

From Information to Intelligence



A Practical Guide to Strategic Watch

Chapter 2: Strategic Watch (Part 2)

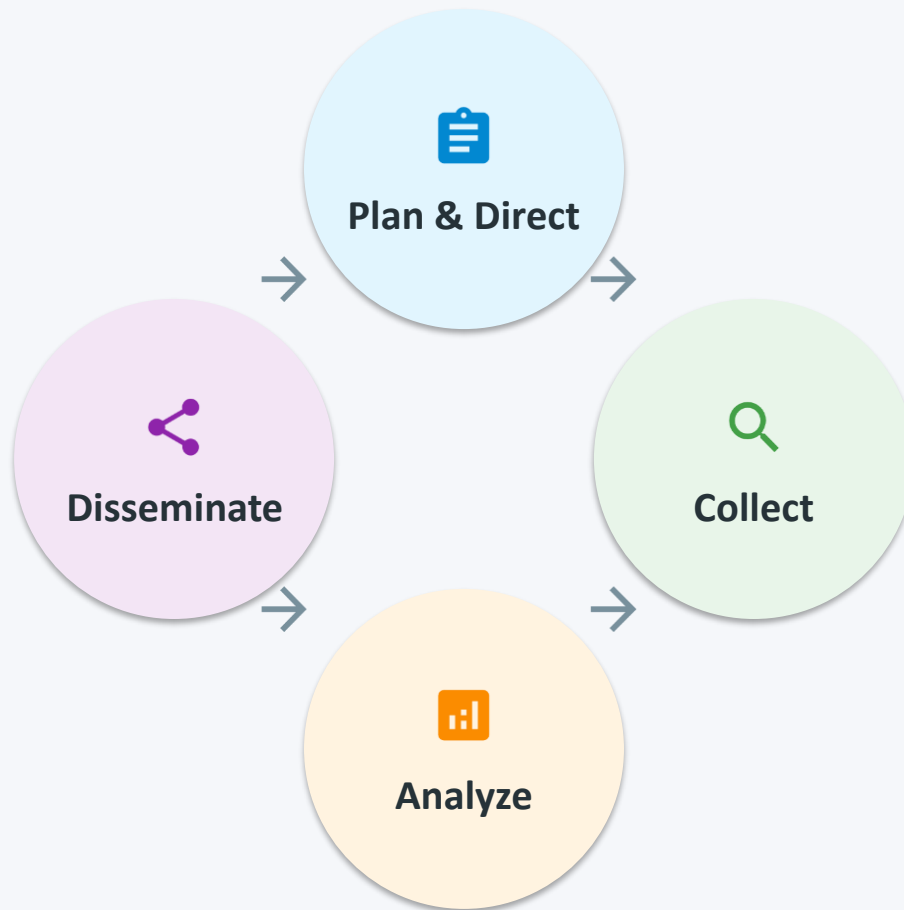
Covered Today:

- ✓ The Detailed Steps of the Watch Process
- ✓ Free Tools for Collection, Management & Dissemination

"Without a system, you are just Googling. With a system, you are doing intelligence."

Dr. Adel MOUSSAOUI
Computer Science department
University of M'sila

The Intelligence Cycle: Our Roadmap



💡 Key Concept

- This is a **continuous cycle** where results from one phase feed directly into the next.
- The intelligence gathered in one cycle becomes the foundation for planning the next cycle.
- This cycle is the **core system** for effective strategic watch.

Step 1: Plan & Direct - The Foundation

The Big Idea

If you don't know what you're looking for, you will never find it. This is the **most critical step**.

Goal

To define the intelligence needs clearly.

Key Tool: Key Intelligence Topics (KITs)

These are the **specific, actionable questions** that decision-makers need answered.

KIT Examples

Bad KIT

"Monitor competitors."

Good KIT

"Will our main competitor likely launch a cheaper version of their product in the next 6 months, and how should we respond?"

How to Define a Key Intelligence Topic (KIT)

✓ A Good KIT is...



Specific

Clearly defined scope



Actionable

Leads to decisions



Time-bound

Has a deadline

Σ KIT Formula

"What [specific information] do we need about [a specific topic] to make [a specific decision] by [a specific time]?"

💡 Practical Example



Scenario: An Algerian e-commerce company

📋 Example KIT

"What are the **delivery speed and pricing strategies** of our **two main competitors in Algiers**, and what would be the **impact on our market share** if we introduced a **same-day delivery option by Q3**?"

