

Experiment No. 12

12.1 Aim:

Email and the Cloud Evidence: Geolocation of IP Address, Analyzing Email Headers, Recovering Browser Search History

Example Scenario:

A report indicates that a user may have sent suspicious emails and searched for information related to a fraud case.

As the digital forensics investigator, your tasks are:

1. Identify the physical or approximate location of IP addresses found in email headers or server logs.
2. Read and interpret email headers to determine the sending path and originating IPs.
3. Recover the suspect's recent browser search history to confirm intent or establish a timeline.

Tasks:

1. Gather Evidence Sources

- Obtain emails to examine (.eml files, raw headers from webmail, or .msg files).
- Collect server logs or cloud access logs if available.
- Acquire the suspect's browser profile or create a forensic image of the suspect's system if working from a seized machine.

2. Extract Email Headers

- For webmail (Gmail / G Suite), copy the email's full header.
- Save a copy of the full raw header as evidence.

3. Analyze Email Headers

- Use **G Suite Toolbox** to paste the copied email header.
- The tool will provide parsed results, including sender IP, message path, and authentication checks (SPF, DKIM, DMARC).
- Record candidate IP addresses for geolocation and further investigation.

4. Geolocate IP Address(es)

- Use <https://whatismyipaddress.com/ip-lookup> to map IPs to approximate geographic locations.
- Record details: country, region/state, city, ISP, and approximate latitude/longitude.
- Preserve results as screenshots or exported reports.

5. Recover Browser Search History

- Use **MyLastSearch.exe** on the suspect's system to retrieve recent browser search entries.
- Save the results, including URLs and timestamps, for evidence.

6. Correlate Evidence

- Match timestamps from email headers, IP geolocation, and browser search history.

- Identify searches made before or after sending suspicious emails to confirm intent.
- Note supporting artifacts like attachments, downloads, or cached pages.

7. Preserve and Verify Evidence

- Generate hash values (MD5/SHA1) for exported headers, browser search results, or forensic images.
- Maintain a detailed evidence log / chain-of-custody documenting acquisition details.

8. Report Findings

Include in the report:

- Extracted headers
- Identified IPs
- Geolocation screenshots
- Recovered browser search entries with timestamps
- Investigative conclusions
- Highlight limitations (e.g., approximate geolocation, possible header forgery).

12.2 Lab Outcome:

- Learn to extract email headers, parse and geolocate IP addresses, and recover browser search history.
- Correlate artifacts to build a timeline and support investigative conclusions.

12.3 Learning Objectives:

- Extract and preserve email headers for forensic analysis.
- Identify and interpret IP addresses in email headers.
- Use geolocation tools to estimate IP locations.
- Recover browser search history using **MyLastSearch.exe**.
- Correlate email, IP, and browser evidence into a coherent investigative timeline.

12.4 Requirements:

Hardware

- Forensic workstation or laptop
- External storage for evidence images and exports

Software / Tools

- **G Suite Toolbox** for analyzing email headers
- <https://whatismyipaddress.com/ip-lookup> for IP geolocation
- **MyLastSearch.exe** for browser search recovery
- **Wireshark** (optional, for network-level corroboration)
- **Autopsy / FTK Imager / Magnet / Belkasoft** (for acquiring system images if needed)
- **Hashing utility (MD5/SHA1)**

- **Text editor** for notes and reporting

12.5 Related Theory:

Email Headers

Email headers contain metadata about a message, including sender, recipient, date/time, and the servers it passed through.

“Received:” lines indicate the path the email took, often showing the originating IP address.

Authentication fields like SPF, DKIM, and DMARC help verify whether the email is legitimate or potentially forged.

IP Geolocation

IP geolocation maps an IP address to an approximate geographic location using ISP and registry data.

It provides details like country, city, and ISP, but it is not precise—especially if the sender uses VPNs, proxies, or Tor.

Geolocation helps investigators narrow down the region from which an email was sent.

Browser Search History

Browsers store visited URLs and search queries locally, often in SQLite databases (e.g., Chrome History, Firefox `places.sqlite`).

Many browsers also sync this data to cloud accounts if enabled.

Recovered history provides timestamps and content, helping establish the suspect’s intent or activities.

Limitations & Cautions:

- Email headers can be manipulated.
- IP geolocation may reflect the VPN/proxy exit point, not the actual sender.

- Cloud-synced data may require legal authority to access.
- Always maintain chain-of-custody and verify evidence integrity using hash values (MD5/SHA1).

