

FORENSICS V2 LAB SERIES

Lab 03: Live Forensics

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Introduction

When dealing with digital evidence, it is important to know the correct methodologies and procedures that are acceptable for collecting electronic data. This lab aims to teach the student how to collect relevant evidence and navigate a live computer to review key artifacts that may aid in the full examination without altering evidence.

Objectives

Review the hard drive file structure Review frequent paths for an average user(s) Document all action/steps taken



Lab Topology





Lab Settings

The information in the table below will be needed to complete the lab. The task sections below provide details on the use of this information.

Virtual Machine	IP Address / Subnet Mask	Account (if needed)	Password (if needed)
Caine	172.16.16.30	caine	Train1ng\$
CSI-Linux	172.16.16.40	csi	csi
DEFT	172.16.16.20	deft	Train1ng\$
WinOS	172.16.16.10	Administrator	Train1ng\$



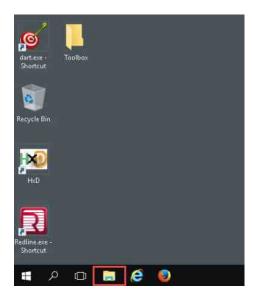
1 Getting Familiar with Digital Evidence & Forensic Toolkit (DEFT 8) & Digital Advance Recovery Toolkit (DART)

Live analysis of a computer requires certain tools that can ascertain valuable data while leaving very small footprints. One of these tools is the Digital Evidence & Forensic Toolkit (DEFT). This is a full Linux operating system that can also be used for live analysis and incident response. It has a full suite of tools, and we will be utilizing a few of them in this lab.

- 1. To begin, launch the WinOS virtual machine to access the graphical login screen.
 - a. Select Send CTRL+ALT+DEL from the dropdown menu to be prompted with the login screen.

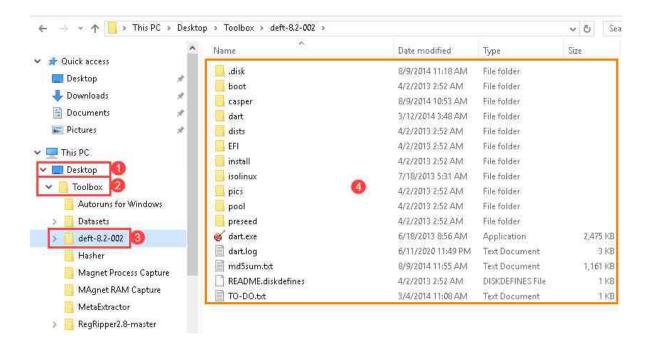


- b. Log in as Admi ni strator using the password: Trai n1ng\$.
- 2. Once you are logged into the VM, open file explorer by clicking the icon on the taskbar as highlighted in red below.





3. Within File Explorer, browse to Desktop > Toolbox > deft-8.2-002, as seen in items 1, 2, and 3 below. This will allow you to view the extracted contents of the DEFT ISO file, as seen in item 4.

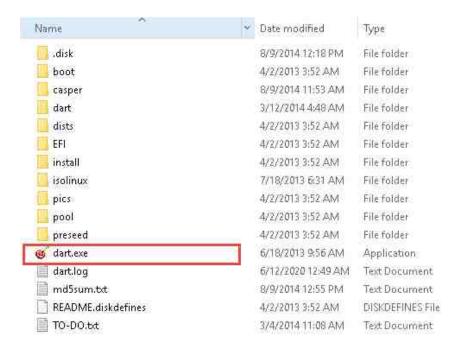




It is important to note that the tools contained within DEFT can be reported as False Positives in antivirus programs. When practicing in the real-world environment, be sure to disable antivirus solutions to prevent them from complicating the capture process.

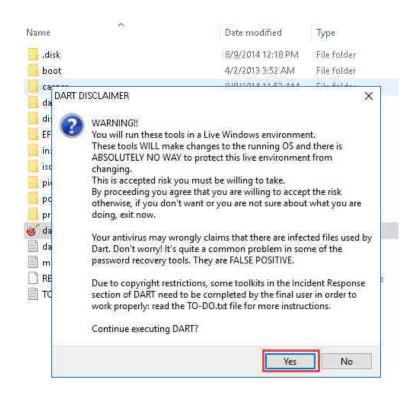


4. Once the folder is opened, you will see the following folder structure appear. These are the files and folders that make up the DEFT 8 operating system. In this exercise, we will only be using the Digital Advance Recovery Toolkit (DART) feature of DEFT. DART is a handy live response toolkit that has applications designed for extracting valuable evidence from running systems. To open DART, double-click the dart.exe icon highlighted below.





5. When opening, DART will display the DART DISCLAIMER window. Read it carefully to understand the risk that is taken when performing an analysis on a computer that is booted into its operating system. It will also provide details about common issues. Click the Yes button as highlighted below to continue.

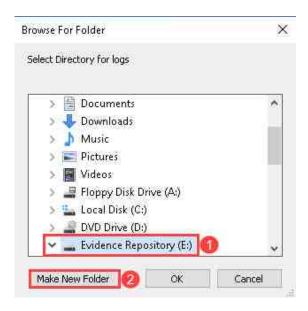




Note taking is a very important factor in ensuring that you are able to regurgitate what exactly happened when you interacted with the evidence item. The DART logs assist in this detailed recording, which makes it extremely vital. It should always be used and stored on a drive prepared for evidence storage and <u>NEVER</u> on the computer being examined.



6. The next window that will appear is the Browse For Folder window. DART creates a log of actions taken while using it, and it requires a path to store the log file. To adhere to forensic procedures, the logs must be stored on an external evidence drive to prevent creating more artifacts than necessary and potentially overwriting data on the host's system. Let us make a new folder in the Evidence Repository drive that has the drive letter (E:). To do this, browse to Evidence Repository (E:) and click Make New Folder as seen in items 1 and 2 below.



7. Let us name the new folder FOR_LAB_003 as highlighted below.

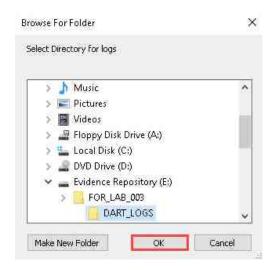




8. Inside the folder called FOR_LAB_003, we will create another new folder by clicking Make New Folder again, and we will call it DART_LOGS as highlighted in items 1 and 2 below.

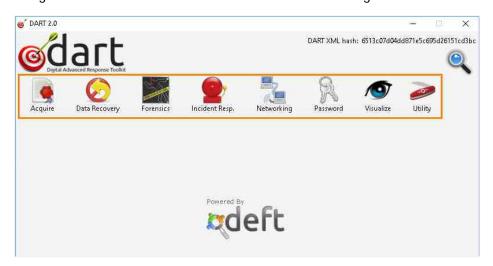


9. Once the folder is created, click OK as highlighted below.





10. You will now be presented with the DART 2.0 home page. From this window, you will be able to navigate the different categories of applications offered in DART. The categories are outlined in the table below the following screenshot.