Step 2: Collect - Finding the Raw Material



The Big Idea

Systematically gather information from **relevant sources** to answer your KITs.



Golden Rule

Always **note your source** for later validation.



Two Types of Sources



Primary Sources

Information you get **directly** from original sources.

Examples:

- ✓ Interviewing a customer
- ✓ Surveying users
- ✓ Direct observation
- ✓ Expert consultations



Secondary Sources

Information that **already exists publicly**. This is the focus for most watch activities.

Examples:

- ✓ News articles
- ✓ Financial reports
- ✓ Social media
- ✓ Government data

Introduction to the Free Toolbox



Why Free Tools?

Accessible to everyone, perfect for **learning**, and often powerful enough for small to medium projects.



The Trade-off

You invest your **time** instead of your **money**.



Collection Tools

For automatic information gathering from various sources.

Examples:

- ✓ Google Alerts
- ✓ Feedly
- ✓ TweetDeck
- ✓ Google Trends



Management Tools

For structuring and organizing your findings.

Examples:

- ✓ Trello
- ✓ Notion
- ✓ Google Sheets
- ✓ Evernote



Dissemination Tools

For sharing your intelligence with stakeholders.

Examples:

- ✓ Executive Summary
- ✓ Google Data Studio
- ✓ Canva
- ✓ Google Slides

Collection Tool 1: Google Alerts



Google Alerts



What it does

Monitors the web for **new content** containing your specific keywords.



Best for

Tracking mentions of your **company**, **competitors**, or **industry terms**.



How to use

- 1 Go to **google.com/alerts**
- 2 Enter your keyword (e.g., "Yassir expansion")
- 3 Choose result type (news, blogs, etc.)
- 4 Set frequency and delivery method



Pro Tip

Use **quotation marks** for exact phrases and the **minus sign** to exclude terms.

"cloud computing" -AWS



Google Alerts Interface

The screenshot shows the Google Alerts interface. At the top, there's a blue header with the word 'Alerts' and a sub-header 'Monitor the web for interesting new content'. Below this is a search bar containing 'barry schwartz'. To the right of the search bar is a close button (X). Below the search bar are several dropdown menus for configuring the alert: 'How often' (set to 'As-it-happens'), 'Sources' (set to 'Automatic'), 'Language' (set to 'English'), 'Region' (set to 'Any Region'), 'How many' (set to 'All results'), and 'Deliver to' (empty). Below these menus are two buttons: 'Update alert' and 'Hide options'. Below the configuration section is an 'Alert preview' section. It shows a sample alert for 'NEWS' from 'bnn.ca' with the headline 'Three assumptions keeping returns out of your hands: Barry Schwartz' and a brief summary of the article.

Collection Tool 2: Feedly



Feedly



What it does

An **RSS feed aggregator** that brings new articles from your favorite blogs, news sites, and journals into one dashboard.



How to use

- 1 Create a Feedly account
- 2 Search for and follow sources
- 3 Organize them into boards

Example Sources & Boards:

TechCrunch

Wired

Algerie Eco

AI News

Local Market

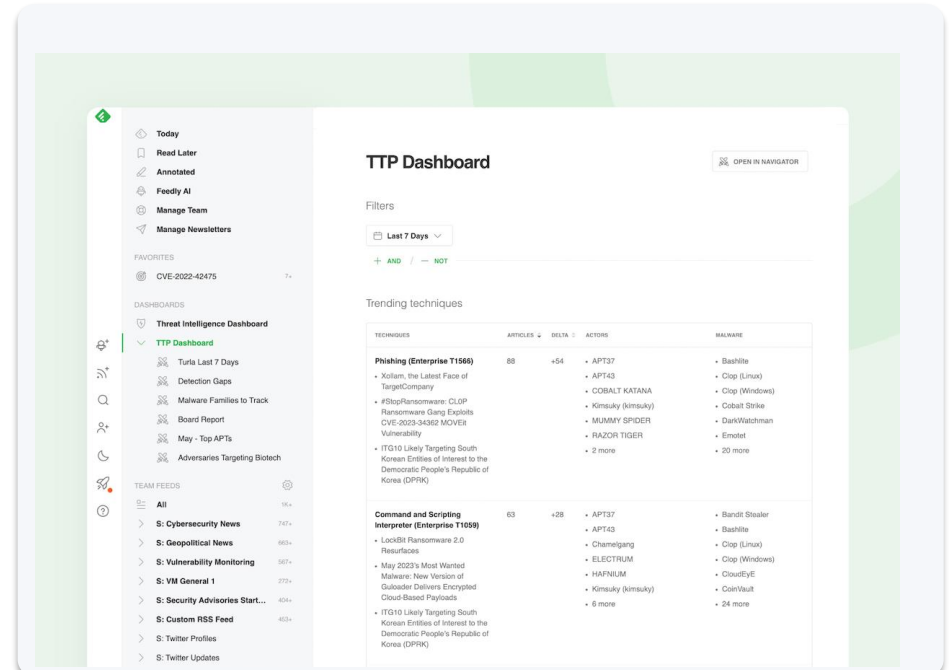


Best for

Technological and **Market Watch**. Following industry thought leaders.