Purpose in Forensics:

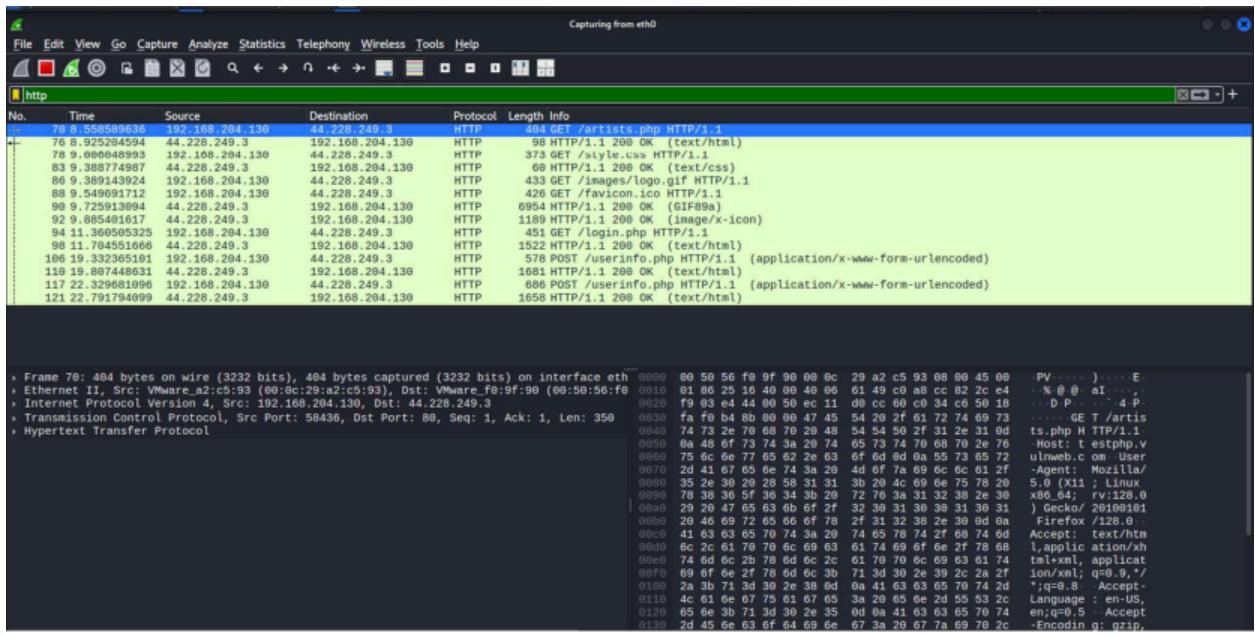
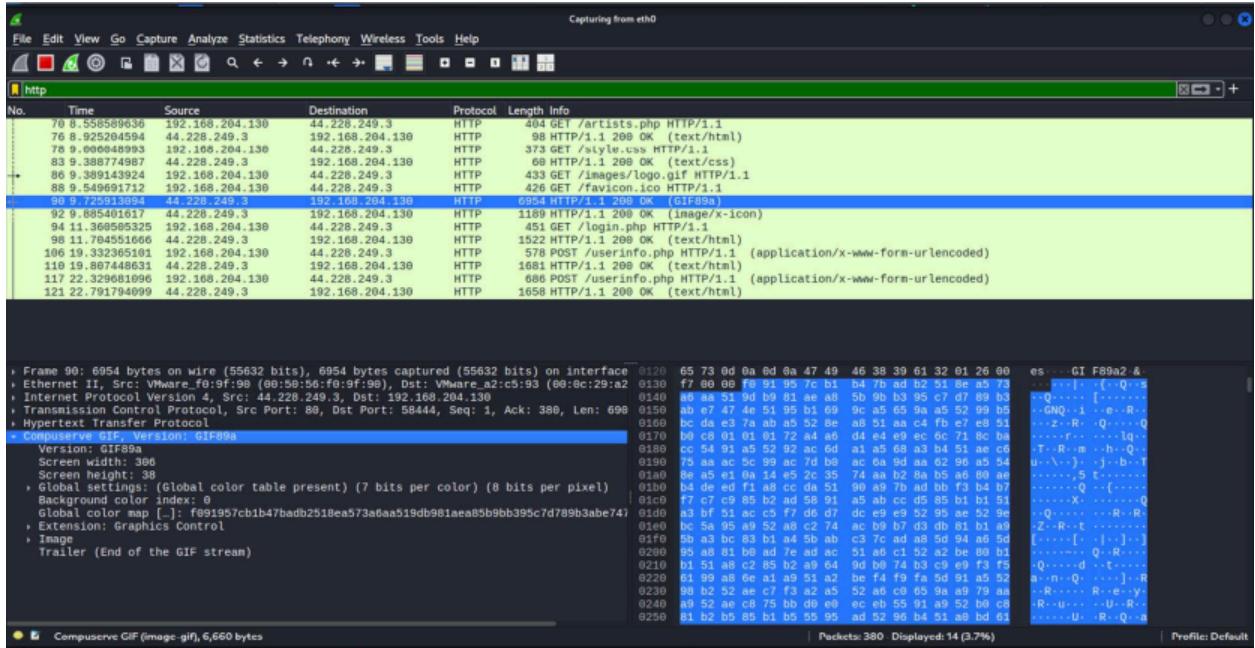
By combining email headers, IP geolocation, and browser search history, investigators can build a timeline, confirm intent, and correlate digital evidence while ensuring it remains admissible in court.

