

The Google Account Androids Cloud Estate

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THEGOOGLEACCOUNT · A GUIDE FOR UK LAWYERSThe Google Account: Android's Cloud EstateLocation History, Photos, Backups and Activity: The Account That Often KnowsMore Than the PhoneCOMPUTER FORENSICS LAB§ ABOUT THE AUTHORPREPARED BY COMPUTER FORENSICS LAB E-DISCOVERY TEAM35 and CrimPR Part 19.FULL CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY DOCUMENTATION§ CONTENTSIn this guide01 Executive summary02 The problem in plain English: the account that knows more03 What the Google account holds04 The distinctive activity records05 Reaching the account law full y06 User controls, retention and honest limits07 Deployment: the account as source and fallback08 Source architecture: where else the evidence lives09 Worked examples10 Common mistakes and technical limitations11 Questions to ask · Suggested wording12 Checklist and red flags · When to involve a digital forensic expert13 Frequently asked questions14 Glossary · References · Disclaimer · How a specialist laboratory can assist§ 01 · ORIENTATIONExecutive summaryThe headline point: behind nearly every Android phone sits a Google account that holds the device's backups,photos, messages and files and, distinctively, Google's own records of the user's activity, Location History,own controls.§ 02 · FIRST PRINCIPLEThe problem in plain English: the account that knows more§ 03 · WHATTHEACCOUNTHOLDSWhat the Google account holdsBACKUPS PHOTOS MESSAGES / PIM DRIVE DEVICES§ 04 · THEACTIVITYRECORDSThe distinctive activity records§ 05 · REACHINGTHEACCOUNTLAWFULLYReaching the account law full y§ 06 · CONTROLS, RETENTIONANDLIMITSUser controls, retention and honest limits§ 07 · DEPLOYMENTDeployment: the account as source and fallback19 (guides 100, 20): the account evidence deployed defensibly.§ 08 · THEWIDERMAPSSource architecture: where else the evidence livesEVIDENCE (LOCAL/GOOGLE ANDROID MANUFACTURER PAIRED / PROVIDER /ACCOUNT DEVICE CLOUD COUNTERPART CARRIERBACKUPSCLOUD)§ 09 · IN THE WILDWorked examplesEXAMPLE1 · THESEALEDPHONEANDTHEACCOUNTTHATKNEWEVERYTHINGEXAMPLE2 · THETIMELINETHATPLACEDTHEJOURNEYEXAMPLE3 · THERECORDTHATWASABSENTBYTHEUSER ' SCHOICES§ 10 · WHEREITGOESWRONGCommon mistakes and technical limitationsCommon mistakesTechnical limitations§ 11 · INTERROGATORIES & DRAFTING AIDSQuestions to ask · Suggested wordingAsk your clientAsk your opponentAsk your e Discovery / forensic provider§ 12 · QUICK CONTROLChecklist and red flags · When to involve a digital forensicexpertThe Google account checklistRed flagsWhen to involve a digital forensic expert§ 13 · COMMON QUESTIONSFrequently asked questionsWhy is the Google account so important in Android matters?If the phone is locked, can the account still be reached?What is Location History, and how reliable is it?The account shows no Location History. Does that prove the person didn't travel?How is Google account data obtained law full y?Do search and browsing records prove what someone intended?§ 14 · REFERENCEGlossarySources and authoritative referencesDISCLAIMER§ HOW A SPECIALIST LABORATORY CAN ASSISTWorking with Computer Forensics LabSpeak to a forensic examiner, not a

salesperson.INSTRUCTTHELABNEWENQUIRIEEMAIL - DISCOVERY

Questions and answers

Why is the Google account so important in Android matters?

Because it often knows more than the phone (

What is Location History, and how reliable is it?

Google's record of where the user went, now called Timeline (

The account shows no Location History. Does that prove the person didn't travel?

No, it may simply reflect the user's settings (

How is Google account data obtained lawfully?

By consent, lawful process or production (

Do search and browsing records prove what someone intended?

They evidence what was searched and visited, and intent is inferred with care (

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