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How a Computer Forensics Investigation Firm Can Help with Child Exploitation Cases pt. 1



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Child exploitation cases are difficult for everyone involved. The very word, exploit, means to “use unfairly for one’s own advantage.” Child exploitation is a blanket term describing crimes involving; producing, owning, distributing child pornography, child erotica, child harassment, child coercion, or even just forcing someone younger and weaker to do your will. The nature of this accusation is intense. The accused and alleged victims encounter a range of emotions. This type of accusation can destroy reputations and wreck havoc on all those involved.

If accused of such a crime, the first thing to do is to get an attorney. The second thing is to get a Computer Forensic Investigator. The majority of Computer Forensic Investigators are accustomed to working for the defense in such cases. The District Attorney and FBI have their own departments to investigate these things. Whether using a Public Defender or a private attorney,

How a Computer Forensics Investigation Firm Can Help with Child Exploitation Cases pt. 1 (Cont’d)

ask to get a Computer Forensic Investigator on the case.

With Child Exploitation cases; a Computer Forensic Expert with court experience is familiar with the intake procedures of digital and physical evidence. Your expert can review these procedures; such as chain of custody or use or lack thereof of certain dongles.

Additionally, your expert will know to look for possible network intrusion; for example, this can be done through the use of unprotected wireless networks or protected networks with a large number of users, such as university wireless networks.

Find a professional who can provide all the needed support services, such as responding to interrogatories, providing court reports, and providing expert testimony. Save time and effort by limiting the number of consultants you will have to coordinate.

Search for a computer forensics specialist who is an **experienced expert witness**. It is preferable for the expert witness to be able to explain and discuss how he or she conducted the investigation, came to various conclusions, and determined their findings, rather than relying on another expert witness to interpret your specialist’s investigation.

Have the expert explain the process of computer forensics to you. Can he or she explain the process in language that a jury can understand or is it described using scientific jargon that will sound like gibberish to the court?

Discuss the preparation of court reports. The expert you choose should have ample experience in the generation of court reports, and should be knowledgeable of the intricacies that should be contained in this documentation.



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Remember:

~Peer-to-Peer (such as Limewire) networks can contain files claiming to be one thing and truly be another.

~Unprotected wireless networks can lead to intrusion or imitation of usage.

~Never try to do a forensic search yourself, you risk making evidence inadmissible to court.

Instead of e-mailing to receive a resume first, talk to experts on the telephone. Consider how the individual's voice will sound in court. The expert you choose should be articulate and self-assured without sounding pretentious or arrogant.

Additionally, explore his or her knowledge concerning the Federal Rules of Evidence,



its relation to the admissibility of expert testimony, the Hearsay Rule and its exceptions, chain of custody, and suitable documentation.

The expert's knowledge in these areas is critical - it could make or break the case and impact your reputation, as well.

Form a partnership with the expert. Be sure that the lines of communication between you remain open and that the expert is informed of every twist and turn in the case that might impact his or her role in the matter.

The earlier a forensics specialist is involved in the matter, the greater the chance that usable evidence will result from



the investigation.

Attorneys should do their best to ensure that non-forensic professionals, including IT professionals, do not have access to the drive. If someone has accessed the drive - even turned it on or off - it can affect your case.

Next month: I've chosen an expert, now what?

The Methodology

- Seize eEvidence
- Authenticate
- Analyze
- Report

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Case Logs for May

What's in Our Lab?

- 2 x Infidelity Cases
- 4x Corporate Dispute Cases
- 1 Copy write infringement dispute
- 2 Child Exploitation cases

And counting...