

# The Private Investigator's & Bail Bondsman's Guide To Tracking & Finding Cell Phones



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# Harness the Power of Geolocation Technology



# Introduction

The world of private investigation has evolved dramatically. Tools once exclusive to law enforcement are now accessible to investigators willing to harness modern technology. Among these, geolocation intelligence stands out, enabling real-time and historical tracking of cell phones to uncover critical truths.

As a former law enforcement professional or seasoned private investigator, you understand the frustration of losing access to the tools that once made your job easier. This guide will provide a detailed roadmap to reclaiming that edge—legally, ethically, and effectively.

By the time you finish this guide, you'll have a deep understanding of how to leverage active and historical geolocation intelligence to solve complex cases, refine your investigative strategies, and deliver unmatched results for your clients.



# 1. Understanding Active & Historical Geolocation Intelligence

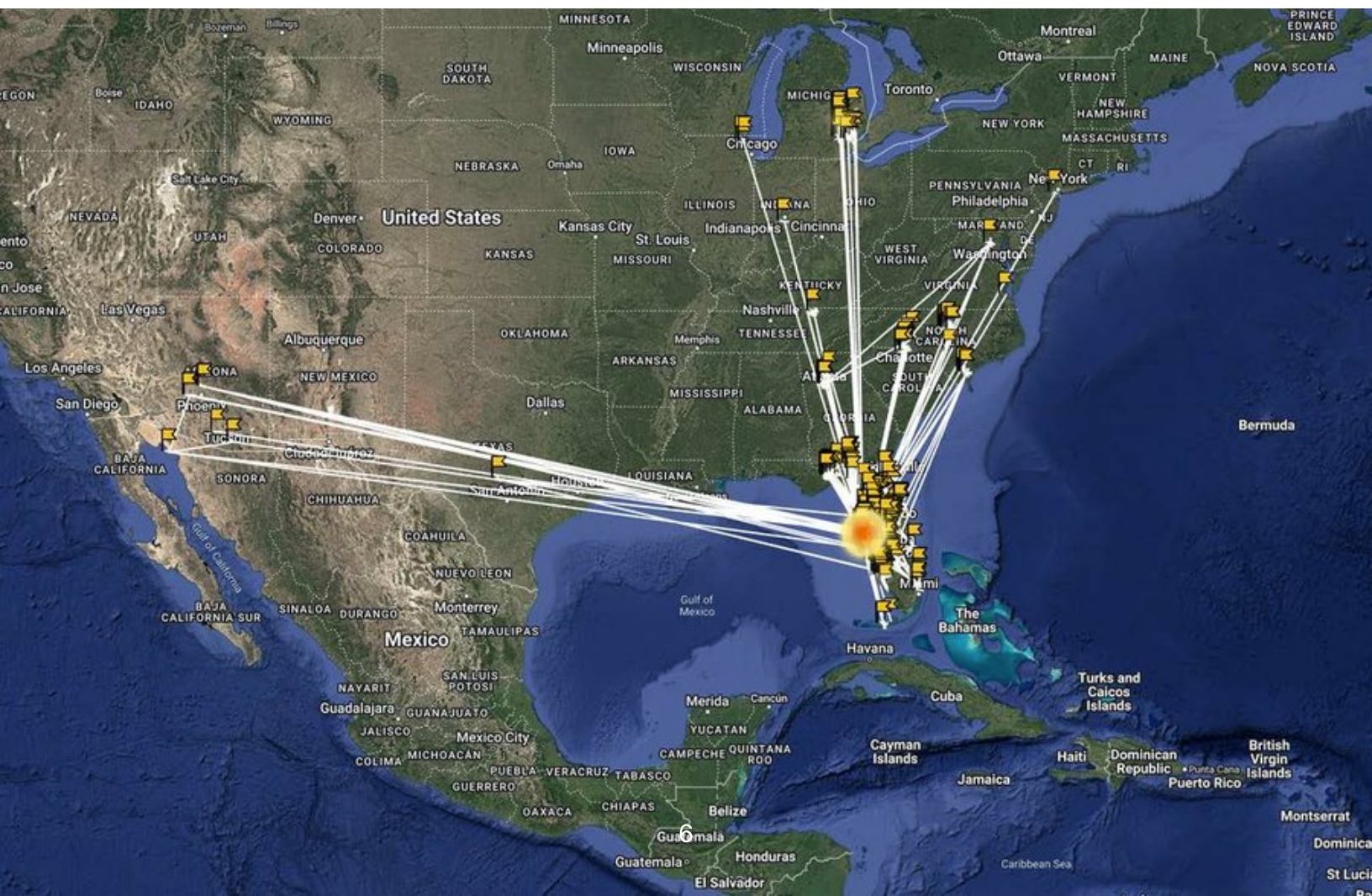
Private investigators often find themselves at a disadvantage, missing the resources once available during their law enforcement days.

