# SKOPENOW

# THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE:
## Parler for OSINT Investigation

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# INTRODUCTION

Following recent updates to social media platforms' policies regarding censorship and misinformation, many people are flocking to a new 'free speech' platform called Parler. While we've seen this in the past with platforms like Gab and Minds, this new platform is seeing great success in attracting many mainstream defectors today. That platform is Parler.

Parler is self-described as "free speech social media focused on protecting user's rights." It's users can create, comment, discover, and upvote posts called "parleys" on the platform. It is not without its own set of community guidelines, which prohibit promoting violence or crime, copyright violations, and other types of 'rules of the road' seen on many social platforms.

With a rapid rise in its user base since its creation in 2018, Parler has become a crucial part of Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) investigations. As we'll discuss shortly, due to how Parler was created, there are limitations to how information is gathered from their system. We've unpacked everything for you and have developed a set of steps, tricks, and tips to get you collecting information in no time.

This guide will show you how to conduct OSINT investigations using Parler. We'll discuss finding profiles, extracting content, identifying valuable information, platform limitations, and how to get beyond those limitations to get the most value from Parler for your OSINT investigation.

# 1

# PROFILE DISCOVERY

This chapter will teach you how to find user profiles without creating an account and get the information you need to keep your investigation moving forward.

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For users, Parler not only offers them the freedom of speech they're searching for but also a unique user experience to the alternatives. Users can easily access content either through desktop or mobile. This model is different from platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, or Snapchat that are designed to be used on a mobile device. Yet, unlike many mainstream social media options, there is no way to view Parler's information from its homepage without an account. Similar to other platforms, like Twitter, Parler entices you to create an account immediately to view the content. We'll see this type of limitation appear throughout the platform as we investigate further.

When it comes to searching Parler, you'll discover that this causes an inherent problem while running your investigation. However, just because there isn't a search engine on the home page doesn't mean we can't search through other means. Since Parler allows Google to crawl their site to be indexed in their search, it will enable you to use Google's index to find Parler's content for investigative purposes.

Although a manual process, through the Google Search index, there is plenty of information you can still view from Parler without registering for an account, such as posts, usernames, and profiles.
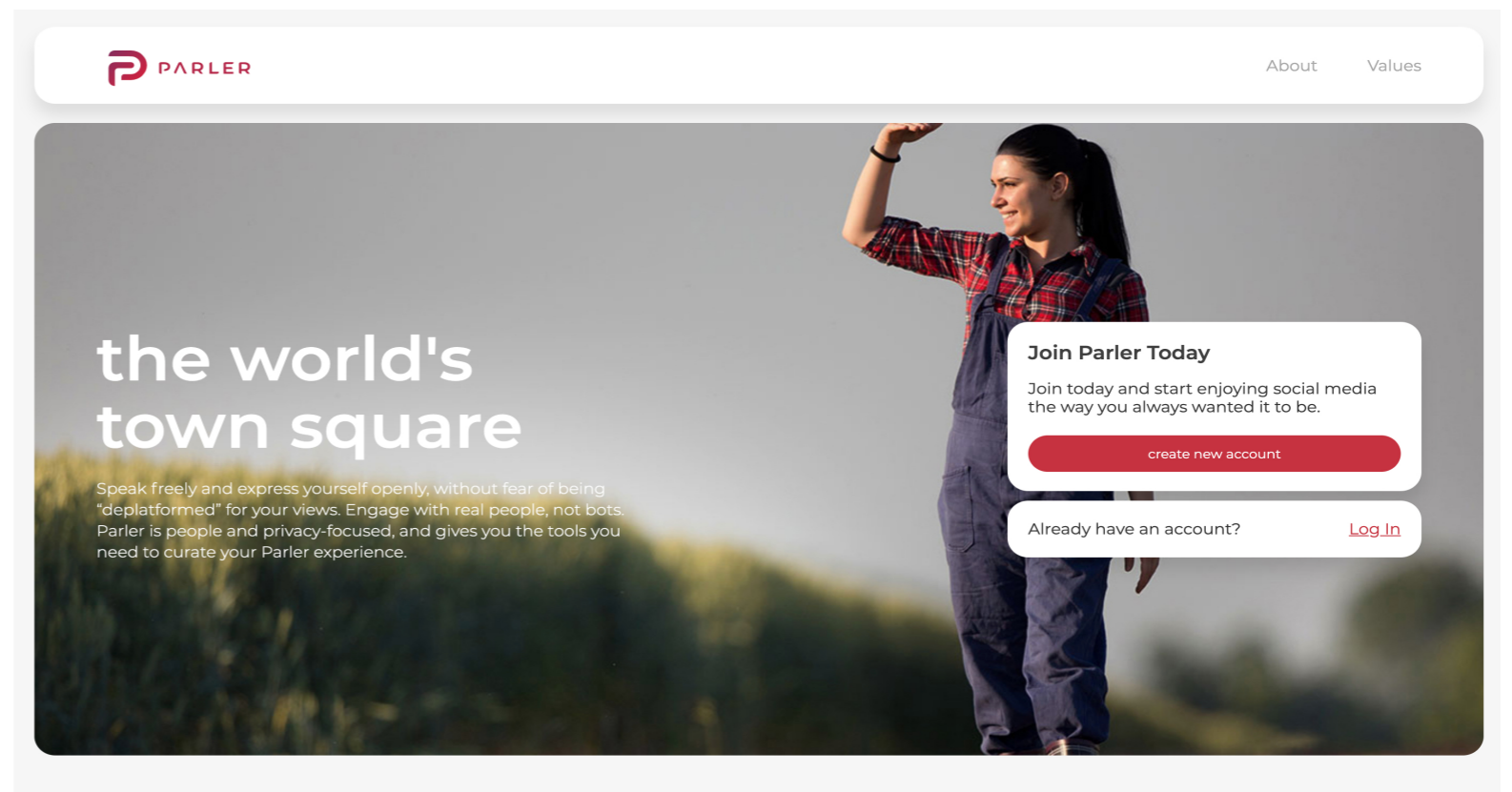


