Social Media

Legility is adept at social media and webmail collection, having put its services in work in a high-profile case involving students at a major American university. Among social media sites involved in the litigation, Legility collected data from Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. Legility also collected data from a host of webmail sites, including Gmail, Microsoft's Hotmail/Live Mail, Yahoo, Apple's Me.com and various university-affiliated domain names. In addition, we were able to collect data from Google applications associated with Gmail accounts, such as Google documents, calendars and contacts.

Legility developed a solution to easily collect data from the webmail accounts, which involved both the Internet Message Access Protocol (IMAP) and the Post Office Protocol (POP) account types. We then implemented a proprietary process for the deduplication of emails across multiple formats. In typical platforms this would have been impossible. However, Legility successful deduplicated the various email formats against each other by running a standardization algorithm on all data prior to the deduplication process, saving time, money and resources.

For the different social media platforms, our collection efforts varied as necessary. Legility collected data from LinkedIn, the social networking site for business professionals, by creating code to pull all of the information from LinkedIn user profiles and groups which users belonged.

Legility Team

Legility is the independent, global new law company.

We're here to do the best legal work of our lives alongside our innovator clients.

We deliver transformative legal solutions that build business value and set our clients apart. Our global network comprises 20+ offices & 1,500 people, and our legal operations work spans every industry and practice area. We have world-class data, strategy, and talent operations. But everyone and everything is driven by our core values:

- Do the Right Thing.
- Fabled Service.
- Diversity is in our DNA.
- Passion for Innovation.

We collected data from Twitter by writing code to download all available tweets. To access older tweets that were archived elsewhere, we leveraged systems that stored databases of archived tweets. Through the modification of an existing application, we collected this information into an interactive webstyle database where attorneys could view and filter tweets by year, month and day.

For Facebook accounts, it was necessary for Legility to enlist the end user's involvement in collecting data due to Facebook's security protocols. Once collected, each user uploaded their data to Legility using their STFP (Secure File Transfer Protocol).

We also needed to collect information from Google docs, including contacts and calendar information. Legility created a proprietary application to grab that data and to then save it in formats that could be used in common programs, like Outlook. From roughly 80 accounts, Legility downloaded approximately 500,000 emails and messages, which were loaded into a traditional review platform for analysis. However, the data we collected from the social media sites were not in formats that could be imported in the same manner. To accommodate, we provided the social media data to our client in specialized format with a user-friendly interface.

As eDiscovery evolves to encompass the demands of proliferating social media platforms, whose users are growing at a geometric rate, it will become increasingly necessary for eDiscovery firms to place an emphasis upon learning and understanding the best practices involved in social media collection. Legility is committed to finding innovative solutions for data collection and review, regardless of the rigor involved or the obscurity of the obstacles in place.

A Word of Caution

Though there are many techniques for gathering data from social media networks and webmail online, digital forensics and eDiscovery companies need to proceed with caution when gathering data. It is important for companies to have proper authorization from the service provider. A common obstacle faced in the collection across various platforms involved the terms of service, the user agreement between the service provider and end user.

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