Geolocation intelligence offers a way to bridge this gap by providing:

- **Active Tracking:** Real-time location of a cell phone's within 10-30 Meters. It is a singular locate of a phone at a place and time. Typically better to use when you believe the subject is stationary such as a home, work, friend's house, etc.
- **Historical Data Analysis:** Insights from location history from 1 day ago to up to 3 years, derived from billions of global app signals, with location within 10-30 Meters. While it does not always find the subject in question's phone, it provides excellent intelligence about who else the subject spends time with and where they live to assist in your investigation. It is truly a powerful lead source second to none.

- **Geolocation Monitoring:** Insights from location history, based upon monitoring a known subject's key locations, or just a location itself. This is powerful in corporate theft and espionage cases, stalking and harassment cases, and counterfeiting. Any use case where you need to know who is coming and going at a location.

Whether you're tracing a missing person, building a case against an organized crime ring, or solving corporate theft, understanding these tools is vital to success.



# 2. How Geolocation Technology Works

Modern geolocation methods fall into distinct categories, each with advantages and limitations.



# a. Telcom Services

Telecom carriers offer tools that allow tracking through cell tower triangulation.

- Advantages: High reliability for domestic cases, seamless integration with legal protocols, accurate results.
- Disadvantages: Limited to areas with strong network coverage; difficult to become an approved provider of cell tower location services due to the rigorous steps required to become an approved vendor.

