A Fact Sheet for Companies and Counsel
Harnessing the Power in the Data

When looking for answers, data holds the power to help companies and their counsel move faster, save money, and unravel critical information during investigations and more effectively tell their story in court.

WHAT DATA ANALYTICS CAN DO

1. AID AN INVESTIGATION. During an investigation, the combination of your data and the analytics deployed by investigators allows them to synthesize unlimited amounts of quantitative and qualitative data to identify trends, relationships and unexpected patterns inconsistencies and irregularities.

2. SAVE TIME AND MONEY. Given the volume of electronic data most companies and individuals produce, analyzing so much material may seem to be a high hurdle. But disparate sets of electronic data—like accounting records and transactional data—can be gathered and organized in relatively short order, pulled into a single database, and related, mined, and analyzed. This can save effort and reduce investigation expenses.

3. TELL THE STORY. Data visualization has the power to bring a story to life, from supporting or challenging a litigant's testimony to identifying the patterns and relationships that help uncover a multi-million-dollar fraud scheme.

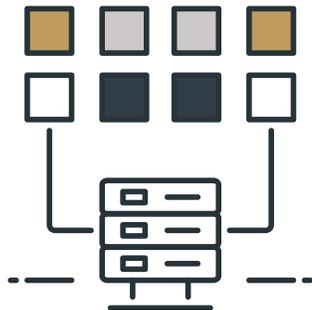**CASE STUDY: WHY A DEEP DIVE MATTERS**
A whistleblower alleged to the IRS that a company had significantly underreported its revenue. While government investigators estimated the amount of underreported revenue with piecemealed evidence, we were able to support quite a different result through the comparative analysis of electronic and manual daily sales records, management reports, reports to accountants, financial statements, tax returns and government prepared reports. The result: The IRS accepted our lower revenue figures, the principals avoided substantial jail time, and the company paid significantly lower fines and penalties.
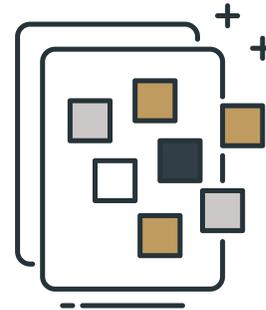
KEY LESSON: *Electronically stored information allows for a deep dive, revealing critical patterns and insights that paper alone does not.*

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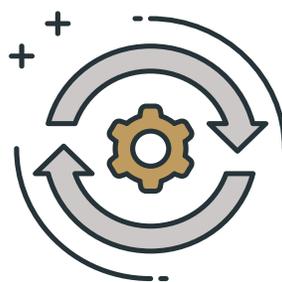
● PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER

There are two general categories of data: structured data and unstructured data. Each holds its own power. When combined, they can pull together the pieces of the puzzle and bring a story to life.

STRUCTURED DATA includes electronic information that is organized and transactional in nature, like accounting system data and bank account data. By its nature, structured data is readily searchable. Without the power of data analytics, however, anomalies in structured financial data can be difficult to detect. This is a moment when a trained professional with the right skills and tools can deploy the analytical techniques necessary to bring forward critical evidence.

UNSTRUCTURED DATA is essentially the opposite of structured data. It's the mess of social media, email, texts, PDFs, documents, presentations and other materials that can be difficult to harness—and that can be essential to proving your case. While analyzing a structured data set can be used to demonstrate how much or how often something has occurred, unstructured data has the power to provide detail about context and motives—material that can bring a narrative to life for jurors, judges and other finders of fact.

COMBINED, structured and unstructured data can transform the trajectory of a case. Connections emerge that would not have been evident or provable if relying solely on one form of data or another. For litigators, going beyond a traditional data set can help them engage judges and jurors with stronger evidence and a deeper story to tell. Putting the pieces of the puzzle together are key. Professionals with the investigative and technical know-how to rigorously examine and extract useable evidence from incongruent data sets are a must.

CASE STUDY: IDENTIFYING PATTERNS

A school district with an annual budget of more than $11 billion had a policy limiting the funds that could be transferred without board approval to $50,000. In our analysis, we isolated electronic data for transactions of exactly $49,999, and found transfers in this exact amount had occurred 48 times in 60 days. By focusing on this amount, this nefarious activity was then easily identified among millions of transactions.

KEY LESSON: *Analysis of structured electronic data coupled with an understanding of the district's policies and procedures allowed for concrete findings that could not have been accomplished with sampling or statistics.*

CASE STUDY: THE POWER OF COMBINED DATA

Attorneys for a whistleblower, who had alleged that a company had submitted false claims to the federal government and violated federal law, needed to pinpoint evidence and determine the value of any identified claims. They faced a mountain of structured and unstructured data, including information from two separate billing systems, vendor records, and e-mail from the company, its customers and a third-party organization involved in the case. The attorneys turned to us to harvest the information. Using the structured and unstructured data, we created a single database that allowed us to identify evidence and draw connections among players in the scheme. In the end, our work helped prove the whistleblower's company had submitted thousands of false claims to the government totaling more than $10 million.

KEY LESSON: *Leveraging unstructured and structured data requires an experienced hand who can marshal distinct forms of information and extract critical evidence that will support claims.*

Forensic Strategic Solutions is a national financial investigation firm with a long track record of deploying advanced data analytics to assist counsel and companies. If you have any questions, please contact us for a consultation.