



ÆGIS journal

Addressing threats that affect your bottom line

Volume 9 Number 7, July 2006

From the case files of

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<http://www.lubrinco.com/>

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This month's features:

- 1. Asset Location and Due Diligence — Financing asset location**
- 2. OPSEC, Economic Espionage, and Competitive Intelligence — Arson**
- 3. Executive Protection — Mission Knives**
- 4. Technical Issues — The Bat! Voyager**
- 5. Real Stories from the Field — Where my house?**
- 6. Book and Product Reviews — *The Race Trap***
- 7. Subscription/Unsubscription/Copyright Information**

1. Asset Location and Due Diligence — Financing asset location

Finding concealed assets is an expensive business, and one which is about to become unaffordable for most Americans. This is because Congress is moving inexorably to pass some version of the *Deadbeat Dad and Fraudster Protection Act of 2006* (the name will doubtless be something else, but the effect will remain the same) which will make it difficult to impossible for private investigators to get information based on social security numbers.

For a woman struggling to get by, and who cannot afford an attorney to work with the legal system, locating the errant father of her children will now be impossible. By the same token, the poorer spouse in a divorce, or a less-than-rich victim of a small fraud (as opposed to the theft of a few hundred million), will be unable to afford a search for concealed assets.

For those of us whose business involves looking for large amounts of money, where the information requests are generally in the form of subpoenas, the effect will be minimal. However, we still generally face the issue of financing a recovery, often on behalf of individuals or groups who have been badly burned.

In the case of a divorce involving significant assets, the secret is that the divorce attorney needs to start looking for the assets early on, before they have run through all their client's money. Unfortunately, most divorce attorney's don't know much about how to find assets, so if you – or someone you know – are going to be involved in a divorce, you should immediately download the March 2000 issue of *ÆGIS*, print out the article "Location of hidden assets in divorce proceedings" (one of our two most popular downloads), start following the advice in it, and give a copy to counsel at your first meeting.

In the case of fraud and theft, the best approach is to go to the person with the money: The fraudster.

In general in fraud and theft cases, even though most assets are concealed or in transit to concealment, there is always some set of assets that are visible. The goal is to find these, and to force their availability for use in locating the rest. As it turns out, location of concealed assets is a specialized area, so if your attorney is not entirely clear on how to do this, have them call us.

2. OPSEC, Economic Espionage, and Competitive Intelligence — Arson

We recently spoke at a conference in London in which three of us spoke on topic relating to protecting information. This is not uncommon for us, and always makes us a little anxious, as we *in theory* face the risk of having several people say the same thing as we are saying.

In practice, however, this never happens. What we always see from others in their excellent presentations – and saw in this case, too – is a discussion of **rule-based** steps taken by security professionals. While the information given is invariably valuable defensive information from communications security, or information security, IT security, security minded IP attorneys, and a number of other security fields, it is not what we discuss in our talks.

What we discuss is OPSEC, which is a **threat-based** (not rule-based) *process*. OPSEC allows us to put in place specific countermeasures based on analysis of specific threats, vulnerabilities, and impacts to reduce vulnerabilities to specific threats of competitive intelligence, economic espionage, and theft of information. We discuss is how to implement a corporate program for the identification, valuation, and protection of information against competitive intelligence, economic espionage, and theft.

The rules from security folk (have access control, use telephone encryption, have firewalls, sweep conference rooms for bugs, do background searches on employees and subcontractors, have appropriate patents and trademarks, use pre- and post- hiring and firing confidentiality agreements, et cetera) are important – indeed critical – in addressing the overall security of your plant, your people, and your information by reducing crimes of opportunity.

That said, all of these are like the preventive and protective measures one takes with fire. You have detectors, and alarms, and sprinklers, and extinguishers, and fire drills. But they are not designed to prevent arson.

Competitive intelligence, economic espionage, and theft are the information-loss equivalent of arson. An OPSEC program helps you implement an overall corporate program for the identification, valuation, and protection of information from real threats, and not merely from crimes of opportunity.

When a specific threat is encountered, the OPSEC staff will work with other staff – either security staff or middle management in specific areas – who will use their disciplines to put countermeasure in place. OPSEC therefore tends to be a relatively small management function in the office of the VP of finance or operations that cuts across all organizational boundaries, depending on the threat encountered.

3. Executive Protection — Mission Knives

In the protective services business we often find ourselves laden down with knives. Assuming we are not expecting any difficulties, most people we know in the trade carry a small pocket knife, a rescue knife, and a larger folding knife, with some adding a Leatherman tool or Gerber tool to the mix. It is only rarely that one adds a sheath knife.