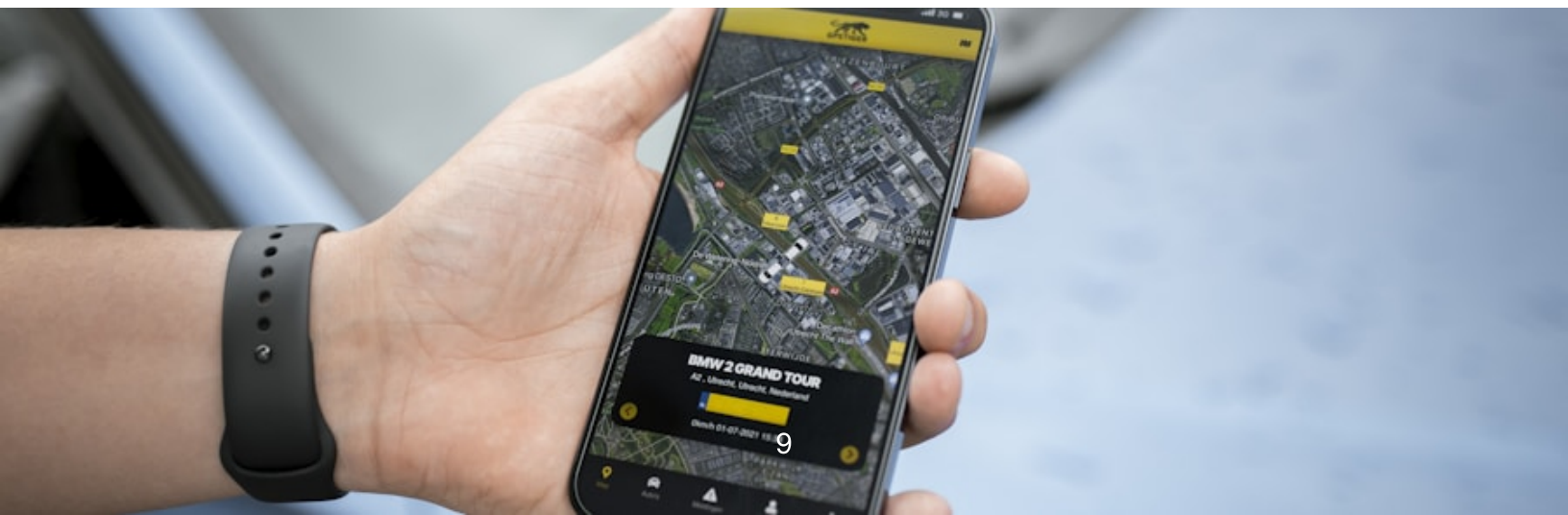




## b. SS7 Protocol

SS7 is a global telecom standard used to share information between networks, enabling location services across borders.

- Advantages: Effective internationally and relatively quick.
- Disadvantages: Access is highly restricted and requires backdoor access to utilize. Costs can vary greatly depending on the location globally.



# c. Link-Based Tracking

Some services involve sending a target a link that, when clicked, reveals their location.

- Drawbacks: Success relies on user interaction. Most subjects are savvy enough to avoid such traps and could be alerted to the investigation.

Each method has its place, but choosing the right one depends on the case specifics.



# 3. Legal Considerations and Ethical Use

Geolocation intelligence for private investigators operates within a spectrum of ethical practices:

- White Hat: Completely legal methods, such as obtaining data from authorized providers.
- Gray Hat: Borderline tactics that may breach user privacy but lack criminal intent.



- Black Hat: Illegal methods, including unauthorized hacking or spoofing.

This guide focuses strictly on white and gray-hat practices to ensure that your work remains above reproach and compliant with legal standards. Keep in mind that all information provided is for intelligence purposes only and typically cannot be used in a court of law.





# **4. Step-by-Step Guide to Using Active Geolocation Intelligence**



# a. For Private Investigators

Active tracking involves acquiring live data from telecom providers or authorized services. Here are the key steps:

1. Gather Preliminary Data: Collect information about the subject, such as their phone number, last-known addresses, and reason for the locate.
2. Partner with Outside Providers: Work with legitimate telecom providers or authorized services to initiate live tracking.



## b. Through Private Services like Next 72 Intelligence

Outside providers like Next 72 Intelligence can provide a singular cell locate or combine it with historical geolocation data to provide additional insights into the subject's movements.

- Singular Cell Locate: Late-night tracking can reveal where a subject spends the night, a critical clue for investigations. Service times range from 6:00 AM to 1:00 AM EST, adjusted for local time zones. For example, 7:00 AM EST equals 4:00 AM PST.
- Information Needed: Basic details, such as phone number, last-known address, and reason for the locate.





A man wearing a headset is looking at a computer monitor. The monitor displays a 3D street view simulation, likely from a software application. The background features a large screen with a stylized white line pattern on a dark blue background. A desk lamp is visible on the right side of the monitor.

# Cell Locate & Historical Tracking:

Combining a cell locate with historical data provides a detailed picture of the subject's movements and activity patterns. This is particularly effective in locating hard-to-find individuals.





# 5. Harnessing Historical Data for Investigations

# a. How It Works

1. Apps installed on a user's phone broadcast permission-based location data, which is aggregated and analyzed using geofencing areas of interest.
2. This data is used to trace historical movements in specific areas, ranging from 1 day to 3 years ago.



## **b. Advantages of Historical Tracking**

- Doesn't alert the subject that they are being tracked.
- Offers long-term behavioral insights, revealing patterns that a single cell locate cannot.
- Provides data as far back as 3 years ago.