Parler.com homepage (a)



By entering this simple command into Google, you'll tell the search engine to only show you web pages that come from the website parler.com. The site operator eliminates results from any other website. We'll start here to see what type of content is available. At the time of this writing, and from our browser specifically, there are roughly 52,800 results from parler.com in Google's index.

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The first valuable thing you'll notice within these search results are web pages, including /post/ and /profile/ in their URLs. Here you can see a few examples from the first page of Google.

https://parler.com/post/08d5fe69f47f4d8d81b202f59ed1c436 ▼

## @Timcast - Timcast - Novermber 4th 2020 Michigan turns red ...

Novermber 4th 2020 Michigan turns red giving trump just enough EC votes to win reelection Governor Whitmer intervenes and decides the EC votes should go ...

This page contains "/post/" in the URL.

https://parler.com/profile/Marklevinshow

## @Marklevinshow - Mark Levin - Parler

Mark Levin Podcast: Mark Levin Audio Rewind - 11/13/20 on Apple Podcasts On Friday's Mark Levin Show, Dr. Anthony Fauci and others say to wear a mask ...

This page contains "/profile/" in the URL.

By appending /post/ to the end of our first query, we'll narrow down the search results from 58,200 to 3,240. Google will show us only posts from Parler that their system has indexed. Adding any keyword after this query will allow us to search for Parler's content through Google without even visiting the site. Let's say we're looking for mentions of Twitter on Parler. We can use this query to specify that which will reduce our results from 3,240 to 803.

Google        site:parler.com/post/        ✕ | 🎤 🔍

By appending /profile/ to the end of our original query, we'll narrow down the search results from 58,200 to 40,400. What is left in our search are only Parler profiles that Google has indexed. Searching this way can allow you to collect names and usernames without even entering Parler's website. If you're looking for a particular person, you can add their first and last name, display name, or username after your site: command to look for them specifically. Here's an example.



The last way of discovering user profiles on Parler is to enter a username you have directly into the Parler URL using the URL structure example above. I'd recommend doing this check if you aren't finding results in Google, but you suspect a profile may exist. The profile may exist, and Google hasn't indexed it yet.
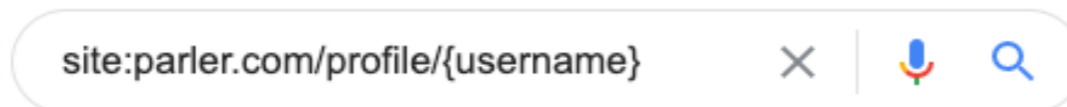


On that last note, it's important to understand the limitations of Google Search. Google can only show you pages that it's indexed. Because of this, brand new profiles and posts likely won't show up in search results. Moving forward, we'll look at how to find additional information beyond what search engines can provide.

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# CONTENT EXTRACTION

In this chapter we will show you how to extract the content you have found for easy use once you've finished collecting everything.

N ow that you've found a profile or content that's useful to your investigation, it's time to begin extracting useful information from the page to archive it for later use. There are three free Chrome Extensions we're using to streamline this process. Combined, we'll have multiple pieces of evidence among different formats for our investigative purposes.

### Instant Data Scraper

Instant Data Scraper will easily extract information from the page.

### GoFullPage

GoFullPage will capture full screenshots as PNG and PDF.

### Save as MHTML

Save as MHTML will archive the web page itself, including all source code on the page.

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Let's use Bill O'Reilly's Parler profile (a) for reference. We're using his account because of the variety and breadth of content available, as well as the fact that he's a public figure. Here's a preview of that profile at the time of this writing.

Keep in mind that we are still viewing Parler without registering for an account. While this method has limitations, it maintains anonymity and will quickly kickstart your investigation. We'll cover account registration and advanced techniques later in this article.

Now that we're on a profile we're interested in, the first thing we need to do is expand all comments. You can do this manually by clicking the "Show Comments" button beneath a post. If a post has a lot of engagement, you'll have to click "Show Replies" as well. This process can be automated using Javascript, but we will do it manually for this guide.

