

DocAuthority

Founded 2013 | HQ Ra'anana, Israel | <50 employees | <\$5M revenue (est.)

DocAuthority is a start-up that has developed a new, patented, AI-based approach called BusinessID™ to identify sensitive information. In our discussions with the firm and in viewing a product demonstration, it is clearly very promising. At the same time, we have some questions about how it actually works.



The Company

DocAuthority is an Israel-based start-up, with offices in the UK and US. Founded in 2013 and headed by CEO Steve Abbot and co-founder Ariel Peled, the company has raised around \$10 million through series A funding led by Raine Ventures. The history of DocAuthority goes back to 2001, though, when Pelet founded PortAuthority, arguably the originator of data loss prevention (DLP). Pelet sold it in 2006 to Websense for a reported \$90 million, but the expertise acquired during that period, including data fingerprinting, has been leveraged in the DocAuthority products.



The Technology

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discussions with some open questions about how it actually works. The DocAuthority system is used to identify and protect sensitive data automatically; it's primarily a search-style DLP approach. The identified information is categorized based on an understanding of the data's business meaning and context. DocAuthority can be used in many different industries to identify and protect sensitive information, forming the basis for designing a practical information governance model. For example, access control lists (ACLs) are typically very difficult to manage beyond switching them on or off, but DocAuthority lets users gain insight into their effectiveness. Similarly, one can use DocAuthority to identify data at scale that needs to be retained or destroyed.

However, how it does all this differently from traditional methods remains a bit of a headscratcher. What we do know (having sourced and read the original patent) is that it works through a form of pattern matching. The system extracts features from the documents, creates a vector based on those features, then matches for similarity in future

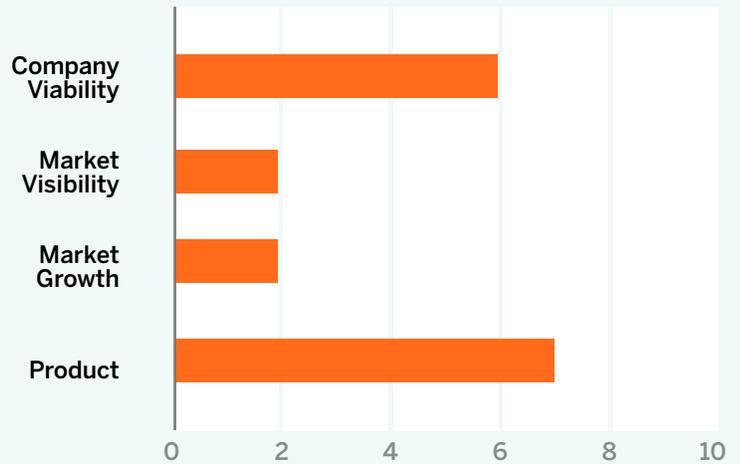
documents against the feature vectors. Where we are still somewhat in the dark is in how to configure those vectors to meet specific requirements; DocAuthority told us that the system does not need to be trained as it has already been pretrained. What we can see is an AI-driven faceted search engine, primarily for Word, Excel, and PDF files held in file shares, SharePoint, and Office 365. It does a good job of the initial analysis and tagging, and it can run across multiple repositories and aggregate/federate the results. Combine that with some prebuilt taxonomies and you have a tool well worth looking at if you are facing multiple silos of unidentified data, as it primarily builds an auto-classified information hub. By default, from that hub, the potential exists to automate records management and governance on scale.

Our Opinion

Our issue is that how the product works is a bit vague. As the firm has already patented the underlying approach, it would be valuable to articulate more clearly how it differs from traditional approaches and, more importantly, how it can be practically leveraged in the enterprise. In future releases, we would also like to see more automated delivery of insights, alerts, and actions to the end user, rather than simply data identification. It seems to us that this technology can do a lot more than just identify sensitive information. All in all, though, DocAuthority is a good product, and a timely one as more data protection regulations roll out (e.g., GDPR and CCPA). It's also refreshing to see new approaches to AI being used for document and records management requirements, as traditional approaches struggle to scale and truly deliver on their promises.

Figure 1 shows our assessment of DocAuthority across four categories.

Figure 1
DocAuthority Assessment



Advice to Buyers

Identifying the valuable files amid problem and junk files is a significant challenge; most organizations have no idea what they have. Many tools and services are available to help with this, yet most work by reading the text in the metadata or file itself, and while they are quite effective, they struggle with high volumes. DocAuthority provides an intriguing new approach to this common challenge and may be worth exploring and testing within your organization.



SOAR Analysis

Strengths

- Innovative approach to data governance
- Operates at scale in complex environments

Opportunities

- Capitalize on need for information governance
- Optimize and replace traditional information management activities

Aspirations

- To deliver DLP capabilities to non-traditional environments
- Empower CISO to engage with internal data that is traditionally overlooked

Results

- Clients such as Saga and El Centro
- Patented technology

About Deep Analysis

Deep Analysis is an advisory firm that helps organizations understand and address the challenges of innovative and disruptive technologies in the enterprise software marketplace.

Its work is built on decades of experience in advising and consulting to global technology firms large and small, from IBM, Oracle, and HP to countless start-ups.

Led by Alan Pelz-Sharpe, the firm focuses on Information Management and the business application of Cloud, Artificial Intelligence, and Blockchain. Deep Analysis recently published the book "Practical Artificial Intelligence: An Enterprise Playbook," co-authored by Alan and Kashyap Kompella, outlining strategies for organizations to avoid pitfalls and successfully deploy AI.

Deep Analysis works with technology vendors to improve their understanding and provide actionable guidance on current and future market opportunities.

Yet, unlike traditional analyst firms, Deep Analysis takes a buyer-centric approach to its research and understands real-world buyer and market needs versus the "echo chamber" of the technology industry.

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About the Author

Alan Pelz-Sharpe is the founder of Deep Analysis. He has over 25 years of experience in the IT industry, working with a wide variety of end-user organizations like FedEx, The Mayo Clinic, and Allstate, and vendors ranging from Oracle and IBM to start-ups around the world. Alan was formerly a Partner at The Real Story Group, Consulting Director at Indian Services firm Wipro, Research Director at 451, and VP for North America at industry analyst firm Ovum. He is regularly quoted in the press, including the *Wall Street Journal* and *The Guardian*, and has appeared on the BBC, CNBC, and ABC as an expert guest.