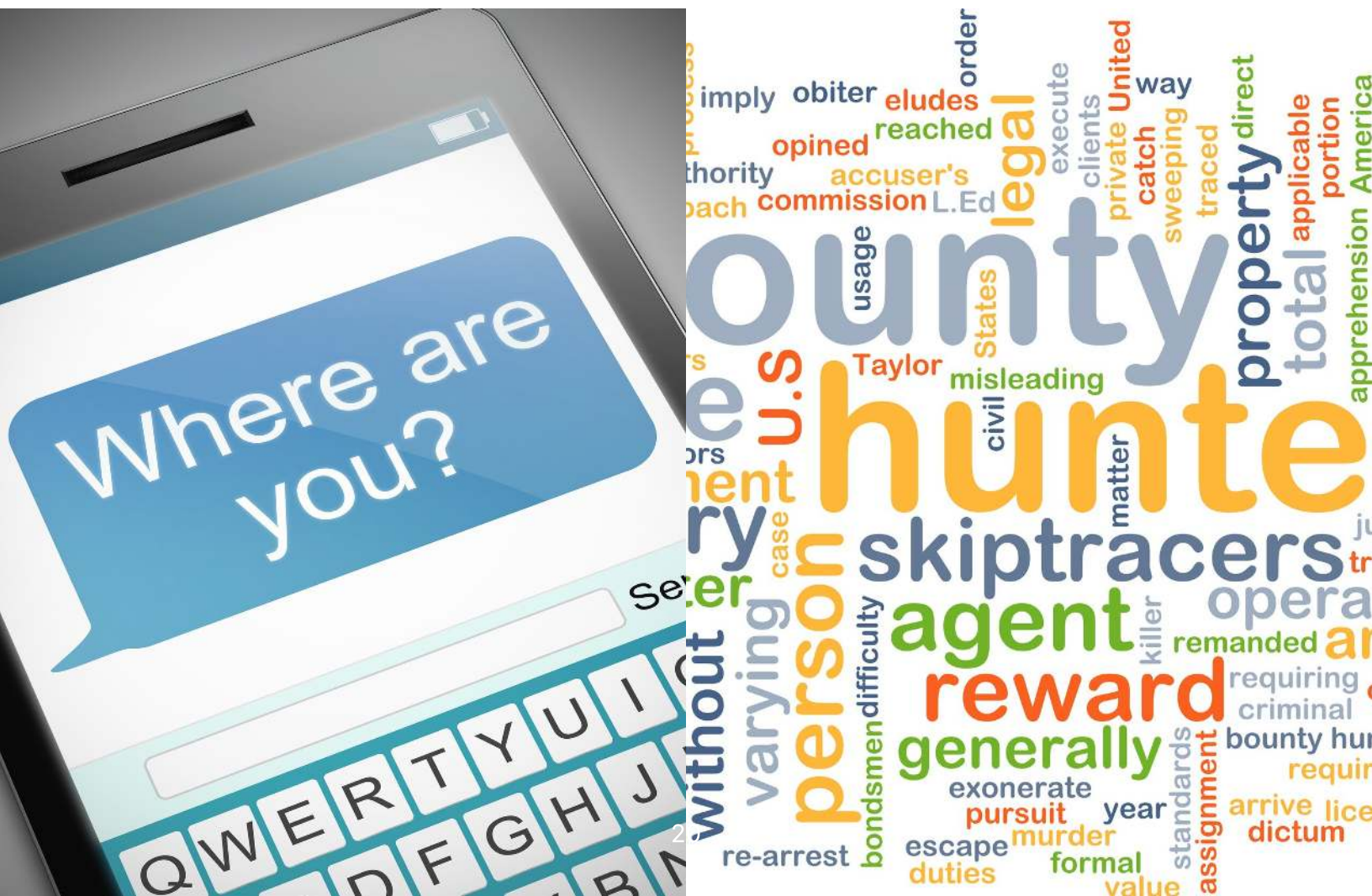




# c. Real-World Applications

Historical geolocation data can be used to:

1. **Analyze an individual's movements:** Map out behaviors over time.
2. **Analyze relationships between groups and people:** Map out daily routines, meeting points, and activities.
3. **Locate missing persons:** Assist in finding individuals as long as they are carrying their phone.
4. **Develop witnesses:** Identify individuals at a crime or civil incident scene.
5. **Find bail skips:** Locate individuals who have skipped bail and their associates or family members.
6. **Surveillance intelligence:** Avoid wasting hours by identifying where to set up for observation.
7. **Organized crime investigations:** Track movements, meeting points, drop-off points, and storage locations for counterfeit goods, stolen vehicles, or corporate espionage.





# 6. Why DIY Location Intelligence Falls Short

While do-it-yourself (DIY) tools for geolocation tracking exist, they often lead to dead ends for several reasons:

- **Lack of Precision:** DIY tools often fail to provide granular, actionable data or rely on permission-based tools.
- **Illegal Activity:** Installing apps or malware on someone's phone is illegal in most jurisdictions.





- **Limited Access:** Telecom network data and other critical resources are typically unavailable without proper channels or access.

**Professional services like Next 72 Intelligence save time, ensure accuracy, and deliver results through a combination of data analysis and expertise.**

# 7. Real-Life Applications and Success Stories

Case studies highlight how geolocation intelligence has solved complex investigations:

- **Case 1: Missing Persons:** A private investigator located a missing teenager using historical data and burner phone tracking. The investigation confirmed her safety and revealed critical details about her movements.
- **Case 2: Surveillance Setup:** By geofencing a subject's known home and work locations, investigators isolated their phone and tracked them to an Airbnb 50 miles away, enabling surveillance.





- **Case 3: Murder Investigation:** Historical data revealed a phone at a crime scene, which led police to a suspect's residence.
- **Case 4: Burglary Investigation:** A \$1M burglary was solved by geofencing the victim's home and identifying four suspects who left the area after the crime.
- **Case 5: Bail Skip Locate:** Historical tracking revealed a bail skip's daily movements, aiding recovery efforts.