We are always interested in looking at knives to see if they offer an improvement over the knives we have. We were therefore eager to look at the titanium knives from Mission Knives (<http://www.missionknives.com/>). Let us start by saying that these are special purpose knives, but, within this minor constraint, are among the best knives in the world.

There are three generally available titanium alloys: Alpha alloys possess the highest corrosion resistance, but have low to medium strength. Alpha beta alloys are capable of medium to high strength. Beta alloys are capable of high strength, which is the important factor for us knife users. Mission uses beta titanium.

For our purposes, some of the features of these knives are not terribly relevant. For example, they are non-magnetic. This is a really good thing – a really critical quality – if you are dealing with magnetic mines, but of lesser import to those of us not involved in bomb disposal. The alloy also does extremely well in cold weather, so if you are based out of McMurdo Station, or any other place with sub-zero weather, this is an important plus over steel or ceramic.

Of greater importance is its weight (A2 tool steel is 0.29 lb/in³ while titanium beta is 0.16 lb/in³.) and corrosion resistance (titanium is a perfect choice for work in a marine environment). Its strength is more than adequate (A2 tool steel is 310,000 PSI and RC 57-58 while titanium beta is 230,000 PSI min and RC 47). Mission's signature MPK-Ti knife (at which we did not look) is used by the Navy SEALs and Marine Recon units, among others. None of them have ever broken in field use. In fact, our understanding is that none of their knives have ever failed in the field.

We looked at three representative knives, two of which we feel are directly suitable for our readers (the third would be appropriate for divers). With each of these knives it is clear that they are serious work tools that will last well beyond your lifetime, assuming you don't lose them. If you do lose them, whoever finds them will use them for the rest of their lifetime, before their children take over.

The first knife is the MPK10-Ti, which is a scaled-down version of the 11.875 inch MPK-Ti. This knife has a blade length of 5.75 inches with an overall length of 10.5 inches. While the knife may seem heavy at slightly over half a pound when you pick it up, remember that titanium is a little less than half the weight of steel. The handle is extremely well designed, and it fits well in both small and large hands. It is as good a utility knife for camping, diving, hunting, or any other demanding activity as we have ever seen. It has a manufacturer's suggested retail price of \$426, which is competitive with knives of this type and class.



The second knife we looked at was the MPF1-Ti, which is a folding knife. The knife has a four inch blade and an overall length of nine

inches. It weighs almost six ounces, largely because it is entirely made of titanium beta. That is to say that the blade is titanium, the handle is titanium, the clasp is titanium, the pin is titanium, and even the screws are titanium. In addition, the MPF1 deals well with one of the major problems faced by any folder: Keeping it open. In this case Mission has chosen to use a frame lock. This means that when you open the knife a piece of the thick side plate moves about halfway in behind the blade. This is a *very* sturdy knife. It has a suggested retail price of \$435. This is competitive with bench made knives. As an example, the highly regarded Strider folding knives range from \$300 to \$625, with most selling for \$400.

The third knife was one of their skeletonized knives. The one we had had a blunted tip, making it ideal to strap onto the harness of your dive gear to cut net and cord that has entangled you. In the pointed version it would be an option for undercover work.



These knives are not pretty in the sense that you see in custom knives designed to be works of art. They are, however, clearly functional tools, designed to do a job, and do it well. And the difference is clear. With art knives the tendency is to say “Wow! This is a nice knife!” With these the reaction tends to be “Whoa! This is a *serious* knife!” So if you are looking for a pretty knife to put into a display case, go to a knife show. If you are looking for a functional tool, save the trip to the show and look at these.

There are at least four good reasons why one might choose one of these knives. The first is if you are in that special category where you are disarming magnetic mines – and we hope you never will be – in which case non-magnetic tools are a must.

A second case would be if your circumstances were such that you or those in your care depended on your tools for survival. If we were going off to war, as an example, the MPK-Ti or the MPK10-Ti would be competing for the top place in our list of knife choices, as they are, in fact, for some special forces and special operations teams.

A third case would be if your life is lived on the edge where you or those under your care are likely to depend for survival on your knife, and while you would really *like* to strap on a knife like the MPK10-Ti in the morning, you know you can't unobtrusively wear one with your business suit. In this case the MPF1-Ti would be an excellent alternative.

Finally if you simply wanted to own – or give as a gift – what are arguably among the finest knives made, then *any* of these knives would be an excellent choice. As with most desirable knives of this quality, production runs are relatively small – these are made largely for the government at one level or another – so it would be prudent to order well in advance if you intend to have or give one for Christmas....

