

# FBI seeks better analytics

National security agencies collect hordes of data every day. But drilling down into that information and getting valuable analysis poses a whole different set of challenges. While several agencies' offices have developed promising test cases for artificial intelligence, machine learning and automation tools, Robert Osgood, a former computer forensics examiner at the FBI, said the government has hardly scratched the surface when it comes to leveraging these tools.

"The big problem with these type of methodology platforms is that we don't really know how to effectively drive data through them," Osgood, now a professor of data analytics and computer forensics, said Thursday at AFCEA Bethesda's Data Analytics Breakfast. Maria Voreh, the FBI's chief data officer, said the bureau has so much data that it is "near impossible" for the agency to get value out of it quickly enough.

The amount of data I'm getting in, and the amount of sense that we can make of it, there's a huge gap delta, and that's our data debt," Voreh said. "My job is to make sense and reduce that data gap. Whatever I have to do to organize the data, share the data within our agency or other agencies, I've got to reduce that gap, or else I can't serve the mission."

The FBI plans to move to the cloud within the next year in order to share its data both within the department and across other agencies.

"To be able to share broadly with other partners or to meet a joint U.S. mission, we've got to move our data to the cloud," Voreh said. "These siloed, on-prem systems aren't going to cut it. Our budgets aren't getting any better, so buying more computers and putting them into a warehouse somewhere isn't going to happen. We've got to invest in the cloud, we've got to move our critical systems so that we can get the data out of them."

While the move to the cloud will take the FBI multiple years, Voreh said the migration will allow the agency to access all of its data more quickly.

"It's going to take time," she said. "In five years, we'll probably get a lot further along because once we break the seal of the security, the protections, compliance and the comfort of the social understanding within the agency, then it becomes easier. It's always that first piece going to a new technology that's the hardest."

The FBI put out a [request for information \(RFI\)](#) for commercial cloud services on Feb. 16.

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