Feedly Dashboard



Collection Tool 3: TweetDeck



i What it does

A powerful, **free dashboard** for monitoring Twitter (X) in **real-time**.

▶ How to use

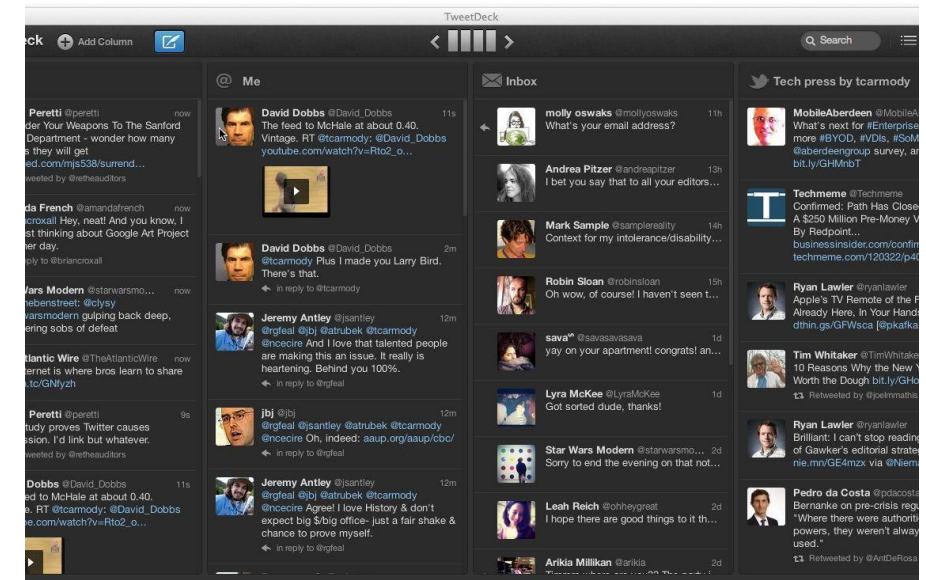
- 1 Log in with your Twitter account
- 2 Create columns for different monitoring needs

Column Types:

- # Specific search terms (e.g., #StartupAlgeria)
- @ User mentions (e.g., @YourCompanyName)
- 👤 Lists of influencers or competitors

★ **Best for**
Reputational Watch and **real-time event tracking**.

🖥️ TweetDeck Interface



Collection Tool 4: Google Trends



Google Trends

What it does

Shows the **popularity of search queries** over time and across regions.

Best for

Identifying **emerging trends** and comparing interest in different topics.

How to use

- 1 Enter keywords (e.g., "electric vehicles")
- 2 Compare interest over time or by region

Example Keywords:

 electric vehicles

 Algiers vs. Oran

Practical Use Case



Beverage Company Market Analysis

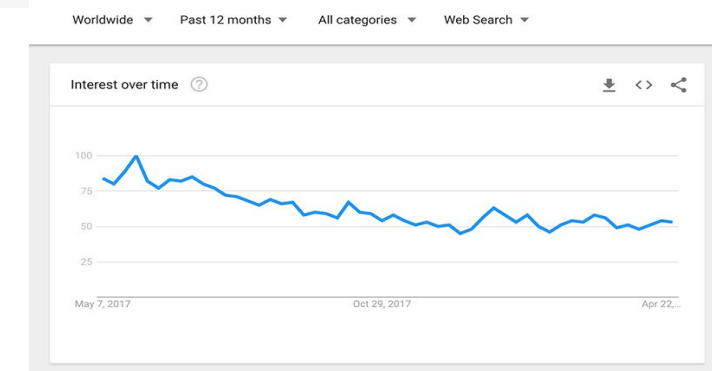
A beverage company could track search interest for "healthy drinks" vs. "soda" to spot a market shift.



Healthy Drinks



Soda



Step 3: Analyze - From Data to Insight



The Big Idea

This is where you **add value**. You turn a pile of collected information into meaningful intelligence by identifying patterns, connections, and implications.