It'll look similar to the example to the right (b).
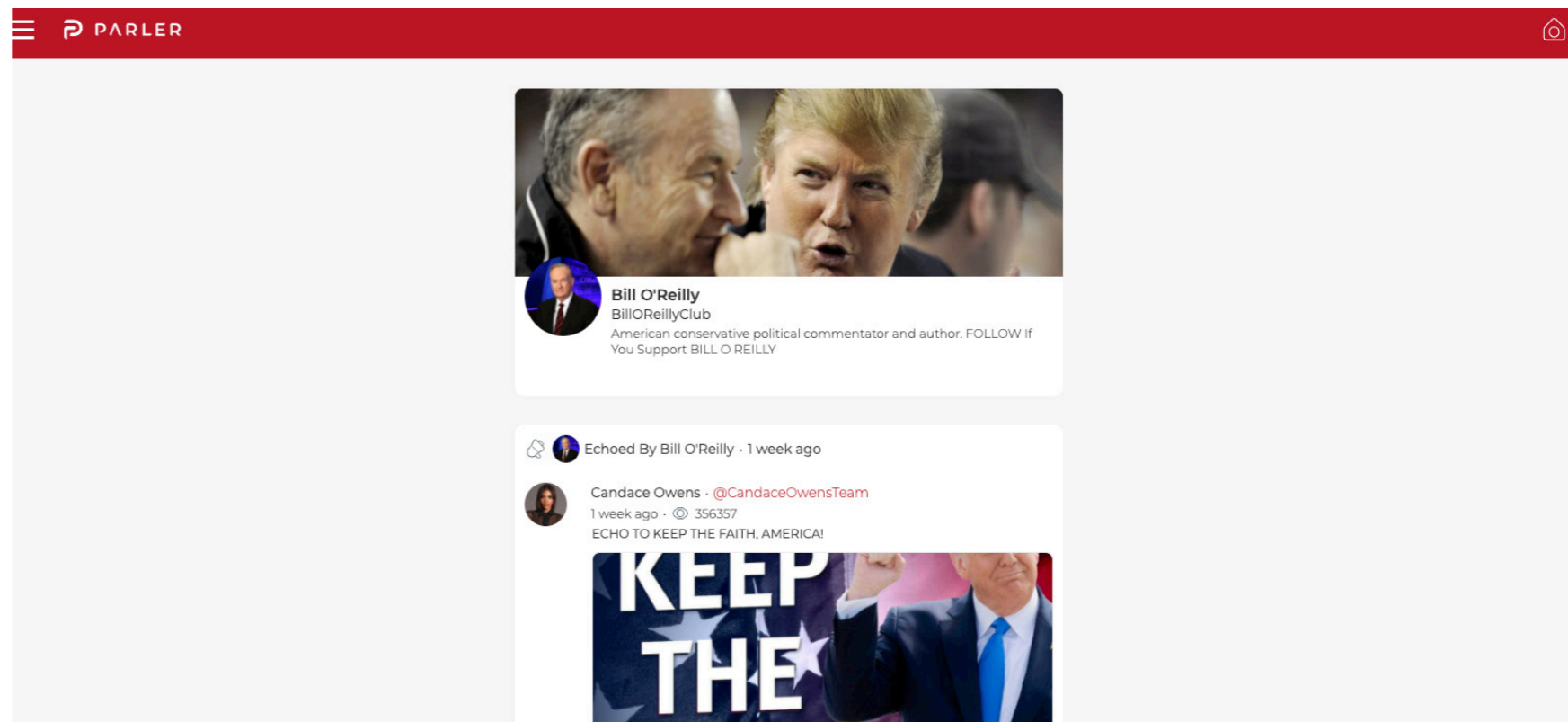
Bill O'Reilly's Parler profile page (a)
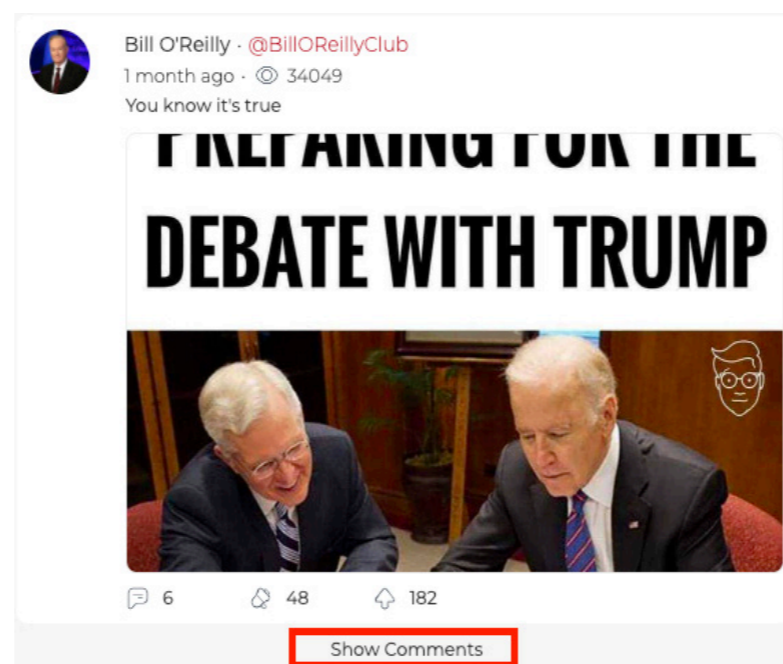
Show comments below a post (b)

TOP TIP

There's an even easier way to do this, but it requires a bit of technical capability. By placing a short javascript snippet into the Console tab of your browser, you can expand all of the comments and replies to comments for the entire page at once. On the next page, we'll show you how to do it.
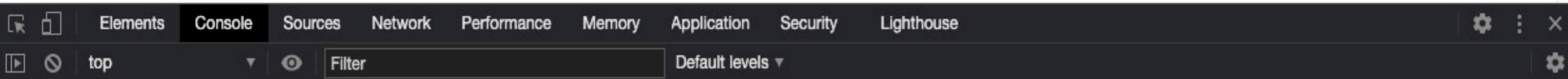
# Step 1: Open your browser console

Right-click on your browser and select "Inspect". Once a window in your browser appears, click the "Console" tab. This will work on any browser, but we'll use Chrome in the visual aids.