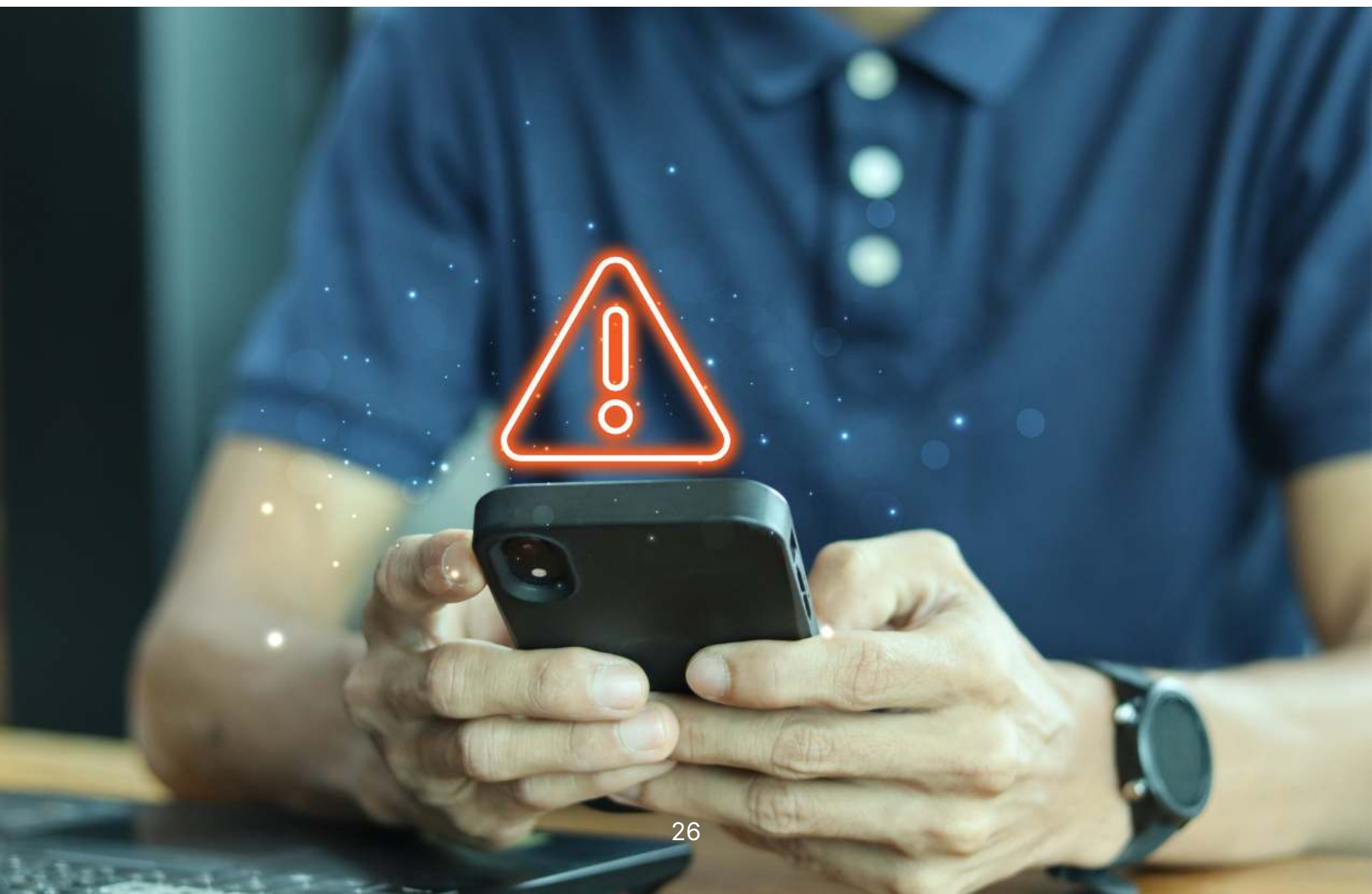


# 8. Troubleshooting Common Challenges



# a. Lack of Signal

- If a phone is turned off, historical data can reveal movements up to the point it went dark.
- Apps with location permissions disabled or geolocation tracking turned off can impact results but may be overcome with active tracking.
- Burner phones can still be located using active or historical tracking.
- VOIP numbers cannot be precisely tracked but may reveal general areas using link-based tracking.

