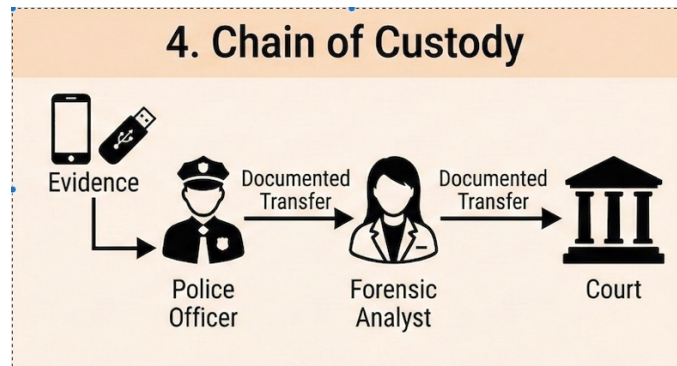


20 Digital Forensics Facts for Attorneys

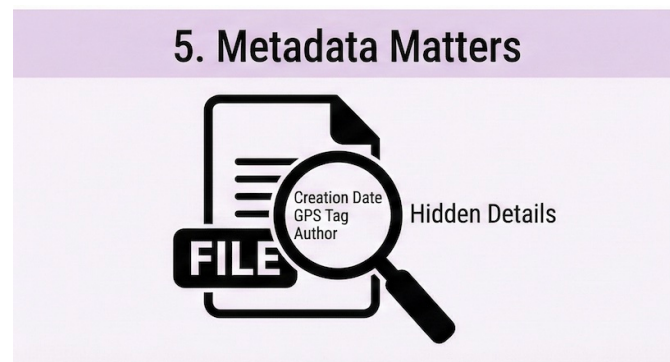
1. Deleted ≠ gone: Most deleted files remain recoverable until overwritten.



2. Every case is a data case: Even “non-digital” disputes usually contain text messages, emails, or documents.
3. Forensic imaging: A “bit-for-bit” or forensic working copy preserves evidence without altering the original.
4. Chain of custody: In many cases, essential to maintain evidentiary integrity and courtroom admissibility

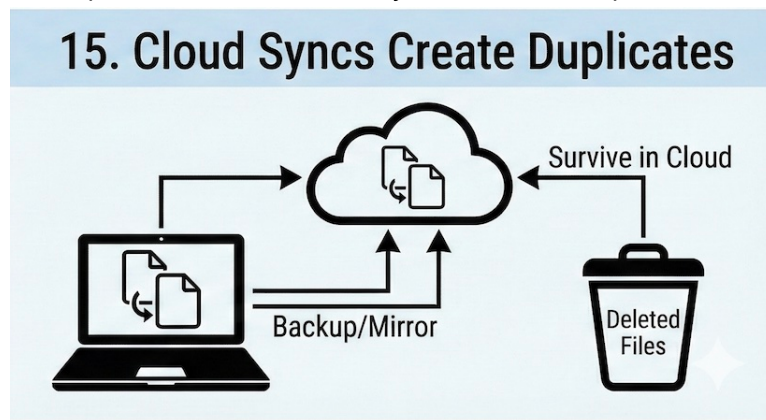


5. Metadata matters: Creation dates, edits, GPS tags, author information, and other metadata often expose truth.



6. Timestamps can shift: System clock errors or time-zone changes can mislead investigators.
7. Mobile devices: Contain texts, call logs, app data, health data, photos, and location trails.

8. Cloud & social media: Require proper authentication; screenshots alone are weak evidence.
9. Encryption & passwords: Legal access may require subpoenas or warrants; never guess or force.
10. Spoliation risk: Even good-faith access or copying can alter metadata; always image first.
11. File format forensics: Different file types (PDF, DOCX, JPEG) embed distinct hidden data.
12. Logs tell stories: System, email, and access logs can reconstruct user actions - and possibly reveal unauthorized access.
13. Emails are not always what they seem: Headers reveal routing and spoofing attempts.
14. Video & photo forensics: Compression artifacts, error levels, and metadata help expose tampering.
15. Cloud syncs create duplicates: Deleted files may survive in backups or mirrored accounts.



16. Expert reports: Should clearly document tools, hashes, and methodology for repeatability.
17. Hash values: Digital "fingerprints" that confirm evidence integrity (MD5, SHA-1, SHA-256).
18. Forensic duplicators: Hardware tools create certified copies with built-in write blockers.
19. Legal collaboration: Early involvement of forensic experts reduces spoliation and increases admissibility.
20. Everything starts with data of some sort: computer, phone, tablet, email, documents.