

Review: One Click Collect for Do-it-Yourself Automated ESI Collection

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One Click Collect
www.pinpointlabs.com

TechnoScore: 4.8
1 = Lowest Possible Score;
5 = Highest Possible Score

Harvesting electronically stored information (ESI) can prove cumbersome and expensive. Many clients balk at the expense, and some wonder why they can't handle the collection process in-house. They have a point. Not every case requires full forensic imaging or the use of outside service bureaus. PinPoint Labs' One Click Collect enables you to automate the collection of ESI on your own. But how well does it work? In this review of One Click Collect, trial technology and computer forensics consultant Bruce Olson evaluates One Click Collect answers this question in considerable detail.

INTRODUCTION

You've just started working on a new lawsuit, and determine your client has potentially relevant electronically stored information (ESI) for multiple custodians on a network server. The custodians also actively save files to the local drives of their individual PCs.

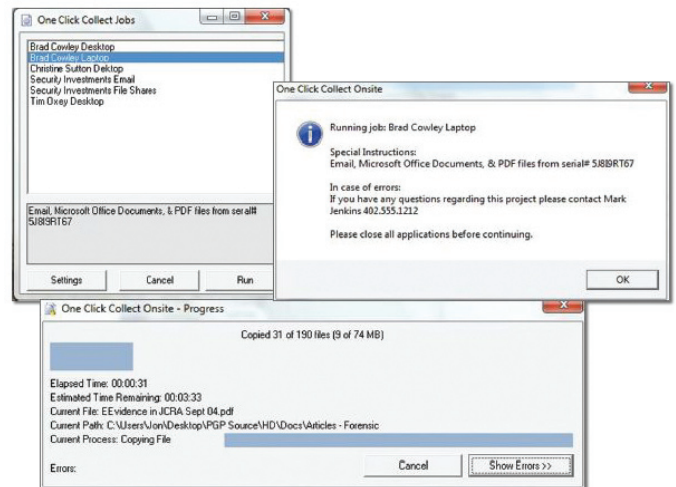
In addition, your client tells you they have several standalone PCs used for testing and design purposes with test results and relat-

ed documentation created by different users. These standalone computers reside in different locations around the country. Finally, they have a separate email server.

You need to quickly develop a plan so you can discuss the issues of preservation and collection at an upcoming meet and confer. The amount of money at stake is relatively modest, and you don't want to break the bank with eDiscovery costs. In fact, you'd like to rely on internal client resources as much as possible.

You're certain you can convince the other side that this is not a case in which a computer forensics expert is needed, and you don't want to incur the expense of multiple people descending on the various offices around the country performing full forensic imaging of every PC and server.

At the same time, you know that a forensically defensible collection method should be used in harvesting the ESI, and you want the collection method used to preserve metadata, provide chain of custody documentation, and ensure appropriate verification using hash values.



You talk to your eDiscovery consultant who tells you about Pinpoint Labs' new One Click Collect—a software product that can handle all your collection needs. In fact, under his direction, and with appropriate consultation with your client's IT department, your consultant assures you he won't even have to leave his office. Internal resources can be used under his direction to minimize the cost of collection.

Your consultant also tells you that once the information is collected it will be easy to load it into your litigation support software because all of the copied files are copied in native format, resulting in a quick turnaround on your deliverables.

This review explores how well One Click Collect could meet the needs of the above client by offering an on-site collection option

range to be applied to either the date created, date modified, or date last accessed.

Finally, the Computer Name field needs to be specified. This completes the basic information for a job ticket.

When you complete the job ticket, One Click Collect runs and automatically copies the files to the specified folder. A log file is automatically created and stored. This .csv contains chain of custody information. Later you can generate a report that specifies the date and time a file was copied, whether the hashes matched, the source path, the source created, modified and accessed dates, the source MD5 Hash, the destination path, the destination created, modified and accessed dates, the file size, and the destination MD5 Hash.

Information is loaded into a job ticket installed on the collection drive.

The eDiscovery consultant does not need to be physically present to obtain a defensible collection.

The above example has an eDiscovery consultant set the parameters for collection, but you can use One Click Collect without a third party consultant. A large company with a knowledgeable IT staff and a lawyer experienced in eDiscovery matters could handle the process on their own.

One caveat—One Click Collect is intended to collect live data

only. Therefore, before using it, the parties should agree that forensic imaging is not required and no special preservation steps are necessary. You should also understand that it cannot be used to recover deleted files.

ADVANCED OPTIONS

There are further advanced options that enable you to create full paths, copy empty folders, exclude temp files, exclude system files, hash the source and destination files, and make a variety of other selection options that may be of use depending on the situation.

Other useful advanced features available only in the Harvester version include the ability to apply a deNISTing filter, and to run in silent mode so the individual whose PC is being copied will never be aware the process is occurring.

Another advanced feature is the ability to create scripts used to create job files, start a job, and launch programs or utilities that can work with the data capture and the files collected.

With the Onsite license you can easily activate and deactivate the license. This means that once you run a job using the program installed on one collection drive, it is easily deactivated so you can install and run it on another external drive for another machine. If you sent a drive to Los Angeles and another to New York, as soon as the collection in Los Angeles is done and the software deactivated, the software on the New York drive could be activated and the collection run. You can even email the program and the job tickets.

In the above example, the eDiscovery consultant could email the program to the client's IT manager. The IT manager could load it on a thumb drive so it could be moved from machine to machine. The IT manager could also procure the external hard drives himself, load the software on the drives along with the job ticket prepared by the consultant, plug in the drive, activate the software, and start the collection process.

When simply collecting live data to see what the files themselves have to say, and particularly where an automated process is desired, One Click Collect is a great option.

TRAINING AND SUPPORT

The help files that come with the software seem complete. In addition, there are several training videos on the Pinpoint Labs Web site. The folks at Pinpoint are responsive and willing to help you configure your jobs or do whatever is necessary to successfully deploy their product. In about an hour you can learn how to use One Click Collect.

CONS

One minor annoyance that is easy to deal with concerns the log function. You cannot just double click on the log file to generate a report. You need to open the file as a comma delimited file in Excel to access the data. It adds a few extra steps. Anyone using the program would undoubtedly be experienced enough to handle

the import function. However, one click doesn't apply to reports.

It would also help if there were additional filtering options. For example, if you could apply a key word filter at the front end, you could reduce the number of files that would need to be copied and subsequently processed, saving time and money.

CONCLUSION

As everyone becomes more cost conscious and looks for ways to minimize eDiscovery expenses, One Click Collect offers a reason-

ably priced solution for the defensible collection of live data. Not every case requires forensic imaging or is concerned about deleted files or preservation of all meta-data. When simply collecting live data to see what the files themselves have to say, and particularly where an automated process is desired, One Click Collect is a great option. It works well whether you are harvesting a handful of files or gigabytes of files.

EDiscovery vendors, law firms, and in-house operations can all benefit from One Click Collect. As

the successor to Pinpoint Labs' successful SafeCopy 2 product, One Click Collect represents a further improvement of a helpful product line.

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