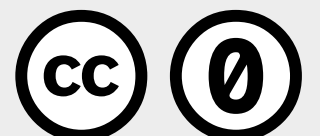


Tips When Collecting Open-Source Information About A Specific Incident



1

What Is Metada?

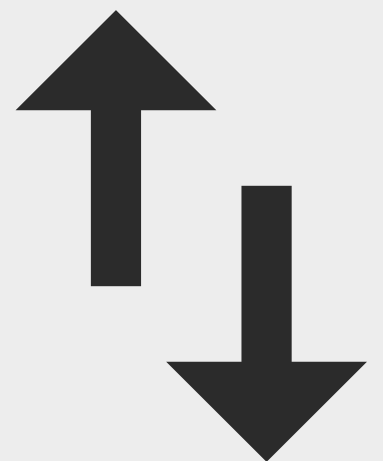
Metadata provides a detailed view of the nature and characteristics of a specific file (video, image, post, email) regardless of its content, including the dates it was created and modified, its author, size, geographic location, and the platform used to publish or modify it.



Why Metadata Is Important?

Metadata is necessary to verify the authenticity and integrity of information used in open-source information investigations.

It might also help you find or lead you to help you find the earliest version of the file (its provenance) - which is crucial for any investigation.



How Do We Monitor Metadata?

When collecting open source information, be sure to:

Monitor metadata alongside the content.

Screenshot the web pages

Use a web record extension to record searches and the ways you access the information.

Reserve information as evidence, try using PDF formats for diagrams, HTML for source code, and PNG for images

These formulas help analysts and lawyers understand the chain of custody of information.

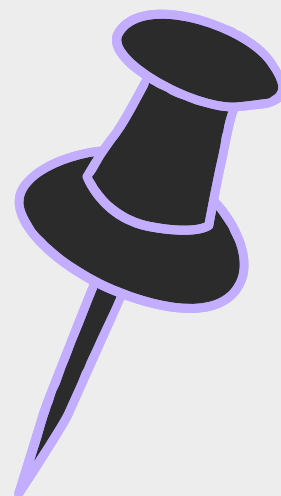
What Is Chain of Custody?

The chain of custody is establishing how the file has been handled, collected, or analysed. In legal terms, the chain of custody is critical for a piece of visual material to reach the standards that a judge would accept it as a form of evidence in a legal proceeding, also known as the “threshold of evidence”.



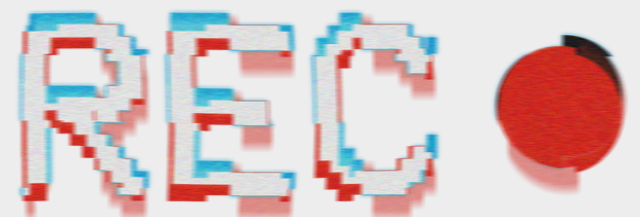
Remember

To download all of the elements that you will need, in the format that you need, along with the target content and save it in a folder in your preservation storage with the target content.



The Video As Evidence

You can verify whether the metadata aligns with the content and the circumstances in the video. But be cautious- metadata can be manipulated, set up wrongly (for example with the mobile phone showing the wrong date) or stripped from the file. It cannot be trusted 100%, but it is the easiest way to begin - it should also be supported with other processes of cross referencing and verification.



Cross-reference With Metadata

Cross-reference with the metadata could include (but not limited to): estimated date, time, and location, eyewitness accounts, the translation of distinct language/code language in the video (for example dialects), other copies of the video found, or identifiable landmarks, street or shop names.



How Does Metadata and Hashing Help In Open Source Investigations?

- Metadata and hashing are two vital digital markers in open source investigations, and are accepted as one of the standards Proof in courts.
- Metadata provides credibility, history, and accuracy to the information provided, while hashing ensures that information used in open source investigations has not been modified or tampered with.



Understanding Hash

Hash/Hashing is a string of numbers and letters created from a specific file using a mathematical algorithm.

If the file is changed in any way, the resulting hash value will also change.

The hash value ensures authenticity and reliability and it is easy to verify the authenticity of the file by comparing this hash value.

The hash value is very small and the hash can be calculated quickly. Changing any part of the file results in a change in the hash value.

Importance of Hash

If hash values are known in advance, they can be included within the file to enhance file authenticity and integrity during collection and analysis operations.

Using hash values is useful in verifying that files have not been modified or changed unauthorizedly.

If hash values are added to open source files, the hash can be used so that users can verify that the files they are working on have not been subjected to tampering or unauthorized change.

Including hash values enhances the authenticity and integrity of files and gives investigators and court members the ability to verify that files have not been illegally modified and are still valid and usable.



Always Remember:

To consult legal professionals for specific guidance on collecting and preserving evidence of acceptable court standards using open source information.

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