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| Elements | Console | Sources | Network | Performance | Memory | Application | Security | Lighthouse |

top      ▼      Filter      Default levels ▼

```javascript
> var btns = document.querySelectorAll('.show-comments--wrapper,.show-replies--wrapper');for(var i=0; i<btns.length; i++) {btns[i].click()}
```
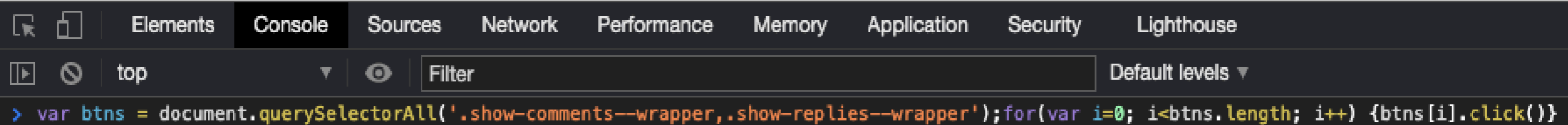
## Step 2: Copy and paste javascript

Copy and paste the following Javascript into the console window of your browser and hit enter. That's it. You can go ahead and close your console window and see all comments and replies expanded.

```javascript
var btns = document.querySelectorAll('.show-comments--wrapper,.show-replies--wrapper');for(var i=0; i<btns.length; i++) {btns[i].click()}
```

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If you haven't installed Instant Data Scraper already, you'll be needing it in this next step. Once all comments and replies have been expanded, scroll to the top of the page and click on the Instant Data Scraper Chrome extension to collect information. Setting it up is easy. It'll look something like this (a).

Make sure to turn "infinite scroll" on and set the minimum delay to 5 seconds.

Once the extraction is complete, you can download all data, including links and images, to a CSV or XLSX file for further analysis. In the event anything is deleted, this will also archive all information on the page. Since Parler's guest view limits the number of posts you can see, this process should be quick.

The next step is to capture a full-page image of the Parler profile using GoFullPage. You can save this as a PDF or a PNG (or both). We find this useful for including in reports or sending via email to other members of your team.

Instant Data Scraper Chrome extension (a)

## TOP TIP

Doing this isn't necessary, but we like having everything on the page saved, source code and all. This helps protect you, if any part of the full page image captured comes into question.

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# DISCOVERING VALUABLE INFORMATION

In this chapter, now that you've archieved the content, you'll learn how to parce the data to find what is most useful to you.

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## https___www.parler.com_profile

File   Edit   View   Insert   Format   Data   Tools   Add-ons   Help

100%   ⊙ View only

*fx* | hide-comments--wrapper

| | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | ch--avatar--wrap | card-meta--row I | author--name | author--usernam | post--timestamp | impressions--cou | card--body | mc-image--moda | mc-image--moda | pa--item--count | pa--item--count 2 p |
| 2 | https://images.pa | https://www.parle | Candace Owens | @CandaceOwer | 5 days ago | 297191 | ECHO TO KEEP | X | https://api.parler. | 139 | 2334 |
| 3 | https://images.pa | https://www.parle | Bill O'Reilly | @BillOReillyClul | 1 month ago | 23439 | You know it's tru | X | https://api.parler. | 5 | 41 |
| 4 | https://company-media.parler.com | | Name Hidden | @Private User | 1 month ago | 33194 | ECHO FOR TRU | X | https://api.parler. | 14 | 242 |
| 5 | https://images.pa | https://www.parle | Bill O'Reilly | @BillOReillyClul | 1 month ago | 19679 | President Donal | X | https://api.parler. | 6 | 40 |
| 6 | https://company-media.parler.com | | Name Hidden | @Private User | 2 months ago | 212265 | ECHO if you are | X | https://api.parler. | 21 | 644 |
| 7 | https://images.pa | https://www.parle | Bill O'Reilly | @BillOReillyClul | 2 months ago | 19998 | You know the "fie | X | https://api.parler. | 9 | 46 |
| 8 | https://images.pa | https://www.parle | Bill O'Reilly | @BillOReillyClul | 2 months ago | 21379 | | X | https://api.parler. | 8 | 62 |
| 9 | https://company-media.parler.com | | Name Hidden | @Private User | 2 months ago | 43254 | ECHO To Suppo | X | https://api.parler. | 17 | 215 |
| 10 | https://images.pa | https://www.parle | Bill O'Reilly | @BillOReillyClul | 2 months ago | 26656 | Echo If You Are ' | X | https://api.parler. | 5 | 115 |

N ow that you've essentially archived the entire profile in three ways (CSV, image, and MHTML), it's time to start the analysis process and discover valuable information. Here's an example of a quick scrape from Bill O'Reilly's Parler page. You'll notice a few useful pieces of information here. The first is a list of links to images that were found on the page. This is useful if you want to save those images to your local drive and hash them. The second is a list of usernames that the page owner "echoed," which is Parler's version of a retweet (see column H). The third is a list of usernames that commented on the page owner's content (see column V).