Acquire	This category contains applications that will allow you to burn, copy, or create forensic images.
Data Recovery	The Data recovery category contains apps that are ideal for finding and restoring deleted information even after it has been removed from the recycle bin.
Forensics	The forensics category contains the most tools. It provides applications that can recover data from web browsers, view e-mails, check for encryption, examine files, create file hashes, view instant messaging data, and identify peer to peer software. It has a whole suite of tools that are specifically designed for extracting data from the windows operating system.
Incident Resp.	The incident response category helps you learn about the system and has some antivirus tools that help with investigating compromised systems.
Networking	The networking category contains tools that provide data about the computer's network connections. It can reveal Wireless network data, reveal cookies, and sniff network traffic, etc.
Password	The Password category has a myriad of tools designed for finding, revealing, and cracking various types of passwords. Some categories are browser passwords, Wi-Fi passwords, and Asterisk passwords, etc.
Visualize	The Visualize category contains tools that allow you to view different types of data. It contains software that allows you to view graphics, multimedia, and documents.
Utility	The utility category is somewhat of a miscellaneous list of useful software. Tools that allow you to erase drives, read hexadecimal files, perform screen captures, and more.

11. Now that you are familiar with DART 2.0. Let us move to the next task, getting information using Drive Manager.



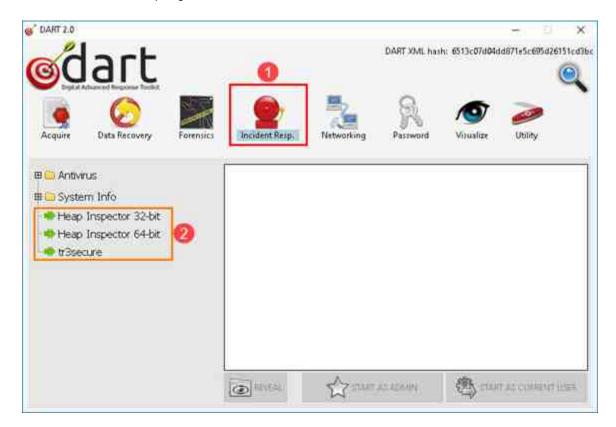
DART contains many tools that we won't be able to cover in this course. Feel free to navigate the options and test the different software. They each have their own help files to teach you what they are for and how to use them.



2 Using Drive Manager to Get Drive Information

Now that you are familiar with the DART interface, let us look at a few of the tools. The first one we will use is Drive Manager. This tool helps to display the connected drives in a Microsoft Windows operating system and provides lots of details about them.

1. DART should already be open. If it is not, reopen it and click on the Incident Resp. category, as seen in item 1 below. The Items on the left side of the window are the names of the different programs. The ones with the arrow beside them, highlighted in item 2 below, are programs.

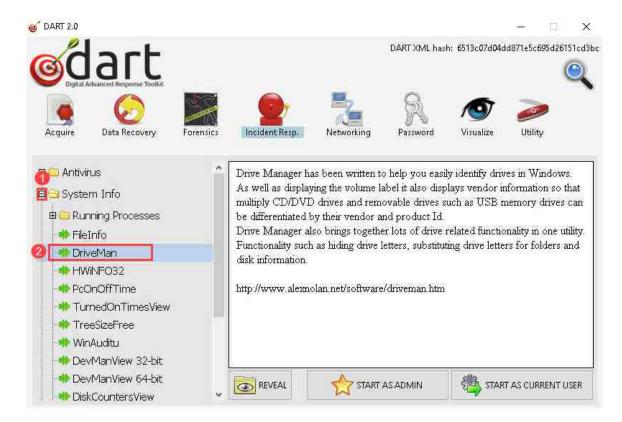




Some programs are further categorized in folders. To expand them, click the plus (+) beside the folder name.

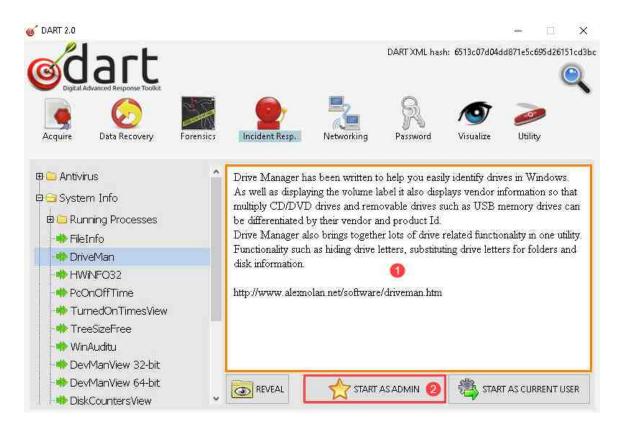


2. In this exercise, we will be using the Drive Manager tool (DriveMan), which is found in the System Info folder. Click the + sign beside the System Info folder, as seen in item 1, to expand it and view the contents. Next, click DriveMan from the list of programs that appear, as seen in item 2 below.

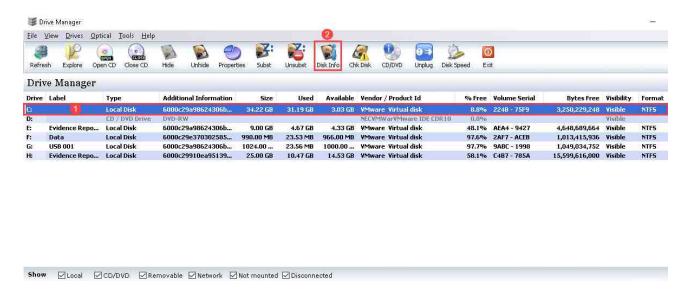




Once you have DriveMan selected, you will see a description of the tool in the right pane, as seen in item 1. To open the program, click START AS ADMIN highlighted in item 2 below.



4. The Drive Manager application will open and will instantly list all the drives currently connected to the computer. The application has several options that can be used to gather information and perform actions on each drive. In this exercise, we will be using the Disk Info option. To begin, let us click the drive bearing the drive letter (C:) as seen in item 1 below. Once you have the (C:) volume selected, click the Disk Info option from the toolbar highlighted in item 2 below.





5. The Disk info window will provide details about the selected drive. Here you can find the hard drive's serial number, the volume serial number, the total size of the hard drive in bytes, the allocated and unallocated clusters, the physical disk name, and whether the drive is fixed or removable. This information is essential when trying to account for all the disk space as well as getting drive serial numbers. The physical serial number is also good for evidence documentation and chain of custody.





Drive Manager has many other useful features. For more information on the other uses, you can click on the Help menu option on the main Drive Manager window.

6. Now that you have reviewed the disk's details, it is time to look at the contents to get a better understanding of the data within it. Close the Drive Manager information before moving to the next task.