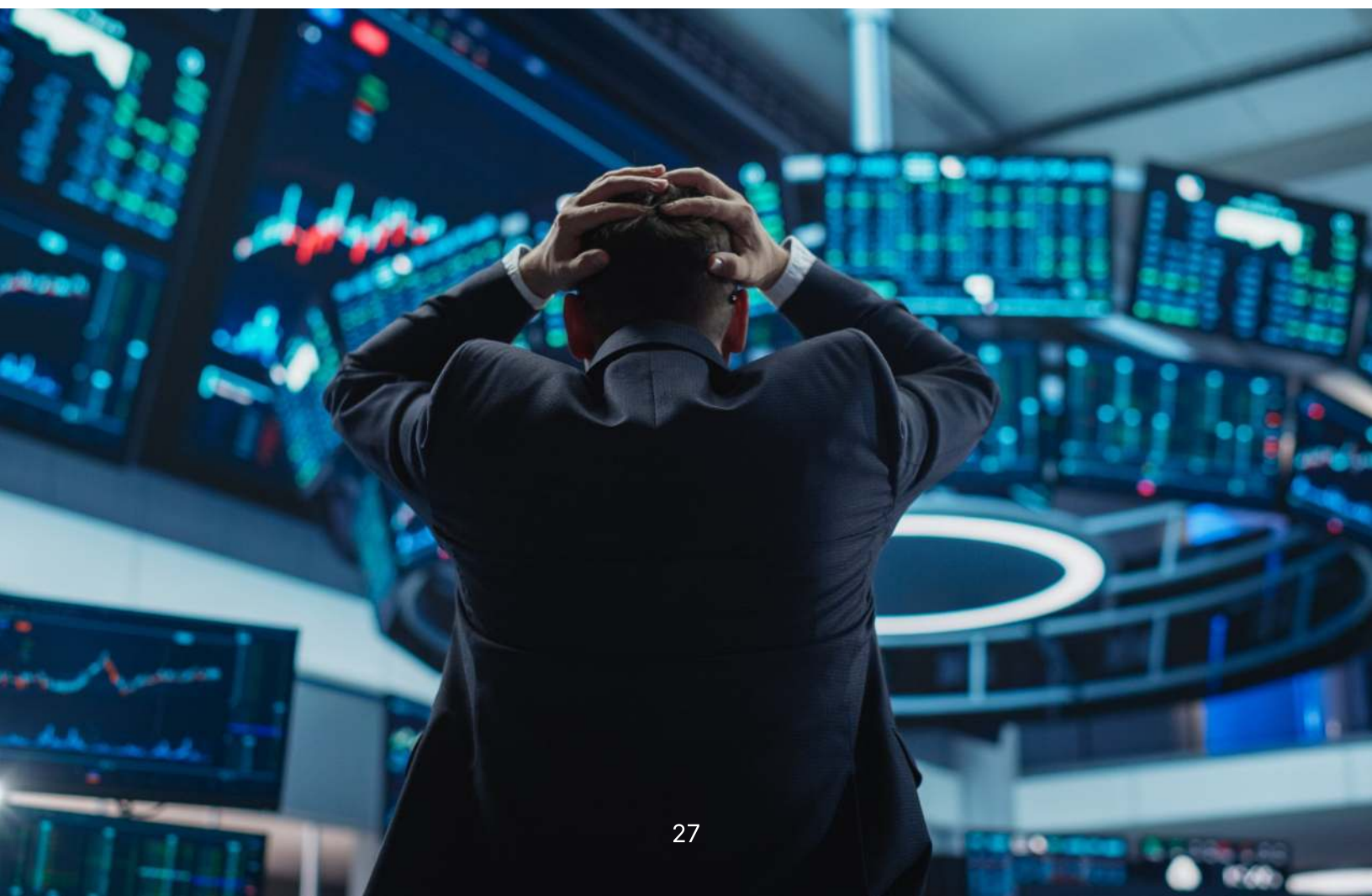


## b. Data Overload

Large datasets often contain numerous devices broadcasting from the same location. Narrowing down results requires:

- Identifying known patterns of the subject's behavior.
- Cross-referencing key locations with dates and times.
- Refining searches through collaboration with clients.

With expertise and strategic filtering, these challenges can be effectively managed.





# 9. How Next 72 Intelligence Can Assist

Next 72 Intelligence specializes in providing comprehensive geolocation services, including:

- **Active Cell Location:** Locate a device anywhere in the world.
- **Historical Geolocation Searches:** Analyze data from up to 5 known subject locations over the past 3 years.
- **Refined Data Analysis:** Sort and narrow down data into actionable insights.
- **Interactive Dashboards:** Provide user-friendly tools to explore findings.
- **Consultations:** Assist investigators in interpreting results.





# **10. Conclusion: Empowering Investigations with Geolocation Intelligence**

Geolocation intelligence and cell location services represent powerful tools for modern private investigators. Whether through active tracking or historical analysis, these techniques provide the precision and clarity needed to solve complex cases. By mastering these methods, investigators can deliver exceptional results for their clients.

Start leveraging geolocation intelligence today to take your investigative skills to the next level.



## About Next 72 Intelligence

With over 40 years of experience, Next 72 Intelligence's elite team of specialists, cyber experts, and former law enforcement officers deliver actionable intelligence and solve complex cases. From combating organized fraud to locating hard-to-find individuals, we are trusted partners to attorneys, corporations, and law enforcement worldwide.



# NEXT 72 INTELLIGENCE

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