identifying data links/leakage, and proper investigative data exfiltration.

Applied Casework and Tools

- Operational modules: Best practices for digital exploits in narcotics investigations, resources and methods for fugitive investigations, and adapting techniques to other case types.
- Tool exposure and labs: Hands-on use of Kali, data aggregators, web scrapers, Agent DEG tools, Venom's Nest, and scenario-based real case exercises.