3 Using FTK Imager to Identify Windows User Directories

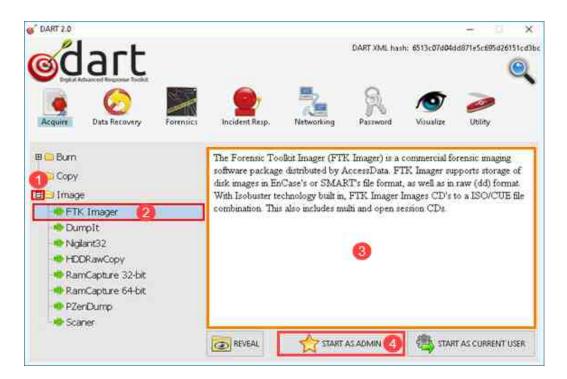
Now that you are familiar with the DART interface, let us look at a few of the tools. The first one we will use is FTK Imager. You should already be familiar with FTK Imager from our first and second labs. In this exercise, we will use FTK Imager to go a bit deeper and show you how to browse to and identify the users' files and folders.

1. DART should already be open. If it is not, reopen it and click on the Acquire category highlighted below.



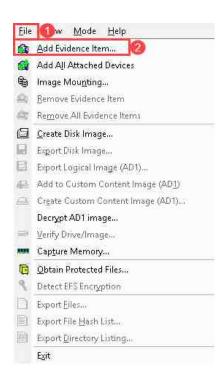


2. Click the + beside the folder called Image and then select FTK Imager by clicking it, as highlighted in items 1 and 2 below. Verify that FTK Imager is selected by looking at the right pane in the DART window highlighted in item 3 below. This is where you will see the description of the selected tool. If your description is correct, then let us go ahead and click START AS ADMIN as seen in item 4. This will launch FTK Imager lite, which is a portable version of this powerful tool.

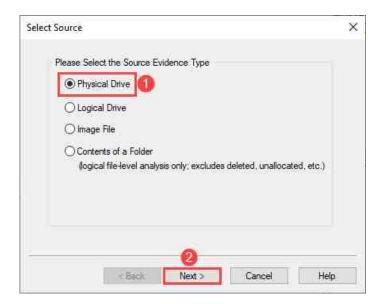




3. Now that you are in FTK Imager, let us load the Physical Drive 0 that has Local Disk (C:) volume. To do this, navigate to File > Add Evidence Item as highlighted in items 1 and 2 below.

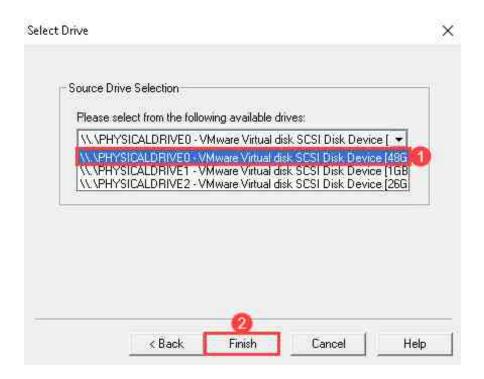


4. You will be brought to the Select Source window. Let us select the Physical Drive radio button and then select Next, as seen in items 1 and 2, to proceed to the Select File window.





5. In the Select Drive window, you will have the option to select which drive you want to preview. Select PHYSICALDRIVEO from the dropdown menu as seen in item 1 below, then click Finish once you have verified that you selected the correct drive, as seen in item 2.

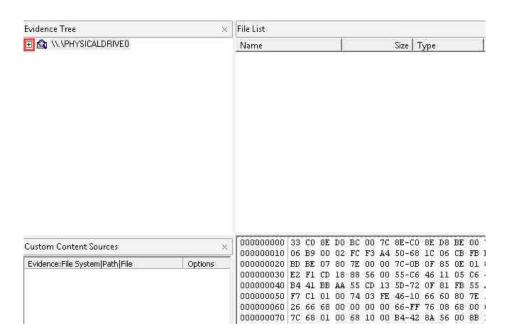




In some cases, 'Physical Drive 0' may be a secondary storage hard drive and may not have the folder structure for an operating system, It is very uncommon but possible. Ensure the correct drive is selected.

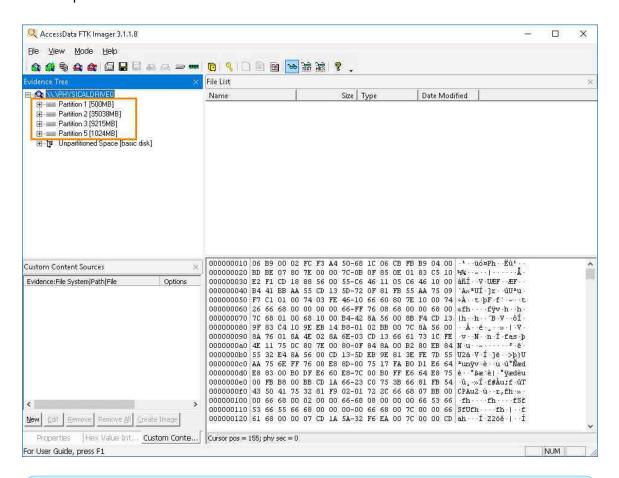


6. If you did everything correctly, you will now be back at FTK Imager's main window with PHYSICALDRIVEO listed under the Evidence Tree Pane. We will now browse the hard drive and view its contents. To begin, click the + sign beside PHYSICALDRIVEO as seen below. This will expand the tree and display the different partitions on the drive.





7. Now that you can see all the partitions, you can determine which partition is the main data partition that contains the operating system and user files. To do this, use the name and the size of the partition. The size can be seen in square brackets beside the name of the partition, as seen below. The larger partitions normally contain user-created files and operating systems. In the example below, the partition called Basic data partition (2) is the largest partition. When you compare this to the size of the other partitions, you can see that it is 35038MB while the nearest partition size is 9215MB.

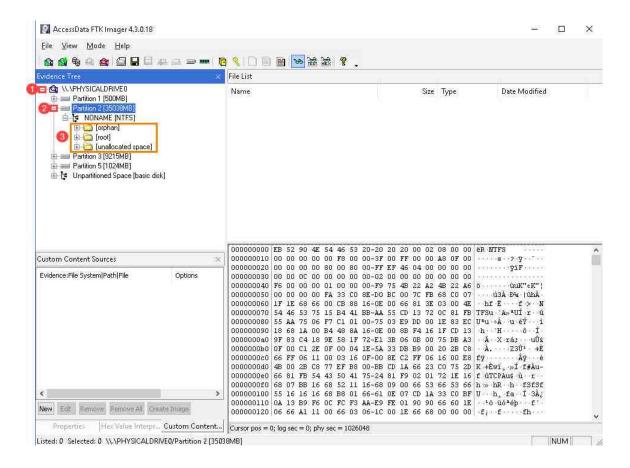




On the right, in square brackets, it shows that the partition called Basic data partition is 35038MB. Which is calculated at 1024KB to 1MB. 35038MB divided by 1024KB equals = 34GB.