4. Technical Issues — The Bat! Voyager

We use an e-mail program called The Bat! (see the January 2005 issue of *ÆGIS*), put out by RIT Labs (<http://www.ritlabs.com/>). We use it because it is *extremely* virus-resistant while simultaneously being extremely full featured. If we are traveling with our laptop, using The Bat! is, of course, the default. But what if we aren't traveling with our laptop? What are our alternatives then?

One can of course use Web mail, which may or may not be available from your service provider. We use T-Mobile as our mobile service provider, so we have the additional option of using their Web mail facility to access both our business and private accounts. While this does work, we find that it is not as satisfactory as using an e-mail client.

However, due to a happy confluence of hardware and software, this is now a moot point for us. RIT Labs has released a version of The Bat! called Voyager, which is intended to be installed on flash drives. Simultaneously, the cost of flash memory has fallen to the point where one can buy a four gigabyte USB or SD memory card for under \$100 (Sony Memory Sticks still

cost more). We chose to get a USB device, since we deemed it more likely that we would find a USB port than an SD slot.

Installation of Voyager was straightforward, and when you open the program it looks exactly like the regular desktop version. It does, however, require a password to open, because it encrypts the data on the off chance that the device might get lost or stolen.

Once we had Voyager installed, we had to figure out how to synchronize the existing data on the desktop with the portable version. While there are instructions in the help file, they were less than clear, so we edited it for clarity, and like to think our version will appear in the standard help file in the future. Synchronize the target installation with the source installation is a three step process. When you are leaving on a trip, your computer-based version of *The Bat!* is the source installation, and the Voyager is the target installation. When you get back from the trip the Voyager version is the source installation, and your computer is the target installation.

The help file entry we edited (British spelling of synchronize theirs) says:

Mail Synchronization for The Bat!

Many people use two or more computers for their daily business, perhaps a desktop in their office and a notebook for travel. *The Bat!*'s Synchronise tool helps you to keep separate copies of *The Bat!* up to date. Synchronising data between installations is slightly more complicated than backing up.

Step 1: Create a data file for the target computer

1. Open *The Bat!* on your **target computer**
2. Go to Tools->**Synchronize**
3. Choose **what** to synchronize
4. Choose which **Address Books** to synchronize
5. Choose **Step 1: Create ...**
6. Click **OK**
7. Choose the **accounts/common folders** to synchronize and click **OK**
8. Enter a **file name**

You have now created a map, which tells *The Bat!* the current settings and contents of the selected components of the target computer.

Step 2: Generate synchronization archive for the source computer

1. Open *The Bat!* on your **source computer**
2. Go to Tools->**Synchronize**
3. Choose **what** to synchronize
4. Choose which **Address Books** to synchronize

5. Choose **Step 2: Generate ...**
6. Click **OK**
7. Choose the **data file** created in Step 1

You have now generated a file containing the differences between the source computer and the target computer.

Step 3: Importing synchronization data

1. Go to *The Bat!* on your **target computer**
2. Go to Tools->**Synchronize**
3. Choose **what** to synchronize
4. Choose which **Address Books** to synchronize
5. Choose **Step 3: Submit ...**
6. Click **OK**
7. Choose the **synch data file** created in Step 2

The Bat! now imports the data from your source computer's installation to the target computer's installation to give you two identical installs of *The Bat!*.

With Voyager installed on the USB device (along with our most critical data in encrypted form, and some of our favorite CDs), we headed off to Phoenix for the Arizona Bar Association annual meeting. In our Phoenix office we plugged the USB device into a free machine and started Voyager. Both versions of the Bat! include a feature to look at headers on the server, and delete them without downloading. While not quite as automated as using MailWasher (ÆGIS June 2002 and May 2003), it works very well, and allowed us to delete the huge amount of chaff and download the small amount of wheat.

At the conference, the Bar Association had provided laptops connected to the Internet, so from time to time we would saunter over to a laptop, put in the USB device, and check our mail. When we returned to Gotham, it was straightforward to synchronize The Bat! (now the target) with Voyager (now the source).

If you travel, have access to computers with Internet connections, and want to be able to read your e-mail without schlepping a laptop, we recommend you give serious consideration to Voyager.

5. Real Stories from the Field — Where my house?

Our stock in trade as investigators are the bizarre and unusual. Thus, when a friend or family member has a problem that falls into the category of bizarre and unusual, we get the call.

As a property manager our sister is at the top of her game and specializes in difficult situations. We have seen her deal with fires, floods, and condemnations. And a Tongan barbeque!

The Tongan tenants dug a deep pit in their front yard, and roasted a goat and a pig. Neither the neighbors nor the police knew what to do, as apparently no law had been broken. Our sister rose to the occasion, came to the house, and suggested that in the future it would be better to do it in the back yard, and, at least for this day's event, invite the neighbors and police for a bite to eat. The impromptu feast was a great solution. The Tongans loved every minute of the joy and company of their new neighbors in this strange new land.

