

VODAFONE UK LTD ELIMINATES FORENSIC PROCESSING BACKLOGS AND SAVES ON LEGAL COSTS WITH NUIX INVESTIGATION TOOLS



SUMMARY

Vodafone's United Kingdom head office needed a more efficient way to conduct internal investigations and litigation matters.

The digital investigation team installed a range of Nuix investigation and legal discovery products, each implementation building on the success of the last. Nuix is now Vodafone's primary tool for digital investigation, which has helped the company to:

- Eliminate backlogs for processing investigation data, completing tasks in hours instead of days
- Bring investigation and litigation work in-house, reducing spending on external providers
- Solve data classification and information governance problems across the business.



CHALLENGE

For the past decade Vodafone UK Ltd, the United Kingdom subsidiary of the global telecommunications group, had used a suite of traditional digital forensic tools to conduct internal investigations. For the digital forensic team, comprising former High Tech Crime Unit detectives Nigel Jeffries and Mark Wootton, conducting deep dives into forensic images of hard drives was a laborious process that could take several days before producing results for the investigators to analyze. In addition, the degree of precision these tools provided was often not necessary for the investigators' needs.

"With the majority of forensic cases and projects, the evidence is usually pretty easy to find; you don't need to dig into the Windows Registry or unallocated space," said Jeffries, Investigations Manager at Vodafone's United Kingdom head office. "That means you need a technology solution that processes large amounts of data very quickly, with the ability to go in depth once you've found what you're looking for."

In 2014, the digital investigation team became involved with the company's civil litigation work. Vodafone had previously outsourced data collection, processing, analysis and review to external legal firms.

"We'd conducted a number of investigations for the heads of our legal and finance departments, so I conducted a Nuix demo for them and it immediately became apparent that we could support a number of current and future projects which would normally be outside the remit of Corporate Security – they had no idea we could do this kind of work," said Jeffries. "I told them 'We can do this project work in-house, develop new workflows, and save a lot of time and expenditure, ultimately Nuix will give us a lot more control over the processes.'"

"I knew Nuix was what we needed, and we conducted a proof of concept, wrote a business case, and had the purchase order approved within a few weeks."



SOLUTION

In March 2015, Vodafone UK implemented Nuix Workstation. The investigations team used Nuix technology for internal and external investigations and litigation matters. Their primary evidence source was email stored in Microsoft Exchange servers and Veritas Enterprise Vault archives. They also regularly examined forensic images of hard drives and mobile devices.

"Nuix has become our primary tool for investigations and we can deal with 99.9% of cases internally," said Jeffries. "We get the source data, process it through Nuix, and very quickly zero in on the evidence we're looking for."

Following the initial success of using Nuix Workstation, Vodafone's digital investigation team implemented Nuix Investigate® to provide rapid access to case data for the legal team, investigators, and other stakeholders.

"Whatever we've done, Nuix has given us their full support and we've always had an open channel to their engineers and experts," said Jeffries. "We've built a good trust relationship and Nuix has always been open to working with us the way that suits our needs best."



RESULTS

ELIMINATED FORENSIC PROCESSING BACKLOGS

Thanks to the speed and efficiency of working primarily in Nuix, Vodafone's digital investigation team can now complete tasks in hours that previously took days or longer. "We've currently no backlog – we just do the work as it's presented to us," said Jeffries. "I don't know how long that will last. The more successful you are, the more people want of you."

Nuix's investigative capabilities have reduced the need for laborious manual searches. "If the investigators are looking for a particular phone number or IMEI, they don't need to hunt through spreadsheets – we can just ingest the data, process and find the information," said Jeffries. "The investigators are amazed with what we provide to them in such a short time scale."

Using for investigations has made reviewing data much faster and easier for Vodafone's investigators. "In one internal investigation, we had a team member review 14,000 emails and she was amazed at the speed she could review and tag the relevant items," said Jeffries.

SAVED COSTS ON EXTERNAL PROVIDERS

By bringing more of its investigation and eDiscovery workload in-house, Vodafone has reduced its spending on external legal advisors and other service providers.

"We don't have to send our whole case to the lawyers anymore; we have a discussion with them about the parameters and scope of the case, process all the data ourselves and send them a load file at the end," said Jeffries. "They're still an important part of the process but they deal with much smaller volumes of data compared to how it used to work."

"Ideally, we'd like to have our lawyers accessing the data directly using Nuix so we wouldn't even have to create load files."

SOLVED PROBLEMS ACROSS THE BUSINESS

The skills of Jeffries and Wootton, and Nuix's capabilities, have been in strong demand across the company. For example, a project team was seeking to classify and gather important legal contractual documents and business records that were stored across the enterprise estate in file shares, Microsoft SharePoint servers, and other locations.

"We approached the project lead and said we could automate a lot of the sifting and classification work they were doing manually," said Jeffries. "We ran a proof of concept on six gigabytes of data, which we ingested in an hour and produced results in seven minutes – they said it would have taken them two weeks to achieve the same results. We now expect to complete the project well ahead of the scheduled time frame."

"We're doing lots of things with Nuix that we didn't anticipate when we acquired it – we're always finding and creating new ways of using it. If only we had a bigger team, we could do more work!"

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APAC

Australia: +61 2 8320 9444

EMEA

UK: +44 203 934 1600

NORTH AMERICA

USA: +1 877 470 6849

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