

"SHIFT-DELETE"

by

OLAYIWOLA BABALOLA

mentatDUKE
Houston, TX

OWEN WATLEY

Took our analysts about 18 months to finally trace a cell we'd been tracking to a studio-apartment in Des Moines. I don't know how they knew we were coming, but those guys were freaking out. They tried everything. Shredding receipts, burning records, trashing hard drives. Their hard drives. As far as we could tell, they formatted all the drives, microwaved them, and smashed the circuit boards. We think they even tried shooting a few of them with a .38. They toss the drives out for garbage pickup and try to skip town. Amateur hour. The first thing we always do on a sweep is go dumpster diving. Once we retrieved the drives, it was a pretty straight-forward clean-room rebuild, with a bit by bit image recovery. They didn't even try to write zeroes. Not that it would have helped. At the end of the day, we extracted the majority of their internal communications; more than enough evidence to prosecute, and a few gigs of Internet porn. Those terrorists really like their porn.