



ELECTRONIC DISCOVERY

In today's fast paced digital world, electronic data discovery is more important than ever. E-discovery processing philosophies vary greatly for each firm, and with the spread of electronically stored information (ESI), the complexity of the discovery process has significantly increased.

Lighthouse Document Technologies provides the technology and services necessary to successfully get you through each stage of electronic discovery. By walking through the following steps together, we can help increase your efficiency and productivity.

STEP 1: IDENTIFY THE SOURCES OF RELEVANT INFORMATION

Determine where relevant information is stored and who has access to it.

The main objective of the identification stage of the electronic discovery process is to determine the scope, breadth and depth of electronic data that one should pursue during discovery.

The best way to tackle electronic discovery is to have a pre-existing litigation readiness plan. This should be a key component of every organization's records management plan. Companies should create an inventory of their information systems and sources of data and determine their content, location, and accessibility. Sample sources include: enterprise servers, web servers, hard drives, laptops, desktops, removable media such as CDs, DVDs, USB devices, back-up tapes, PDAs, etc.

When litigation is anticipated, the litigation team first needs to identify the personnel relevant to litigation ("custodians") and the types of data that must be collected. Litigation holds, which require the company to immediately freeze its usual document management and disposal efforts, must be issued to preserve all documents and data that may be relevant to the litigation.

Using a variety of tools, Lighthouse works with our clients to identify, preserve, and collect the information and data needed when litigation arises.



STEP 2: COLLECT & PRESERVE RELEVANT INFORMATION

Devise collection strategy to address who, what, where and how data will be collected and preserved.

Preservation

An essential step for any successful electronic discovery plan is the creation and implementation of a rigorous preservation strategy. When litigation is anticipated, quick and thorough steps must be taken to ensure that relevant electronically stored information is protected from destruction or alteration.

Lighthouse Document Technologies can provide consultation to your internal IT department or provide professional service on-site to preserve and collect client data. We take every precaution to maintain the integrity of your electronically stored information.

Collection

The goal of the collection stage is to gather electronic data from identified sources so it can be processed for document review and, ultimately, production. There are several considerations when proceeding with data collection, including: who is going to conduct the collection, the method of collecting, and whether computer forensics are necessary.

Using industry leading hardware and software, Lighthouse Document Technologies has the capacity to collect from virtually any operating system or storage device, capturing the entire drive or one specific file, while at all times maintaining the integrity of your originals.

Forensic Consulting

Forensic data capture may be required during discovery if potentially relevant files have been deleted, overwritten, damaged, or if there is hidden or encrypted data on a system.



STEP 3: PROCESS ELECTRONICALLY STORED INFORMATION (ESI)

Choose a data reduction strategy.

- De-duplication options
- Keyword Searching
- Date ranges and Custodians

Determine whether you need metadata and/or full text extraction.

Choose the format for output and determine whether a load file is required.

One of the challenges in electronic discovery is overcoming the vast volume of material, most of which is non-responsive or otherwise irrelevant. Lighthouse can turn your sea of electronically stored information into a manageable set of documents that you can quickly retrieve, view and search in order to do your job more effectively.

After collection, we take your electronically stored information and using sophisticated technological tools, transform it from a large mass of unstructured content into an indexed, fully searchable database of all your relevant documents.

Some of our processing techniques include the following:

Data Reduction Techniques

DATA REDUCTION/CULLING/FILTERING:

“Data culling” (or “filtering”) refers to the process of removing certain files from the review process in order to control volume and cost. There are many strategies and methods for reducing large sets of electronically stored information, and we use them all.

Lighthouse Document Technologies will first reduce your data by eliminating specified file types and sizes, such as unreadable and system files. We can further reduce your data based on custodian name, date ranges, de-duplication technology, key words, or any other criteria specified by the client.

Data culling techniques can reduce the population for review by 10% – 75%, depending on the volume and the number of techniques used.



De-Duplication

De-duplication (or “de-duping”) is the process of comparing electronic documents based on their characteristics and removing or marking duplicate documents within the data set. There are various methods to de-duplicate and it is important to understand the benefits and ramifications of each before your files are processed.

For example, vertical de-duping (or “custodian de-duping”) refers to identifying duplicates within the data of a single custodian or source. Horizontal de-duping (“case de-duping” or “cross-custodian de-duping”) covers the entire production set, identifying duplicate documents and emails across every custodian and source involved. There is also the question of whether you want duplicates re-inserted prior to production.

The primary purpose of de-duplication is to allow attorneys and paralegals to maximize their time and focus on the most relevant documents. Further, it helps create a clean, consistent data set in which all versions of the same document are marked with identical designations (responsive, privileged, confidential, etc.). De-duplication also reduces the number of files that must be integrated into a database. All of these factors translate to better efficiency and reduced costs.

