

Deviceless Forensics Services

Minimising Reliance on Device Forensics

Phones, laptops and other devices often contain valuable evidence for investigations. However, the rise of work-from-home setups means remote devices may not always be readily accessible for forensic analysis. Additionally, personal attachment to our devices means premature device collection as part of an investigation can cause business disruption, employee panic or evidence destruction.

FTI Consulting's digital forensic experts help you minimise the need for device seizure in investigations by conducting deviceless forensic assessments.

TYPES OF INVESTIGATIVE SOURCES

Corporate Data

- Collaboration and productivity platforms - Microsoft 365, Google Workspace, Slack, Confluence
- Communication platforms - email, Microsoft Teams
- Network Devices - firewall, proxy, DLP
- Transaction and structured platforms - accounts payable, vendor lists, expense data, customer relationships, and personnel data.

Third-party information

- Phone and message logs
- Building/floor CCTV
- Building access records.

External Public Sources

- Business intelligence research, e.g. corporate records, litigation, regulatory information, blacklists and other public records
- Traditional media, social media and internet sources.

OUR SERVICES

Our team uses deviceless forensic assessments to covertly scope corporate platforms and online information sources for critical user activity, removing the risk of unjustified and hasty device collection. These assessments are particularly valuable in addressing a broad spectrum of challenges in their early stages, including matters related to whistleblower disclosures, intellectual property theft, non-solicitation disputes, and regulatory investigations.



WHEN TO USE A DEVICELESS FORENSIC ASSESSMENT

You can benefit most from deviceless forensics in two situations:

Device seizure is not appropriate or justifiable

- The allegation has not been substantiated
- The person(s) of interest is unknown and therefore requires triage to narrow the investigative scope
- The disruption to business and staff would be destabilising.

Device seizure is not viable or proportionate

- Device forensics is a cost barrier to commencing an investigation
- Device is unavailable, e.g. lost or wiped information, personally-owned device
- Confidentiality or privacy issues, e.g. device contains medical, family, protected or government data.

CASE STUDIES

Unlawful data extraction

Situation

The departure of a senior leader triggered concerns about solicitation and IP exfiltration. It was unknown who in the business was involved or targeted.

Our Role

- Conducted user activity analysis across relevant teams to identify spikes in access and download activity using the corporate communication platform
- Identified sensitive price data had been excessively downloaded
- Analysed instant messenger content, which identified previously unknown involved individuals.

Our Impact

Our initial triage saved the client high costs and business disruption without needing early device forensics. Once the internal investigation matured into a legal dispute involving multiple internal and external stakeholders, we initiated targeted and proportionate device forensics.

Whistleblower allegation

Situation

A whistleblower alleged the company’s Managing Director (MD) favoured certain third-party suppliers for personal gain, including kickbacks, gifts and entertainment.

Our Role

- Appointed by the parent entity to investigate whistleblower’s claims
- Analysed accounting data available to the parent entity, focussing on third-party expenditure patterns, the MD’s expense claims and suspicious payments
- Identified movement of business from existing to new suppliers after the MD joined
- Conducted business Intelligence into new suppliers to identify any undisclosed associations with the MD
- Interviewed whistleblower to gather evidence to substantiate claims.

Our Impact

Through our deviceless forensic investigation, we dismissed several of the whistleblower’s claims due to lack of evidence. We also highlighted areas where the MD was underperforming for the client to address directly.

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