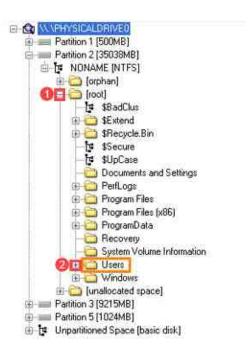


8. Let us click the + beside Basic data partition (2), seen in item 1, to expand the partition and view the file system. The file system in the screenshot below is called NONAME [NTFS], which indicates that the partition uses the New Technology File System (NTFS) file system. Let us expand the partition by clicking the + beside NONAME [NTFS], as seen in item 2. This will reveal three folders. There is the orphan folder, and it contains deleted files that were recovered but have no parent folder. Next is the root folder that contains the operating system and user files. The final folder is the unallocated space that represents free space as files.



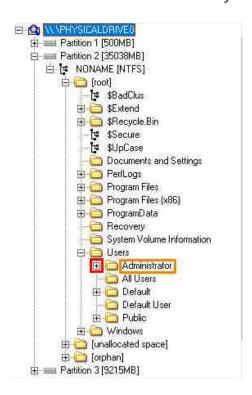


9. Let us expand the folder called root by clicking the + sign beside it, as seen in item 1. Now that you expanded the root directory, you should begin seeing filenames and folders that are a bit more familiar. This is the root directory of the Windows operating system, and it is represented as the C:\ drive. In this lab, we will only focus on the users' folders. To get to these folders, look for the folder called Users in the tree pane as seen in item 2 below and click the + sign beside it.





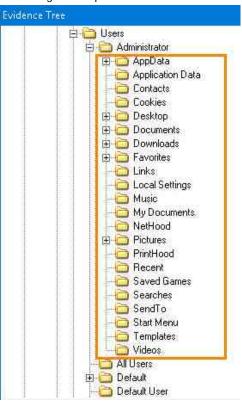
10. Now that you have expanded the Users folder, you will see the list of user profile folders bearing the name of their associated user. There are also some default user folders created by the Windows operating system for various reasons. In addition, there are several registry files that contain many valuable artifacts. Finding and examining the registry files will be covered in a different lab. For now, let us expand the folder called Administrator by clicking the + beside it as seen below.



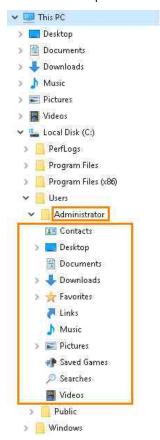


11. You will now see some more familiar folders. These folders are the same folders that the user would see in the navigation pane of the Windows File Explorer. The comparison can be seen below.

FTK Imager Tree pane



Windows File Explorer





By default, system folders are hidden from the user. Using FTK Imager to view a hard drive will show all hidden folders and files that are stored on a hard drive to include deleted ones. For example, the folder AppData contains files created by different applications installed on the computer. It is not shown in the image on the right, but it is visible within FTK Imager.

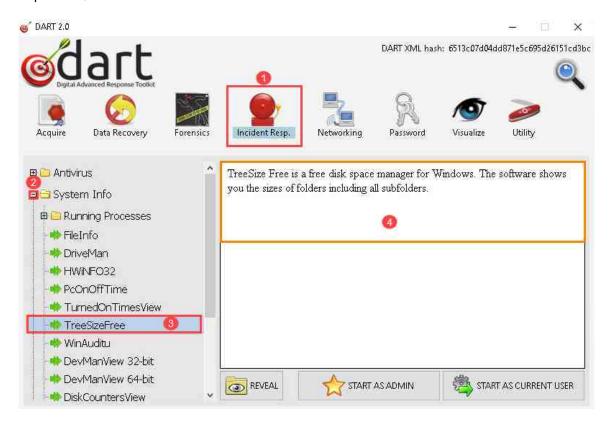
- 12. You will also see several folders that you might not be familiar with. Feel free to browse these folders and familiarize yourself with their contents.
- 13. Being able to identify the user folders is a vital first step towards associating an individual with the contents of a folder. In the next exercise, you will need to remember these folders and how to get to them, as they will contain the majority of user-created data. Let us close FTK Imager by clicking the X at the top-right corner of the FTK Imager window.



4 Using TreeSizeFree to Get Drive Information

Let us look at another program in DART. This tool is called TreeSizeFree and is used to help get a better understanding of what files are on a computer and where to find them.

1. Let us begin by closing FTK Imager by clicking the X at the top-right corner of the FTK Imager window. DART should still be open from the last exercise; return to it. You will need to go back to the Incident Resp. category and expand the System Info folder again by clicking the + sign beside it, as seen in items 1 and 2 below. Click the TreeSizeFree application from the list of tools that appear when the folder is expanded, as seen in item 3.

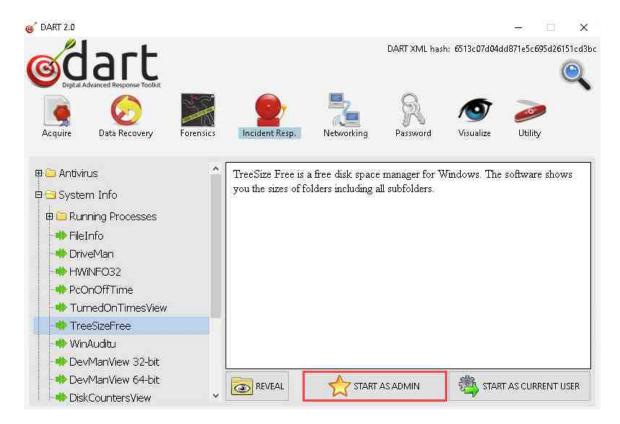




To verify that you have selected the correct tool, read the tool description in the pane on the right as seen in item 4.

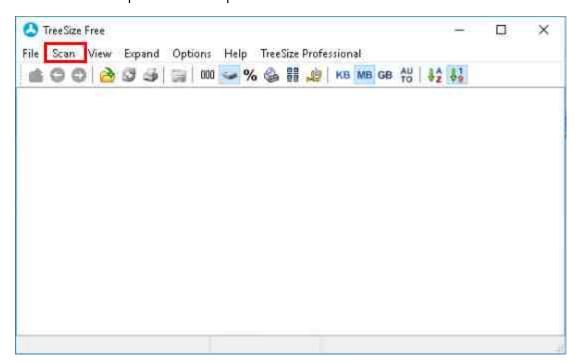


2. Now that you have TreeSizeFree selected, let us run it by clicking START AS ADMIN as highlighted below.



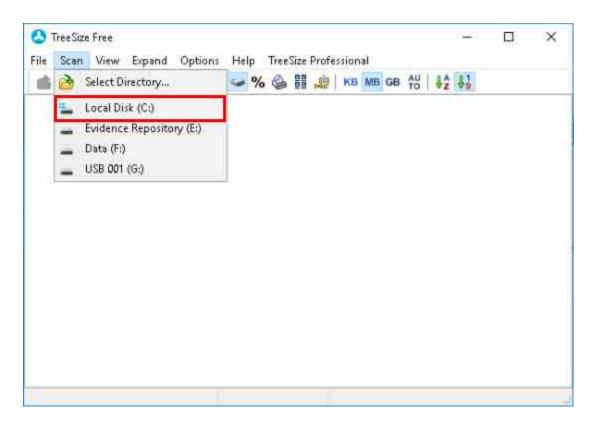


3. The TreeSizeFree main window will appear as seen below. To begin a folder scan, click the Scan dropdown menu option as seen below.