Key Question

"**So what?** What does this mean for us?"



Adding Value Through Analysis



Raw Data

Disconnected information points



Identify Patterns

Connect the dots, find relationships



Generate Insight

Actionable intelligence for decision-making



Simple Technique: The 5 Whys

Keep asking "**Why?**" to get to the root cause of an event.

Example:

1

"Competitor sales are down."

2

"Why?" → "They lost a key distributor."

3

"Why?" → "Their product had a quality issue."

This is the real intelligence.

Analysis Tool: SWOT Analysis

What it is

A framework to evaluate a company's position by listing **internal** and **external** factors.

How to use it for Watch

Use the intelligence you've collected to fill it out:

- ✓ **Strengths** (Internal): What advantages do we have?
- ✓ **Weaknesses** (Internal): What could we improve?
- ✓ **Opportunities** (External): What good trends can we exploit?
- ✓ **Threats** (External): What external challenges do we face?

SWOT Grid Example



Strengths

Internal Factors

- Strong brand recognition
- Proprietary technology
- Experienced team



Weaknesses

Internal Factors

- Limited distribution channels
- High production costs
- Outdated marketing strategy



Opportunities

External Factors

- Growing market demand
- New technology adoption
- Competitor's market exit



Threats

External Factors

- New market entrants
- Changing regulations
- Economic downturn

Management Tool 1: Trello



Trello

i What it does

A **visual collaboration tool** that organizes projects into boards and cards.

★ Best for

Managing the **watch process** and organizing findings.

▶ How to use for Watch

- 1 Create a board for a KIT
- 2 Organize info into lists

Example Lists:

 To Read

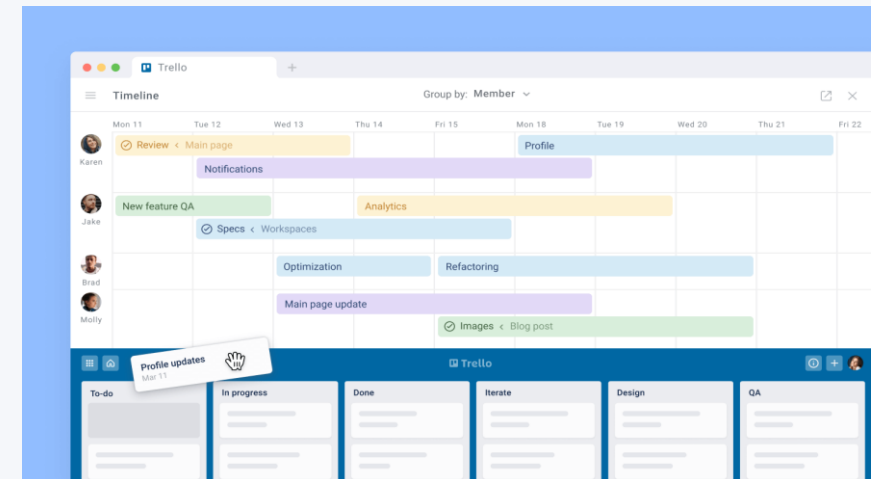
 Being Analyzed

 Key Findings

 Report Ready



Trello Board for Watch Project



Management Tool 2: Notion



Notion

i What it does

An **all-in-one workspace** for notes, tasks, and databases.

★ Best for

For those who prefer **text and databases** over cards.
Great for writing final reports.

▶ How to use for Watch

- 1 Create a database for your intelligence findings
- 2 Add properties to organize your data

Example Properties:

 Source

 Date

 Relevance

 Status

Notion Database for Intelligence



Step 4: Disseminate - Sharing the Intelligence



The Big Idea

Intelligence is useless if it doesn't reach the **right person**, at the **right time**, in the **right format**.



Golden Rule

Always **cite your sources** to build credibility



Know Your Audience



CEO

Needs a **30-second summary** (The "Headline")



Marketing Manager

Needs a **2-page report** with specific data



Technical Team

Needs **raw data** and **detailed specs**

Dissemination Tool 1: The Executive Summary



Executive Summary

i What it is

A **one-page document** that summarizes the key findings, conclusions, and recommendations.



Structure (The Pyramid Principle)

1

Headline Conclusion

The single most important finding

2

Key Supporting Arguments

The 3-4 main points that support your conclusion

3

Data & Evidence

The critical data that backs up your arguments

” Example Headline

"Recommend launching a same-day delivery service in Algiers to regain market share from Competitor X, who is vulnerable due to slow delivery times."