But one problem really flummoxed her. She called us with a great deal of anxiety in her voice. "There is a home on some vacant land I manage. What do I do?" We picked up our sister, drove out to the piece of vacant land, and lo and behold, someone had begun to trench for plumbing, built a small wall, and had a small house on a trailer looking like it was days away from being unloaded.

Late Friday is no time to find a judge, so this was time for self help, not time for the courts. We rented a bob tail, hooked up the house to the bob tail, and moved the house off the land and down the street. We checked the property daily for the next week, and nothing happened until Thursday evening, when the house was back on the land, with work on the property obviously continuing. We picked up the bob tail truck, and this time moved the house five miles away and dropped it on a side street. The police were notified. Not happy, but notified. We continued our daily checks of the property.

The next day Friday the police were at the property, along with a number of workers. The house was at the curb, no doubt having been retrieved that morning. We stopped in to see who was in charge and we met an irate and very puzzled Chinese gentleman. We introduced ourselves as the manager of the land and the ones who kept moving his house. The Chinese gentleman exploded into cursing in three languages, English, Spanish, and Cantonese, filling us with envy at his fluency. He then pulled out a map of the property and pointed to the police. "See, this my land!"

Our sister looked at the map, than looked at the surroundings, looked at the map again and said “See this? This is a street, and this street is over there.” Then she turned the map 180 degrees to correctly orient the map, and pointed out to the gentlemen where his land was: Across the street from where he had been trying to build.

All was silent. He looked up at the house, down at the map, over across the street, than down at the map.

“Aw sit,” was muttered.

Our sister said, “We moved your house because we could not allow it to be connected. And that while we had tried to call whoever was developing the land, the city had no contact information. By the way did you pull permits and have city inspectors look at the construction?”

“Yes, dese guys are inspector” pointing to two red-faced men with city logos on their shirts.

In the end, the house was moved across the street, our sister and Mr. Shieh became fast friends and he retained her for future projects. Built on their proper lots.

And for the equally misguided city inspectors? They were never heard from again, and were not the inspectors used when the house was moved and connected across the street.

6. Book and Product Reviews

The Race Trap

Drs. Robert L. Johnson and Steven Simring (with Gene Busnar)

Harper Business ISBN: 0-06-662001-5 239 pages \$28.00

<http://www.harpercollins.com/> 1-212-207-7000

Because the United States was founded as a slave-owning country, race has historically been a problem that is intimately interwoven into the fabric of our society. Since race is generally visible (though not always: People are generally surprised to discover that this editor’s father was a Hopi and that his great-great-grand-uncle was a Zulu), it is hard to not be aware of racial diversity. Plus, most of us live relatively segregated lives, spending most of our time with people very similar to ourselves in terms of race, religion, and worldview. In addition, problems whose causes have social or economic roots are often incorrectly attributed to race.

The Race Trap addresses approaches to dealing with racial issues. Before reading the book, we were initially concerned that the authors (one a well known psychiatrist whom we know personally, the other a pediatrician who heads the New Jersey Medical School) might have taken a politically correct approach to dealing with race. In fact, they have taken a practical approach, rather than a moral or ethical approach. Since they know that they can't change the way you think or believe, they opt to influence, through enlightened self interest, the way you behave. They refer to this as developing an appropriate racial IQ. We believe that this is a sound approach.

The authors take the position that interpersonal relationships dealing with race should be result-oriented. They present a host of difficult business and non-business scenarios in which a number of choices of behavior can be made, and show that some behaviors cause problems, some minimize problems, and some produce positive benefits.

What you do in a given situation depends – or should depend – on the end result you wish to create. In many cases you have to deal with factors that, in the best of all possible worlds would be race independent. Thus, a white parent hopes that if his teenager is pulled over by the police the child will behave appropriately and not get a ticket or arrested. A black parent may well hope that if his teenager is pulled over by the police the child will behave appropriately and not get arrested or killed. And we can assure you that the police officer has a vested interest in the incident, too.

The authors deal with a wide variety of social and business situations, and the book is thought-provoking. It induces you to consider how your personal biases effect your own behavior and speech, as well as the way you deal (or choose not to deal) with the inappropriate behavior of others.

More important, the lessons of the book are extensible. That is to say that the approach taken to dealing with racial issues also works when dealing with differences in sex, religion, general interests, differing cultures, and a host of other areas in which bigotry in one form or another frequently obtrudes.

Employee or employer, parent or child, civilian or police officer, this book is worth reading. It is particularly worth reading by those whose clueless behavior inadvertently causes discomfort to others. Although, alas, they are the least likely to read it.

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