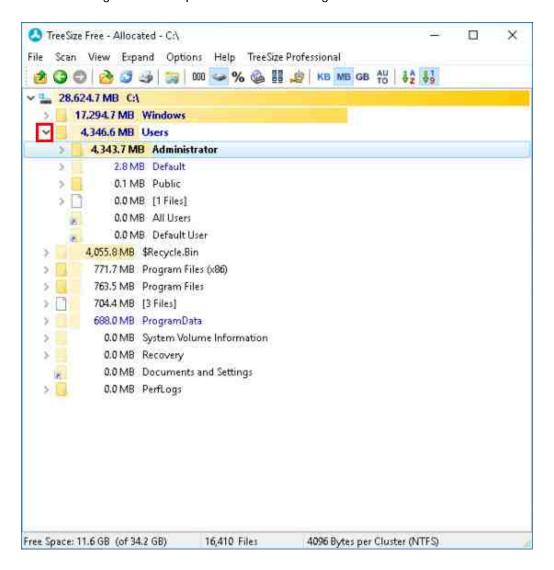


4. You will see several options there. The options will include all the disk drives that are attached to the computer. It will also give you the ability to scan a specific folder of your choice. In this exercise, we will be scanning the Local Disk (C:) volume to identify the largest files. To do this, click the Local Disk (C:) option as highlighted below.



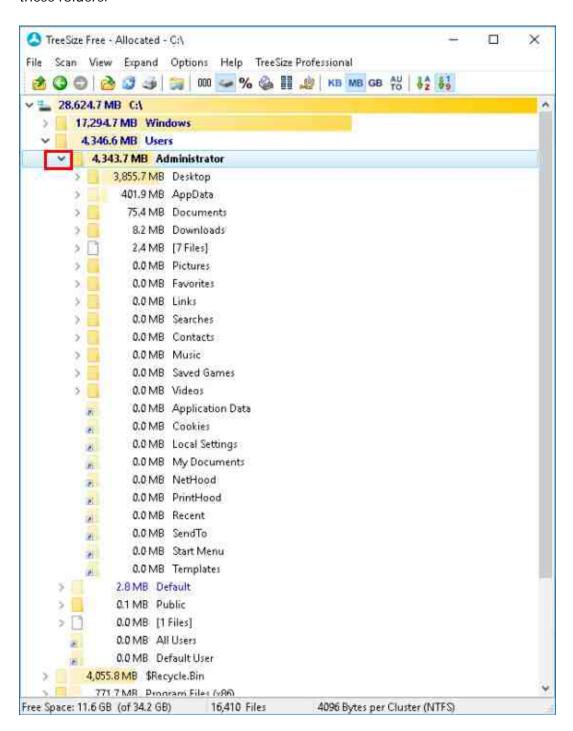


5. The scan will begin as soon as you click the disk drive. If you did everything correctly, you will see data like those in the screenshot below. Let us focus on the users' directories as this is where the average user will store most of their data. Using TreeSizeFree, click the arrow beside the directory called Users to expand it and view the source of the largest files in this folder hierarchy. TreeSizeFree will show you the size of the files in each sub-directory each time you expand a tree item. This is great for narrowing down the specific location of large files.





6. Next, expand the folder called Administrator and look at the size of the contents of these folders.





Files and Folders that appear grayed out are known as 'hidden files and folders'. A hidden file or folder doesn't primarily appear in the Windows File Explorer to help prevent important data from being accidentally deleted by users.



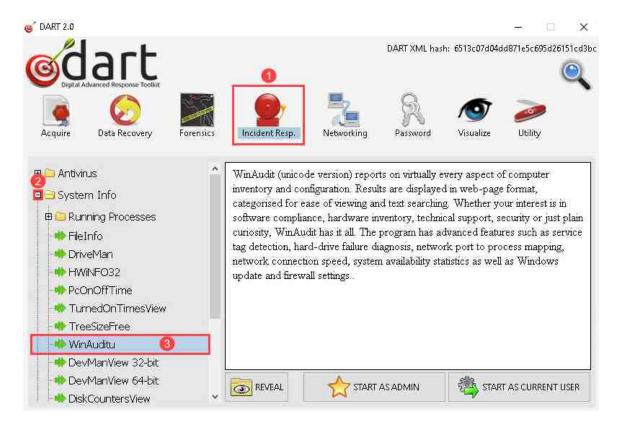
- 7. This method of searching through the file system based on the volume of data is a great way to focus your investigation on areas that might be of interest. This method is great for finding out if certain files were downloaded and where caches of illicit data are stored/hidden on a subject's system.
- 8. In this exercise, we have reason to believe that a user was using file-sharing software and downloaded a video file to their Downloads folder at C:\ > Users > Administrator > Downloads. Using TreeSizeFree, browse to the mentioned folder and note the name of any video files you see there.
- 9. Now that you have learned how to navigate the data based on size and the commonly known file paths, let us learn how to gather some other important system information. First, let us close TreeSizeFree by clicking the X at the top-right corner of the TreeSizeFree window.



5 Using WinAudit to Get Drive Information

The live acquisition process can be daunting if you are new to it or unsure what kind of data you want to capture for future analysis. There are several tools available that can help to make the data capture process a lot less confusing. In this exercise, you will be using one of the tools that are great for this job. This tool is called WinAudit and is a free-to-use tool that captures a ton of helpful information that aids in understanding the computer and its users better.

1. Let us begin by launching WinAudit. To do this, go back to the DART main window and click the category called Incident Resp., seen in item 1 below. In the tree pane, expand the System Info folder by clicking the + beside it, and then click the application called WinAuditu as highlighted in items 2 and 3 below.





2. If you did everything correctly, you should see the description of the selected tool in the right pane highlighted in item 1 below. Once you have verified that you selected the right option, click the START AS ADMIN button highlighted in item 2 below.