So within a few minutes, you've learned how to discover profiles and posts using Google Search, how to archive content in three different ways, and how to extract valuable information from the content archived. By now, you've likely noticed you've hit a roadblock. When viewing as a guest, you can only access so many posts. You also can't see followers, followings, and your search functionality is limited. To continue your investigation, if your environment allows it, you'll have to register for an account. Continue reading to see what else is possible on Parlor when registered.

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# ACCOUNT CREATION

In this chapter, we'll go one level deeper into Parler. We'll go over everything you can discover with an account by teaching you the ins and outs of creating your own.

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B efore registering for an account, it's crucial to review Parler's privacy policy. Doing so allows you to ensure your investigation's integrity and lets you understand what you're putting at risk. Here are some highlights with context to this use case:

- Parler will collect your name, email, username, and profile photo.
- Parler receives your IP address, device type, web browser type, operation system version, phone carrier and manufacturer, user agents, and device identifiers.
- Parler collects information using cookies and pixel tags for advertising purposes.

Parler outlines how they use the information they collect and share it with vendors, service providers, and analytics partners. They state that they may transfer your information to a third party in the event of an acquisition or merger. Keep this all in mind before you register.

Now that the fine print is out of the way let's discuss registering for an account.
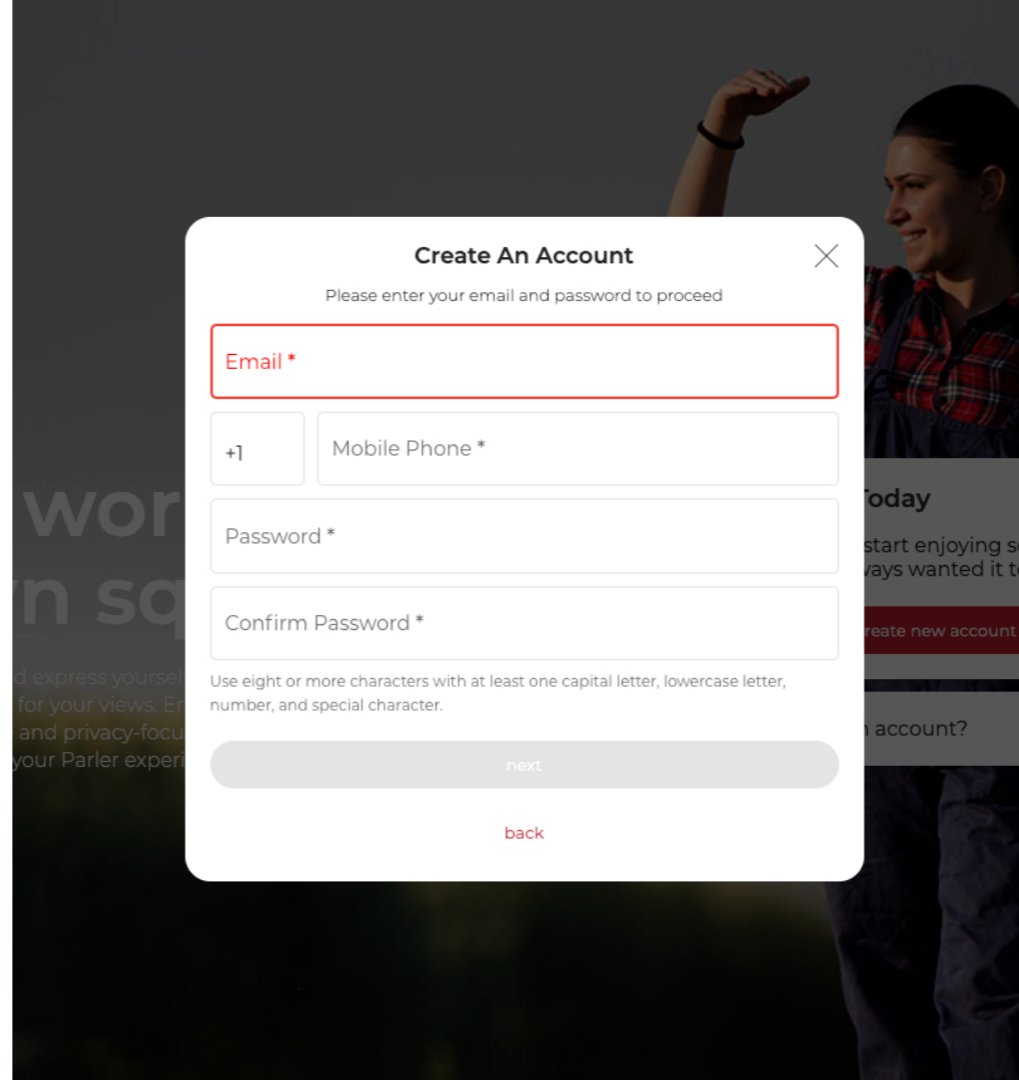


Phone number required (a)

An important thing to note is that you can only create one account per phone number and a required phone number (a). If you try to register an account with the same number but use a different email address, Parler will reject the registration.

Every time you try to log in to Parler, you'll be requested to solve a captcha (b). You need to do this for both the registration process and logging in daily.

