



USE CASE

NOT EVERY VICTIM CAN TELL THEIR STORY. HELP THEM PUT IT TOGETHER.

Violent crimes can be difficult and complex to solve. Victims are often unable or unwilling to disclose full details of their stories, leaving it to investigators to piece together the details based on physical evidence, eyewitness accounts, friend and family interviews, and—increasingly—digital evidence. The data from smartphones and cloud accounts can corroborate other evidence, disprove it, and/or generate new leads for investigators to follow.

BACKGROUND

A young man is found murdered in a parking lot the day after a long holiday weekend. Friends and family tell investigators that they noticed nothing out of the ordinary, though one friend discloses that the young man had mentioned something about looking to buy a car.

Police find his heavily damaged smartphone in his pocket and a laptop and an unlocked tablet at his home. They send the smartphone to a data recovery service that specializes in damaged mobile devices and get to work on the laptop and tablet.

Forensic examiners are able to use Magnet AXIOM to collect a full disk image of both laptop and tablet. However, the data recovery service uses a different set of tools to create a raw dd image of the smartphone, which Magnet AXIOM can pull in to analyze together with the other images.

- Text messages on the smartphone reveal meeting arrangements between the victim and another person, but lack context.
- For that, investigators turn to artifacts parsed from the laptop. Those reveal a series of Craigslist messages that show the victim's interest in a vehicle and an exchange of telephone numbers.

“I did the exam on [a homicide] suspect's phone using another mobile forensics tool... We ran [the phone's image] back through [Magnet ACQUIRE] and [Magnet] IEF, and it pulled search history from the phone that I didn't get through the other tool. It showed the suspect right after the homicide, conducting Google-related searches regarding details of the homicide, and prosecutors really liked that information.”
—James Howe, Central Ohio Crimes Against Persons Investigator

Police are able to use the information to identify a suspect, whom they arrest in short order. They are able to obtain a search warrant for that man's mobile devices.

- Artifacts from those devices, validated on different websites, show that the suspect placed multiple ads and was talking to multiple people about the car, collecting personal information such as whether they lived with anyone and where they worked.
- Geolocation data from one of the devices shows that the man had been plotting different meet sites for weeks, choosing remote locations with a low likelihood of witnesses.
- After police in a neighboring jurisdiction contact investigators regarding an unsolved homicide that appears to have similar characteristics, Portable Cases enable the investigators to help solidify the case against the suspect—and to help county prosecutors build their case, as well.

Learn more at magnetforensics.com

For more information call us at 1-844-638-7884
or email sales@magnetforensics.com