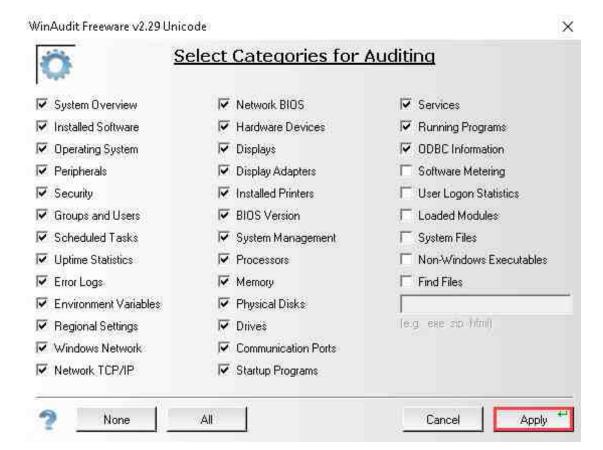


3. You will see the window below; it is the main window for WinAudit v2.29. It is very easy to use. The options highlighted below are the main functions of this simple tool. Let us begin by clicking the Options button highlighted in item 1 below.





4. The Options menu allows you to choose what data you want to be collected when you run the audit. Look at the many categories available. It gives you an idea of the types of data that will be collected and allows you to narrow your scope if you only want to focus on certain areas. For now, we will leave the default options selected. Let us just click Apply highlighted below.

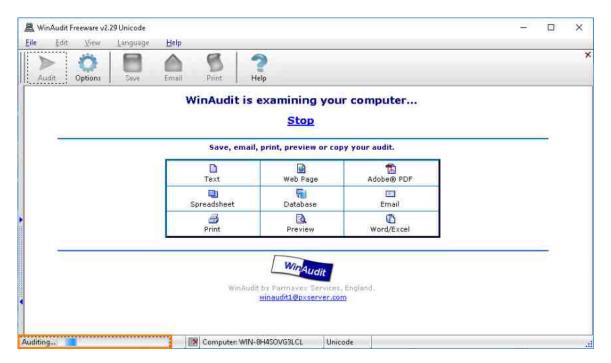




5. Now that we are back at the main window, let us run an audit. To run the audit, click the Audit button highlighted below.

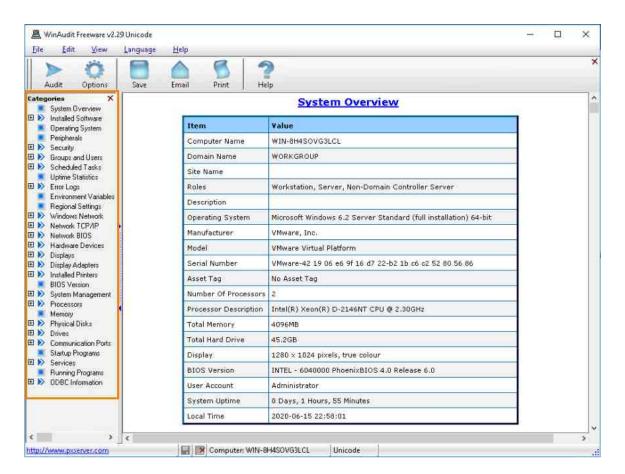


6. The process will begin; its duration is dependent on the hardware specifications of the host. In the bottom-left corner of the main window, you will see the word Auditing... along with an animation as highlighted below. This is an indication that it is still gathering data.





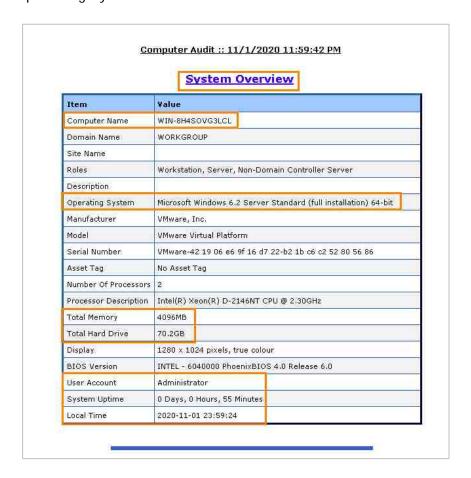
7. Once the audit is done, you will see the familiar navigation pane. In this tool, it is called Categories pane, and, as usual, it is on the left side of the window, as highlighted below. This pane contains the various categories of captured data.



8. For this exercise, we will be exporting the results as you normally would when collecting live data. Before we do this, though, let us take a quick look at some of the data.

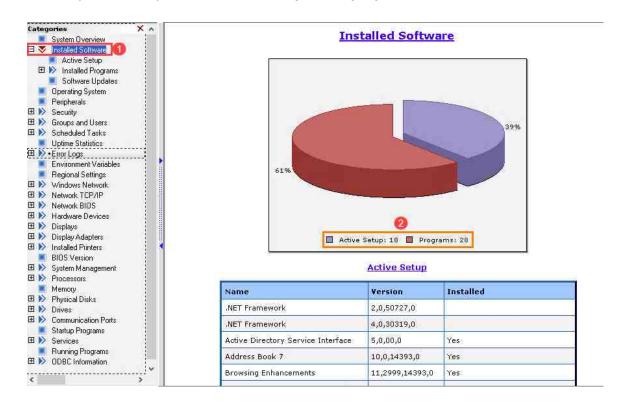


9. If you notice, the System Overview category is already being displayed. In this category, you can find operating system and computer information such as the NetBIOS name, the operating system version, the hard drive size, and the total RAM, among others, as highlighted below. This is the top of the audit report you generated. To view the other categories, you can scroll down in the window. It is quite lengthy!





10. Now let us look at the Installed Software category by clicking Installed software in the Categories pane highlighted in item 1 below. This will show you a neat pie chart that shows the difference between the operating system software that is installed by default (called Active Setup highlighted below) and the software that was manually installed by the user (called Programs highlighted below).



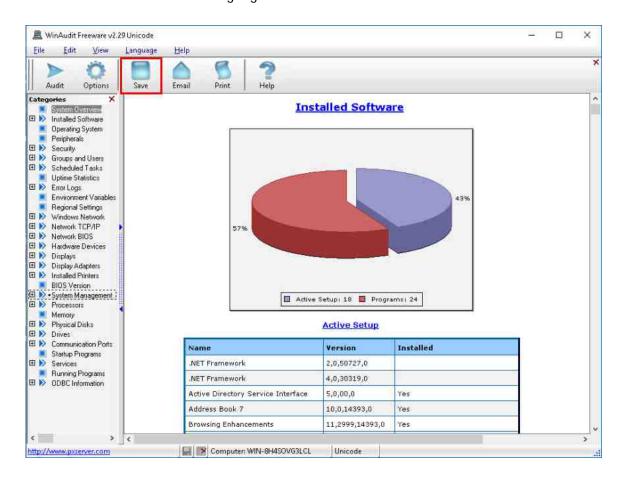


11. Still, in the Installed Software category, scroll down in the right pane to view a list of the installed software from both the Active Setup and Programs categories. Browse until you see the Installed Programs heading. This will provide detailed information about the manually installed programs. As you can see in the highlighted area, the name, version number, the install date, and the source of the installed program are all listed along with lots of other data. Please note that the type of data captured for each application can vary.

