

March 10, 2022 Web-IQ Proof of Concept LIBRA launch:

“New objective insights in global Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) distribution”

In November 2019, Eldert van Wijngaarden (CEO Web-IQ) attended an [AI round table](#), hosted by the [World Childhood Foundation](#) and Global Child Forum, as the guest of H.M. Queen Silvia of Sweden. The theme was fighting CSAM online through smart technology. During a conversation with the Queen, it became clear that the image that exists about the Netherlands as a distribution country of CSAM is persistently negative and that the international community expects more action from the Netherlands to stop this. However, the approach to combating CSAM online has been limited so far due to a lack of objective information on the worldwide distribution of CSAM. Moreover, if all your resources are spent on processing received CSAM reports, proactive discovery of CSAM will not have a high priority.

Time to act

It is clearly time for action to gain insight into the actual numbers and distribution of the material. This insight can be gained by proactively scanning the internet for abusive images from different angles which also allows for the possibility to alert hosters about the material on their servers.

Organizations and police forces worldwide are working hard to detect and remove online CSAM. So far there has not been a clear picture of where we should be looking on the internet, and we are mainly working reactively. As a result, we mostly look at online environments of which we know they contain CSAM. This encourages a biased system and creates many blind spots. Web-IQ has been struggling with the fact that as a private institution, it legally is not allowed to download, view, store or distribute the material it seeks to discover and remove.

LIBRA

The LIBRA plan was developed by Web-IQ in the autumn of 2020 with the main goal of providing objective, real-time insight into the distribution of CSAM on the public internet. A Proof of Concept (PoC) was executed in 2021 in collaboration with Dutch hotline [EOKM](#) (Expertisecentrum Online Kindermisbruik) and the Swedish children’s rights organization World Childhood Foundation. During the PoC, a unique technique was developed to detect CSAM without downloading or saving the image and without facilitating improper distribution. This is groundbreaking, because it allows for objective insights which can be used to detect and remove CSAM from the internet at an early stage. This way, authorities can also gain immediate insight into the severity of the spread of CSAM in their country. At the same time, victims can be identified sooner, and repeated victimization can be prevented because massive amounts of material can be removed using the automated processes that are already in place.

The tool uses the Remote Analysis technique, which means that hashing of the images takes place remotely - outside the LIBRA server. Only the result of this analysis is sent to LIBRA's server. These scans are thus performed without viewing or storing potentially criminal material. Analysis is done remotely using a serverless function, thereby ensuring that the use of LIBRA's technology falls within the legal frameworks such as the GDPR.

First positive results and future

The PoC results are good; there is a view of - until recently - unknown hotspots containing a lot of material and the waterbed effect is demonstrable. Tens of thousands of new images and victims (mainly boys) have been detected and automatically removed from the internet. Over the next two years, Web-IQ and its partners want to improve the concept and then transfer it to the authorities.

About Web-IQ

Web-IQ is one of the world's leading OSINT companies. Its origin and "driving force" are related to the fight against online CSAM. Web-IQ provides OSINT technology, tools and data to Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) authorities and financial institutions in 34 countries.



Web-IQ team developing LIBRA