DOES YOUR eDISCOVERY PROCESS EXHIBIT ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS?

You're not kidding yourself that you have 20/20 vision when it comes to eDiscovery. But you need to know exactly what kind of visibility problems you have before you can find ways to address them. Here are tips to diagnose six common eDiscovery visibility conditions, and the treatments required to repair them.

1. Myopia

Myopia, or nearsightedness, is a vision condition in which you can see close objects clearly, but objects farther away are blurred.

The eDiscovery diagnosis

You have a lot of data in front of you that you can see in detailed grids and tables, but when you step back and try to make sense of what it all means, you can't see any clear lines – it's just a blurred jumble. This is a classic sign that your eDiscovery program may be suffering from myopia.

The treatment

Analytics with visualization provides the corrective lens that can help you improve your distance vision and see the big picture emerge from the details. Data visualization, using interactive graphics that can be explored to quickly identify and drill down into trends, enables you to gain an understanding of the story your data has to tell.

2. Hyperopia

Also known as farsightedness, hyperopia is a condition in which distant objects are usually seen clearly, but close objects do not come into proper focus.

The eDiscovery diagnosis

If you think that metadata is uninteresting – and not terribly valuable – because it doesn't contain information about the contents of the emails, you are probably suffering from hyperopia.

The treatment

Email metadata leaves a digital trail of communications that, when investigated properly, can uncover patterns that are extremely valuable in the discovery process. To correct this condition, use technology that analyzes metadata to reveal the personal and professional networks of the mailbox owner and understand how the person's messaging behaviors change over time.

3. Astigmatism

Blurred vision from astigmatism is due to either the irregular shape of the cornea or sometimes the curvature of the lens inside the eye. Under normal circumstances, the eye is shaped like a sphere and when light enters the eye, it refracts (bends) evenly, creating a clear view of the object. An astigmatic eye, however, is shaped more like a football and when light enters, it is refracted more in one direction than the other allowing only part of the object to be in focus at one time; objects at any distance can appear blurry or wavy.

The eDiscovery diagnosis

If your current keyword search approaches are generating a high volume of false positives and missing lots of false negatives, then you simply can't get a clear picture of the story your data has to tell. Relying on keyword searches that only return exact matches will bloat results with false positives (e.g., "apple" referring to the company and the fruit) while leaving behind false negatives such as misspellings, variations, and different wording to mean the same thing.

The treatment

Technology can provide more sophisticated search capabilities by focusing on concepts rather than just keywords. This enables you to narrow search results based on meaning.

4. Presbyopia

Presbyopia is an age-related vision condition in which the eye gradually loses the ability to focus on near objects.

The eDiscovery diagnosis

With every passing year, your organization creates, manages, archives, and stores an ever-growing volume of data. And this makes finding what you need increasingly difficult.

The treatment

Classification technology can help alleviate this condition. And while it may take time to train the system, the good news is that it can be automated. Once you've classified data that falls into specific buckets, "find more like these" taxonomies can be used to automatically locate and classify any data flowing in.

5. Achromatopsia

Achromatopsia is a visual disorder that is characterized by an inability to distinguish colors. People with this condition can only see things as black and white or in shades of gray.

The eDiscovery diagnosis

When you review your keyword search results, if you just see the black-and-white hit counts, you're missing out on the full rainbow of insight the data can provide.

The treatment

Examining the contents of the search results helps you begin to get an understanding of the data and provides useful, more nuanced insight that can start to color case strategy.

6. Strabismus

Also known as crossed eyes, strabismus is a condition in which both eyes do not look at the same place at the same time.

The eDiscovery diagnosis

If your first-pass reviewers receive batches of documents based on keywords or custodians (features), then they are receiving a mixed bag of data. The resulting process is manual classification of disparate data viewed by several people in chunks of 25 to 100 documents.

The treatment

Leveraging analytics, combined with classification automation, can make the first-pass review process much more consistent, providing reviewers with batches of related documents based on content. This not only improves consistency, it also enables documents requiring specialist knowledge to be routed to the appropriate sets of eyes.

If any of these symptoms sound familiar, you may be suffering from one or more of these eDiscovery visibility conditions. The good news, however, is that there are treatments available. While nothing can provide 100 percent visibility 100 percent of the time, you can minimize the negative effects of visual impairments and see your way clear to improving your eDiscovery process.

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