Eraser 6.2.0.2989	
Item	Value
Name	Eraser 6.2,0.2989
Vendor	The Eraser Project
Version	6.2.2989
Product Language	English
Install Date	20200615
Install Location	
Install Source	C:\Users\ADMINI~1\AppData\Local\Temp\eraserinstallBootstrapper\
Install State	Installed
Assignment Type	Per Machine
Package Code	{1F5AB79D-891C-464F-87A3-565FCB1168FF}
Package Name	Eraser (x64),msi
Local Package	C:\Windows\Installer\945cdf.msi
Product ID	
Registered Company	
Registered Owner	
Times Used	
Last Used	
Executable Path	
Executable Version	
Executable Description	
Software ID	{A8F9BDFF-27EA-478D-BC23-9F518B33E5E9}

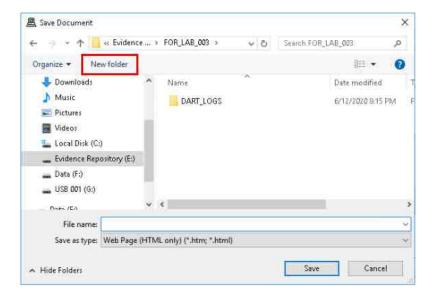


12. As you can see from the audit, the type of data collected is voluminous. For now, let us save what we have captured so that it can be reviewed later. To do this, go back to the toolbar and click Save as highlighted below.

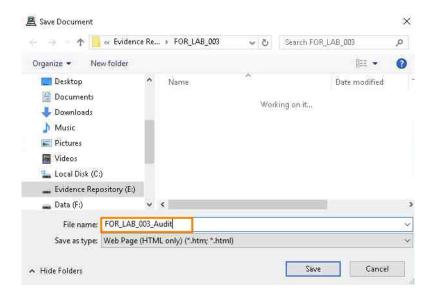




13. The Save Document window will appear, allowing you to browse to the location to which you want the file to be downloaded. Always remember to store the file on a different volume than the one you are performing the live analysis on. In this exercise, we will be saving the data to the Evidence Repository (E:) volume. To do this, navigate to Evidence Repository (E:) > FOR_LAB_003 and click New Folder as highlighted below.

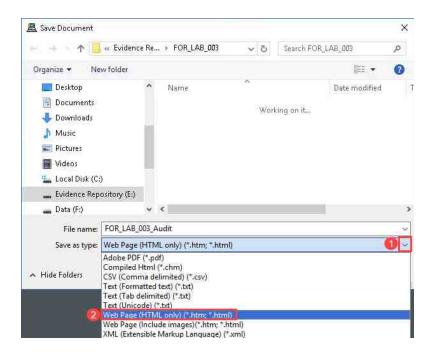


14. Name the new folder FOR_LAB_003_Audit and double-click it to open. Now that we have the location, let us name the file. Give it the name FOR_LAB_003_Audit, as highlighted below.

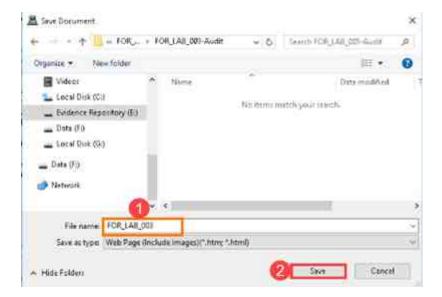




15. Next, let us save it as an HTML file. To do this, click the Save as type dropdown menu highlighted in item 1. From the dropdown menu, click Web Page (Include images) (*.htm;*.html) as highlighted below.



16. Now that you have the right path, name, and format selected, you can click Save as highlighted in item 2 below.





- 17. Now you have successfully saved the report to an HTML file in your evidence drive. This data can later be reviewed and used to assist in examining the computer. It can also be reviewed immediately using your onsite forensic workstation to gather the information that can lead to the recovery of additional evidence items.
- 18. Let us move on to one of the most important digital forensic artifacts on any computer, the browsing history. First, let us close WinAudit by clicking the X at the top-right corner of the WinAudit window.



To view the html report, browse to the folder you saved it and double-click the file you created called FOR_LAB_003.htm



6 Using Browser History View to View and Capture Browsing History

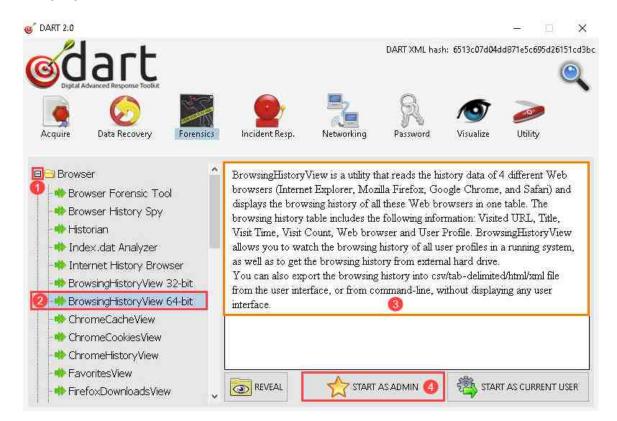
As you have seen in the previous exercises, the live analysis is all about quickly accessing some data for use before shutting the computer down. In some investigations, you may need to see if the user accessed certain websites. You may also want to check if they performed certain web searches. Web history is one of the artifacts that is going to provide you with this information.

 One of the tools we use to view this history in a live environment is BrowsingHistoryView. This is another lightweight tool that can get the job done quickly. In this lab, you will learn how to open, view, and save the web history of a host. Let us begin by going back to the DART main window and click the Forensics category as highlighted below.



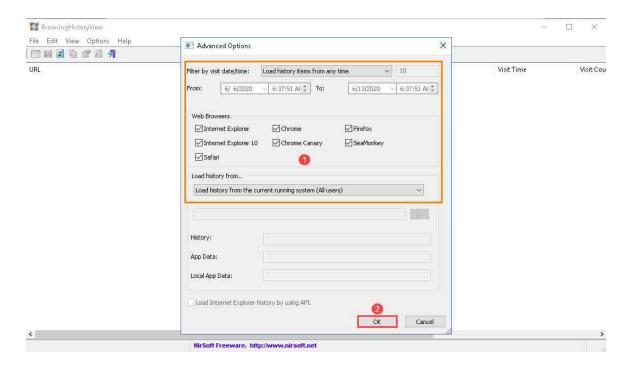


2. Now that you can see the list of Forensics tools in DART, click the + beside the Browser folder and then click BrowsingHistoryView 64-bit as highlighted in items 1 and 2. As usual, look at the right pane highlighted in item 3 below to verify that you have the right program selected. After you have verified this, click START AS ADMIN as highlighted in item 4.