Next, it will ask you to enter a one-time authentication code (c) sent through the mobile device you registered. That means the phone number you use has to be a real number that can accept texts. Because of this, you'll generally be unable to use most VOIP numbers, landlines, etc.

Once you've gotten through those steps, congratulations--you're a member of Parler. Registering for an account will unlock much more advanced capabilities for your investigations.

We wanted to mention before moving on that we had difficulties during the registration process on Parler. Initially we registered through a mobile device and had to reset the password a couple of times to get it to work. If you experience difficulties, it's likely not a personal problem.
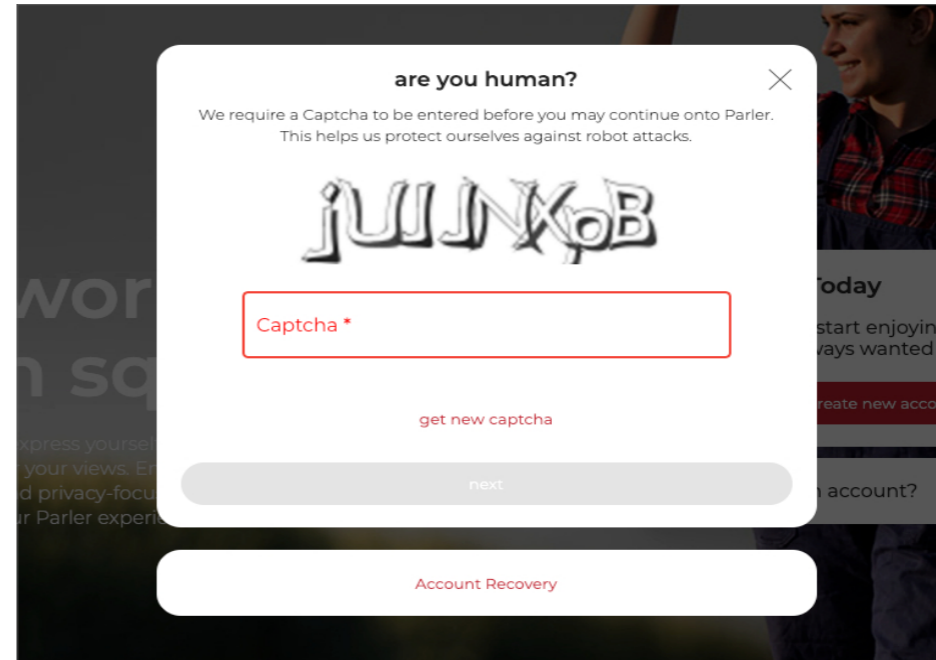


Captcha required (b)
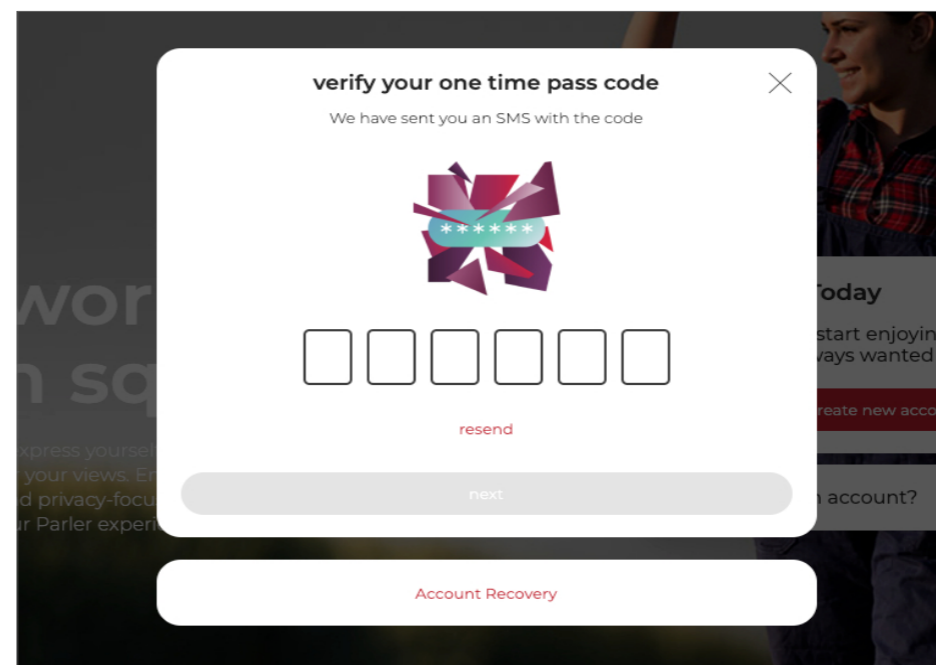


Authentication code required (c)

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# ADVANCED EXTRACTION

Now that we've set up an account, this chapter will be about extracting deeper levels of data for your investigation.