- ▶ **Key Finding:** Competitor X's delivery times are 48% slower than industry average
- ▶ **Market Opportunity:** 62% of customers would switch providers for same-day delivery
- ▶ **Financial Impact:** Projected 15% market share increase within 6 months
- ▶ **Implementation:** Requires partnership with local courier service and minor system integration

Dissemination Tool 2: Google Data Studio (Looker Studio)



Google Data Studio

What it does

A **free tool** to turn your data into informative, easy-to-read dashboards and reports.

★ Best for

Creating **monthly dashboards** that are automatically updated.

How to use

- 1 Connect to data sources (Google Sheets, etc.)
- 2 Build visual charts and graphs
- 3 Share with stakeholders

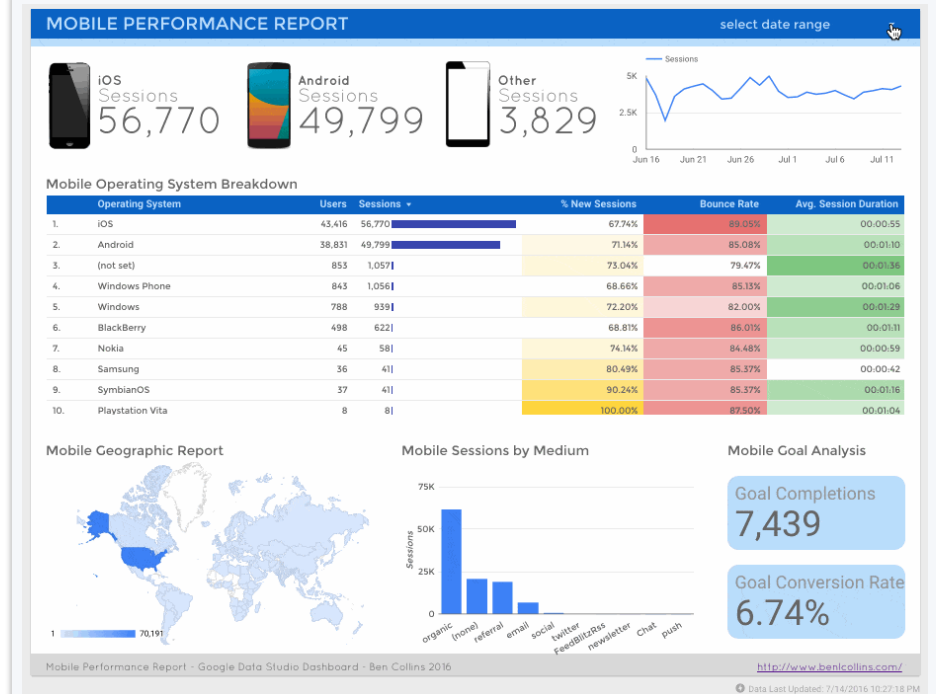
Example Dashboard Types:

Competitive Dashboard

Social Media Sentiment



Sample Competitive Dashboard



Building Your Tool Stack: A Practical Workflow



Scenario: Monitoring a competitor's online activity



Plan

Define a specific KIT to guide the watch process



What new features is Competitor X testing on their website?



Collect

Gather information from multiple sources



Visualping
(website monitoring)

TweetDeck
(social monitoring)



Manage

Organize findings for easy access



Trello (card for this KIT)



Analyze

Identify patterns and implications



SWOT Analysis



Disseminate

Share insights with stakeholders



Executive Summary

Ethics & Best Practices



The Golden Rule

ONLY use **publicly available information**



LEGAL (Ethical Intelligence)

- ✓ Reading public company websites
- ✓ Analyzing job postings
- ✓ Attending trade shows and conferences
- ✓ Using the tools mentioned in this presentation



ILLEGAL (Industrial Espionage)

- ✗ Hacking into private systems
- ✗ Bribing employees for information
- ✗ Stealing confidential documents



Best Practice

Always be **transparent** about your sources and methods.

Key Takeaways & Your Mission



The Process is King

Follow the **Plan → Collect → Analyze → Disseminate** cycle rigorously.



Tools are Your Servants

They **enable** the process; they are not the process itself. Start with one tool from each category and master it.



Your Mission

Choose one thing you are personally or academically interested in (a technology, a competitor, a market trend). Define **one KIT** for it and set up **one free tool** (like a Google Alert or a Feedly board) to start your own strategic watch practice today.



"In the age of information, **ignorance is a choice**. Start watching."