3. The BrowsingHistoryView software should now be open. You will be presented with the main window and a pop-up window called Advanced Options that appears in front of the main window. In this exercise, we will leave everything as the default and click OK as seen below.

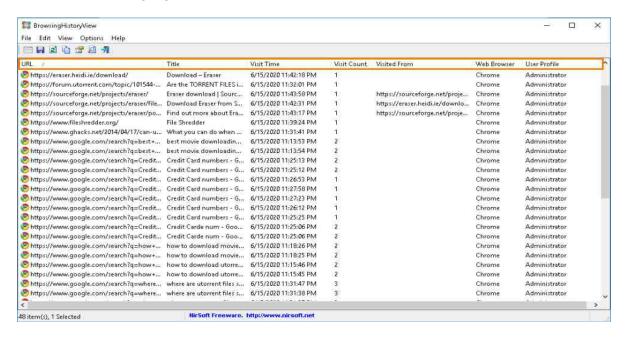




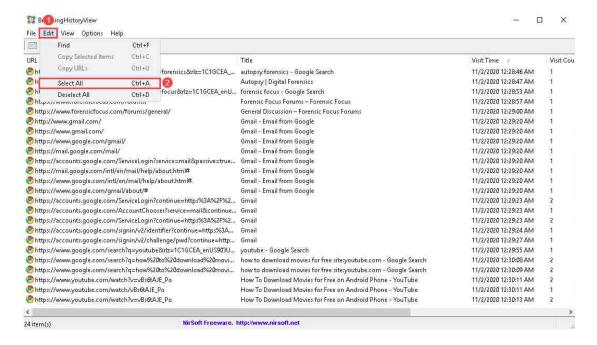
The Advanced Options window gives you more flexibility. You can filter the web history by dates, browser, and the user account you want to target.



4. The BrowsingHistoryView software will now present you with all the browsing history it finds. You will see a window like the one below. As you see, there are several columns that provide useful data. The columns provide data about the specific URL that was visited, the title of the web page, the time it was visited, the number of times it was visited (Visit Count), any redirections (Visited From), the name of the web browser and the username of the person who accessed it. The column titles are highlighted below.

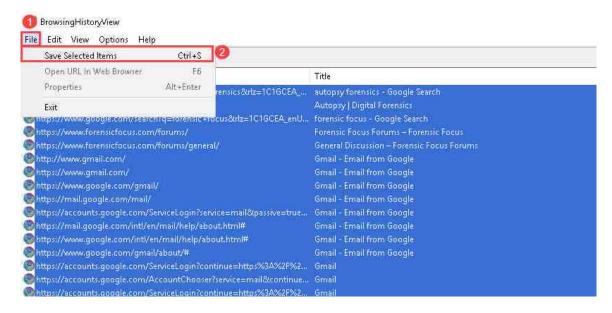


5. You can scroll through the list to see if you are familiar with some of the websites that this user visited. Now let us export this browsing data to our Evidence Repository (E:) volume. To do this, begin by clicking Edit from the Menu Bar and then clicking Select All highlighted below. This will highlight all the historical artifacts that the software collected.

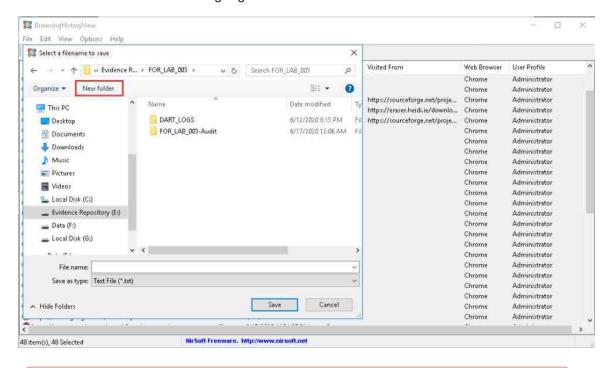




6. Next, click File in the File Menu and click Save Selected Items as highlighted in items 1 and 2 below.



7. The Select a filename to save window will appear, allowing you to browse to the intended destination. Let us browse to the folder you created earlier called FOR_LAB_003. To do this, navigate to Evidence Repository (E:) > FOR_LAB_003. Click the New Folder icon as highlighted below.

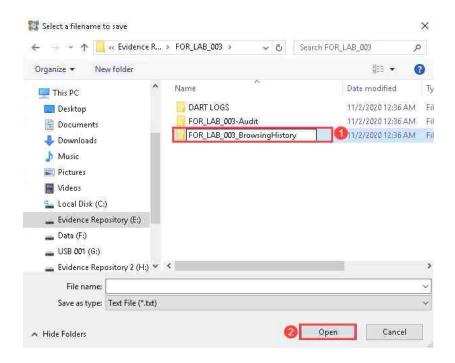




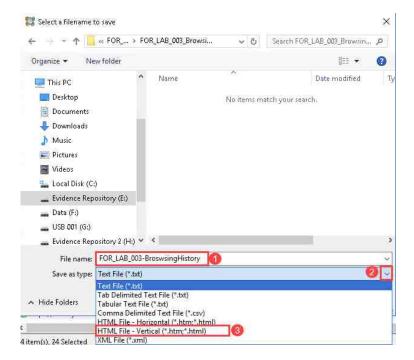
As we regularly mention, always ensure that the captured data is stored to the external drive and not on the one you are examining.



8. Name the new folder FOR_LAB_003_Browsi ngHi story and click Open as seen in items 1 and 2 below.

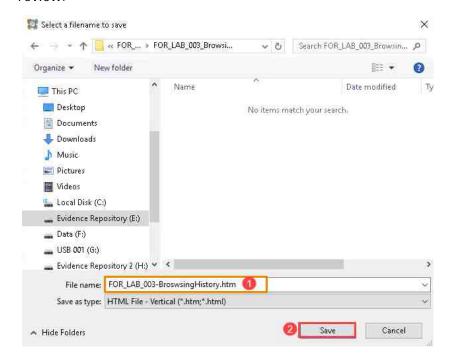


9. Now let us give the file the name FOR_LAB_003-Browsi ngHi story as highlighted in item 1 below. Let us choose the file format of the browsing history report we want to capture. To do this, click the dropdown menu in the Save as type field and click HTML File - Vertical (*.htm;*.html) to save the export as an HTML file as highlighted in items 2 and 3 below.





10. Once you have all the right options selected and you have verified that the file is being saved to the correct path, click Save as highlighted in item 2 below to export the history. Your HTML file will now be saved in the selected path awaiting your review.





To view the report, browse to the folder that you saved it in and double-click the file you created called FOR_LAB_003_BrowsingHistory.htm.

11. BrowsingHistoryView is the last program we will look at in this lab but feel free to review other programs in DART. There are password revealers, IM parsers, networks scanners, and much more. Once you are done, please close the open programs by clicking the X at the top-right corner of the windows.