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Extracted username list (a)

Now that you have an account with Parler, information like followers, following, media (images), and a full list of Parleys (posts) can be seen. Parler also designates a specific URL for each datapoint we're going to collect, which helps OSINT. You can see that here: https://parler.com/profile/BillOReillyClub/followers

Parler uses an infinite scroll feature when listing a user's followers. This is important because if you don't set that minimum delay on Instant Data Scraper to at least 5 seconds, it'll keep stopping the scrape for you in the Chrome extension. If you notice that at 5 seconds, it's still stopping before completion, bump it up to 7 seconds on the minimum delay. Some accounts can have tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of followers. Instant Data Scraper isn't perfect, but it's much faster than copy and pasting each of them manually. Like you can see here: https://parler.com/profile/BillOReillyClub/following

Typically influencers on Parler follow fewer people than follow them. The opposite is true with regular accounts. When extracting a following list, it's crucial to consider which accounts are influencers and everyday users. If an influencer is following a standard account without much content posted, they might know that person. Likewise, if a standard account follows other standard accounts without much content, it's also possible they know that person. Coming to this conclusion requires an analysis of the following list you're extracting.

Here's an example (a) we pulled from the CEO of Parler's following list. His follower list has the greatest variety of account types for a better demonstration of analysis. If you look at column E of the list we mentioned earlier, you'll see a series of image links. Those image links are associated with types of profiles found on Parler. We can use this information to quickly sort and filter profile types to narrow your search down to particular users you are looking for.

# Here's a quick overview of account types found on Parler:

### Verified Real User
https://parler.com/assets/SVG/new-badges/00.svg

Real Users are verified unique people in the Parler network. This does not confirm the user is who they claim to be.

### Verified Influencer
https://parler.com/assets/SVG/new-badges/01.svg

Verified Influencers are users with a large following who run the risk of impersonation. These badges protect their authenticity.

### Parler Media Partner
https://parler.com/assets/SVG/new-badges/02.svg

Parler Media Partners have Parler comments enabled on their website. This means comments on their posts are mirrored between their website posts and Parler posts.

### News Feed Provider
https://parler.com/assets/SVG/new-badges/03.svg

Parler automatically posts news from a news feed provider into the Parler network.

### Private User
https://parler.com/assets/SVG/new-badges/04.svg

Private Accounts will restrict their profile to users they have not approved for Follow Requests.

### Parler Citizen
https://parler.com/assets/SVG/new-badges/05.svg

Parler Citizens are users who have verified their identity and only allow other verified users to comment on their content. This requires a driver's license, passport, or other government-issued identification to verify.

### Parody/Impersonation Account
https://parler.com/assets/SVG/new-badges/06.svg

A comical depiction of a high profile individual.

### Parler Employee
https://parler.com/assets/SVG/new-badges/07.svg

An employee of Parler or their main page.

### Verified User Showing Real Name
https://parler.com/assets/SVG/new-badges/08.svg

This is a verified user who is using their real name as their display name.

### Parler Early Adopter
https://parler.com/assets/SVG/new-badges/09.svg

This individual joined Parler and was active very early in Parler's life.

Using each of these unique identifiers, you can quickly categorize your dataset and remove unwanted user types.

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E xtracting posts is pretty straightforward. It appears that Parler does not give you specific date/time stamps for each post. However, it does seem that Parler switches from "x days ago" to an actual mm/dd/yyyy date after a post is 14 days old or older. Another thing to keep in mind is the javascript snippet mentioned above only works for Parler from the guest view. Once you're logged in, it no longer automatically expands comments and replies. For now, this will have to be done manually.

Go to:
https://parler.com/profile/BillOReillyClub/posts

If you're only interested in images or videos that a profile posts, you can extract the content from this page to get only that content and not every individual post.

Go to:
https://parler.com/profile/BillOReillyClub/media

Unlike some other social media platforms, Parler allows you to filter users' activity to only show their comments. Clicking on the comment will take you to the original post the user commented on. This is an excellent way to establish social networks and determine which users a profile may interact with.

Go to:
https://parler.com/profile/BillOReillyClub/comments

Votes function similar to upvotes on Reddit. Influencers don't often vote on things but regular accounts will frequently "vote" on influencer content. Extracting the list of content a user votes on can help determine a users' interests and establish potential relationships.

Go to:
https://parler.com/profile/BillOReillyClub/votes

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If you don't have a Parler account, these links will be meaningless and take you to the regular profile page. If you have an account, however, it'll show you specific content types. Now that we can view everything Parler has to offer, we're going to repeat the steps we did under the Content Extraction portion of this article.

Let's start with pulling followers by using the steps below:

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STEP 1: Use Instant Data Scraper to collect the follower list - Here's an example.

STEP 2: Use GoFullPage to capture an image and PDF of the entire page after fully expanding.

STEP 3: Use Save as MHTML to archive the page's source code to back up your image and PDF.

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Repeat this process for each data point on Parler to capture the entire profile.

Another thing to note is hashtags on Parler. Similar to other social media platforms, Parler uses hashtags to help users discover content. Once you've registered an account, you can search by hashtags using the URL structure example above. Here's an example. You can use this to track trending hashtags found on other platforms, like Twitter and Gab, and monitor the conversation on Parler. This can illuminate previously unknown influencers in a subject you're investigating and help expand your research into users' content published on other platforms.

Go to: parler.com/search?hashtag={hashtag}

Next, we'll show you how to automate these processes using Skopenow.

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# EXPANDING YOUR INVESTIGATION

This final chapter will discuss what to do with the information you've extracted, and how to streamline the process going forward.

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O nce you've captured each page, you can begin the analysis portion discussed above, including name, username, link, and other data point discovery. Here are a few examples of what you can do with the information collected on Parler.