Lighthouse Document Technologies uses the most advanced file hashing technology (or “digital fingerprinting”) to identify and/or remove all exact or near duplicates within any set of data. With our knowledge and experience, we can guide you to the appropriate de-duplicating strategy for your particular case needs.

Keyword Searching

A keyword search evaluates data by specific words or phrases to locate potentially relevant information. Keywords are often negotiated prior to discovery to determine what content will be produced to the opposing side. However, searching is not always as straightforward as people think. For instance, many file types, such as .tiff, PDF documents, CAD blueprints, and zip files, may not be captured by common search technology. Other obstacles include password protected documents, misspellings, poor optical character recognition (OCR), etc.

A comprehensive search incorporates not only case relevant terms, but also synonyms, code names, spelling variations, acronyms, abbreviations, etc. Once the search terms are selected, it is wise to test them on data set samples and fine-tune the keywords prior to processing the entire corpus of electronically stored information.



Even with thoughtful preparation and precaution, certain files will not be captured by any search engine. Accordingly, it is important to receive an exception report that details all files that, due to their format or file type, could not be searched.

Lighthouse Document Technologies works closely with our clients to understand the intent of the selected terms. Our experience and technology can assist in the development and refinement of a comprehensive search strategy.

Metadata And Full Text Extraction

There is a lot of buzz in the legal community about the practical and ethical implications of metadata. However, the majority of people do not understand what metadata is, how it can be helpful, or the precautions that should be made when producing electronic documents. Lighthouse Document Technologies can help clients understand the issues surrounding metadata. Moreover, we can help you devise an approach for handling metadata both offensively and defensively.

Metadata, commonly described as “data about data,” is “information about a particular data set which describes how, when and by whom it was collected, created, accessed, or modified and how it is formatted. (See The Sedona Conference Glossary for E-Discovery And Digital Information Management)

There are literally hundreds of metadata fields in the different types of electronic files; however, the reality is that only a small number of those fields are actually helpful for electronic discovery purposes.

Depending on your case, some metadata fields such as date of last access or modification, blind carbon copy recipients, or permissions as to who could read or edit a particular document may be important to develop a compelling argument and establish a timeline for critical events.

However in practice, it is much more common to extract metadata as a method to pull basic characteristics, i.e. date, author, subject, etc., from a document so it can be loaded to a review application. In essence, extracting metadata from native files and loading them to a review application is an alternative to manual subjective coding. It allows users to quickly search, sort, and review documents without the additional cost of coding.



Additionally, Lighthouse understands the ramifications of inadvertent disclosure of privileged or confidential hidden metadata to the opposing party. We have the technology to remove metadata from native files so you do not accidentally turn over embarrassing or protected information to the other side.

To ensure the most useful and reliable searching capability, metadata extraction is most effective when done in conjunction with full-text extraction. Full text extraction is the process of pulling the body of an electronic document so the information can be indexed and searched in a case management application.

After devising an individualized approach for processing your electronically stored data, Lighthouse Document Technologies will take your data from almost any electronic source, extract the text and metadata, and prepare the files for output to a variety of case management applications or, if you prefer, in native format. We take special care to preserve the integrity of your data throughout the entire process.

In the end, you have a manageable file set ready for review and analysis. The “parent-child” relationships between e-mail messages and their attachments are preserved during processing, providing the review team with an accurate picture of not only the text on the face of a particular document, but also the context of how electronic documents are related to one another. We also provide load files for all of the commonly used legal industry case management applications including: BlueTrace, CaseMap, Concordance, DB TextWorks, Doculex Viewer, DocuMatrix, Introspect, IPRO View, JFS Litigator’s Notebook, LaserFiche, OmniDox, Ringtail, Sanction, Summation, TotalVzn, TrialDirector, or any variety of delimited formats.

Lighthouse applies a combination of legal industry standards, flexible output formats, and a staff of qualified personal to meet changing demands. When it comes to processing your electronic discovery projects, we are the complete solution.



STEP 4: REVIEW DOCUMENTS

Choose a review method and tool.

Review

After processing, the potentially relevant files need to be reviewed for responsiveness, privilege, and confidentiality. A variety of options exist. Electronic documents may be printed and reviewed on paper, converted to an image format such as tiff or pdf, or reviewed in their native format.

Depending on the size of your case and the preferences of the review team, Lighthouse Document Technologies can help you determine the best, most cost effective method for review and can quickly deliver your documents in the format you desire.

Production

Once the responsive documents have been selected to your satisfaction, we will prepare the documents for production and place them on the storage medium of your choice, plus we have the ability to create a production load file compatible with any case management application.

Our professionals are ready to discuss the various production formats (e.g. native files, TIFF, PDF, paper), as well as the issues and benefits associated with producing your documents in each format.

Lighthouse Document Technologies will assist you in creating a production strategy that will expedite your production process and eliminate significant costs.



STEP 5: PRODUCE DOCUMENTS

Choose the file format for production.

Determine endorsement specifications.

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