



The Importance of Education in eDiscovery

By Tyler Haney, DSi eDiscovery consultant

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We've all seen a lot of articles and blog posts recently about predictions and trends for eDiscovery in 2014. One trend that we at DSi are committed to continuing is our emphasis on education. Whether it be through [blog posts](#), case studies, [white papers](#), CLE events or roundtables, DSi values and focuses on client education. This year DSi has a goal to provide direct eDiscovery education to at least 1,000 people through roundtables, CLE events and other educational seminars. That includes clients, potential clients and even internal education to make sure our team is fully aware of all aspects of our industry and its benefits.



Indifference to eDiscovery is starting to be considered a form of malpractice by most courts and ignorance is no longer bliss. While every attorney does not need to have an eDiscovery accreditation next to their name, they do need to be aware of basic eDiscovery principles and best practices. Attorneys, or anyone dealing with eDiscovery, need to know that eDiscovery “gotchas” do exist so proceeding with some form of caution is highly recommended. This caution starts by having a foundation of eDiscovery knowledge and staying up to date as technology, processes/protocols and case law change and evolve.

At DSi we place a premium not just on client education, but also on employee education as well. Early last year DSi launched [DSi University](#) to make sure our team is knowledgeable about eDiscovery as a whole, not just their specialized competency. We hold our team members accountable to providing a high level of customer service no matter what role they are in. Having that good base of eDiscovery principles in addition to their specialized skill helps employees better serve our clients.

So, what specifically do people need to know about eDiscovery?

A basic understanding of what [metadata](#) is: Metadata is “data about data” that is embedded into files and contains information like date last opened, date created, etc.

The importance of forensically sound [collections](#): Collection is the first step in the eDiscovery life cycle so not doing it correctly can have huge ramifications downstream. The dangers associated with [self-collection](#) is an eDiscovery “gotcha” we frequently run into.



The basics of data culling and ways to cull data: There are several common filters and tools used for initial data **culling**, including deduplication, date range, file type and key word.

Some familiarity of **Technology Assisted Review** (TAR): TAR is becoming a more common tool for finely searching data and finding relevant documents. Corporate clients are going to increasingly request bids for it because it can reduce overall legal spending, which means law firms need to be aware of it.

At DSi, we've committed to providing educational resources for anyone who touches eDiscovery, including attorneys, IT professionals and information security officers. I've gotten mixed feedback when I've talked to clients about their preferred form of education, which is why we provide a variety of methods.

In addition to our events and publications, DSi offers free **software**. We created USB Write Blocker – a tool for eDiscovery and digital forensics that allows access to a hard drive without altering metadata – five years ago. DSi's Resembler is a multifunction, near-duplicate detection tool. Both of these are just more ways we are trying to support the legal community.

eDiscovery is still a relatively young industry but certainly no longer infrequent in lawsuits and investigations. That being said, there is still a resistance to learn basic principles. eDiscovery has become a regular part of litigation, and people need to be savvy to survive. We're excited to share our expertise and help litigation professionals learn the basics.

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