Using the list of followers extracted on Parler, you can conduct reverse username searches across platforms on accounts of interest to build out a digital footprint. You can also filter the follower's list by account type to remove any account types that aren't relevant to your investigation and narrow your list down from a few thousand to a few hundred. Using the following list extracted on Parler, you can build a basic social network of the profile you're investigating.

Combining this with analysis of engagement on other platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, allows you to further enrich the network. Much like follower analysis, you can filter the following list by account type to remove any accounts that may not be relevant to your investigation.

Analysis of followers, followings and engagement on posts, comments, and voted content, can help shed light on connections or associations among individuals online. Analysis of hashtags or trending topics can help create a timeline of popular movements, identify rising influencers, and allow you to forecast future events or provide context on current events. Parler represents an ongoing trend on the internet.

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As mainstream social media platforms mature, new platforms are created to serve the interests of niche audiences. Disregarding those audiences and getting behind on investigative techniques required on alternative platforms puts you behind the curve, producing intelligence gaps that could be costly.

Using a tool like Skopenow (a), you can automate each of the processes. Skopenow will automatically conduct reverse username searches across all social media platforms and expand the search using publicly available information.

Using the Association Search tool, Skopenow can identify connections between two individuals. Skopenow can automate the collection, archive the followers and following lists for further use in your investigation. Lastly, Skopenow's automatic report builder will save you time organizing the hundreds of data points collected in a clean and organized manner.

Contact us for a demo to see how Skopenow can streamline your OSINT workflow.
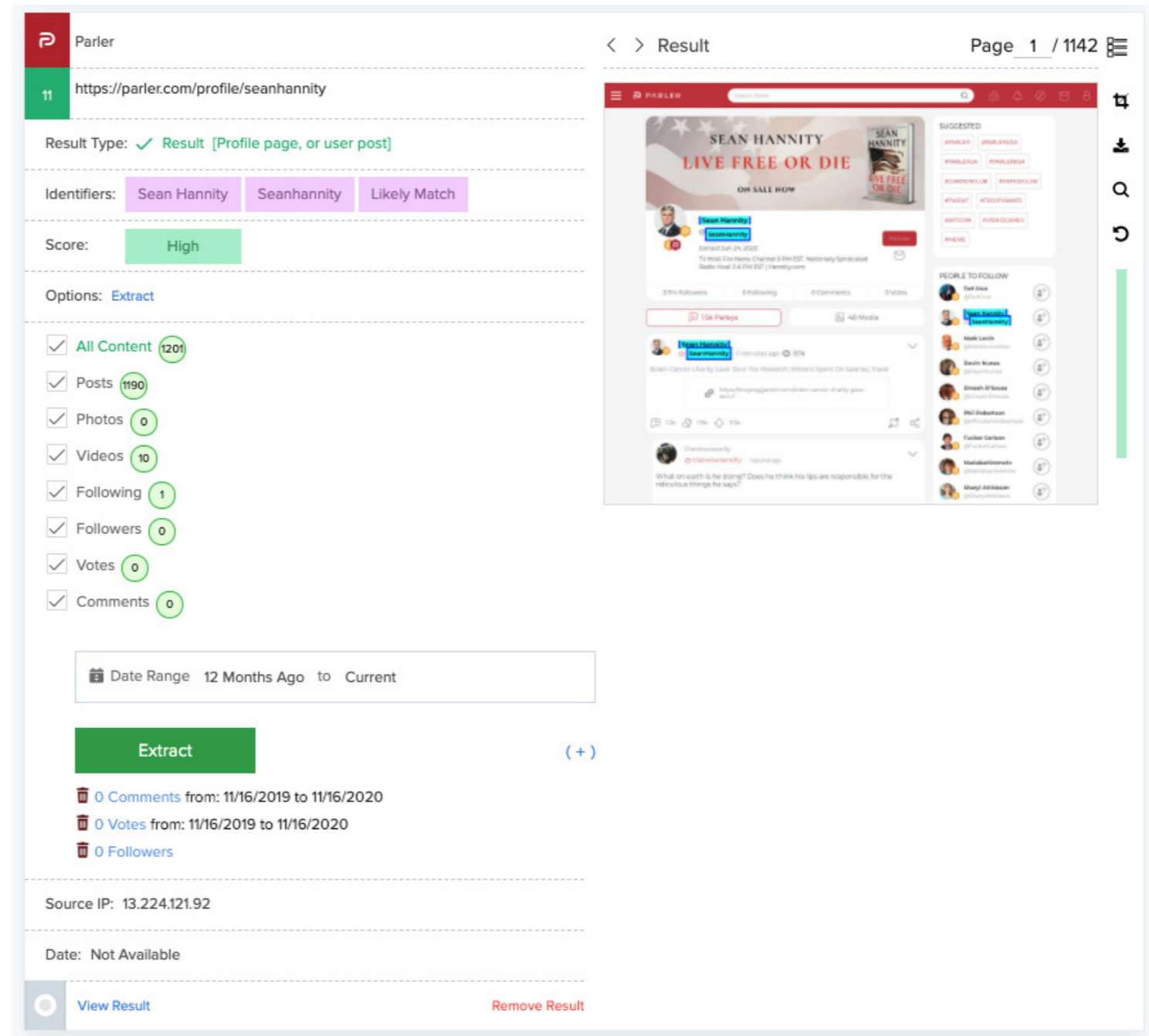


Parler data viewed in Skopenow (a)

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