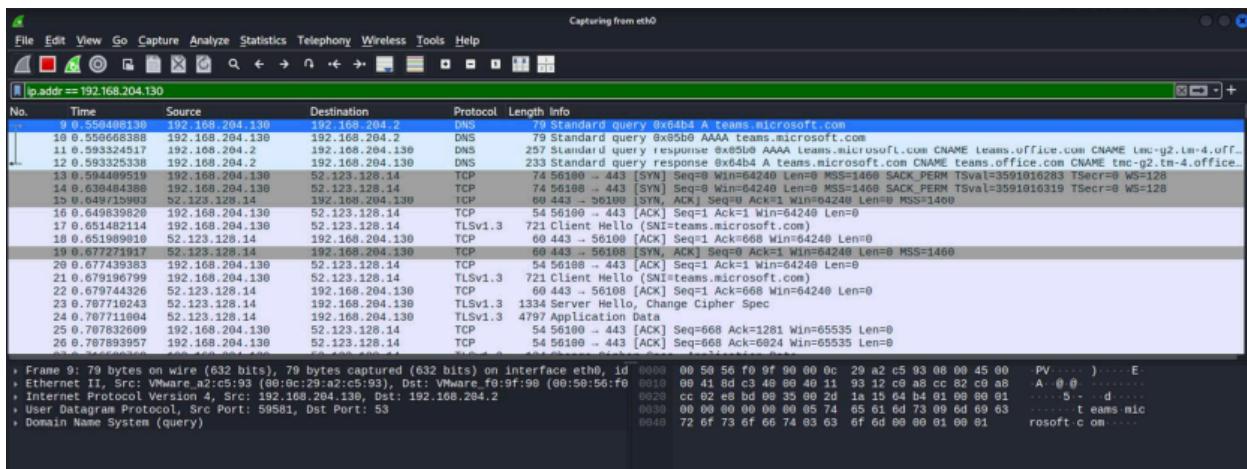
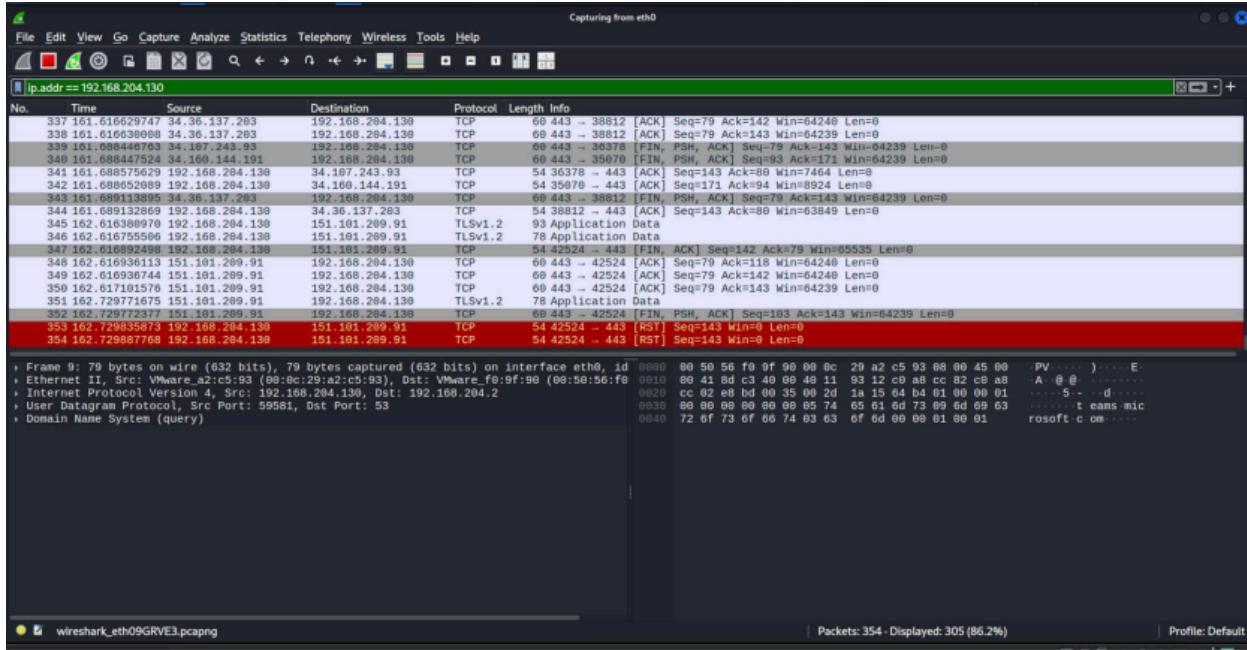
12.6 Output:

(Attach screenshots or data outputs of header analysis, IP lookup, and browser search recovery.)

The screenshot shows the homepage of WhatIsMyIPAddress.com. At the top, there is a search bar with the placeholder "Enter Keywords or IP Address..." and a "Search" button. Below the search bar are navigation links for "ABOUT", "PRESS", "PODCAST", and "SUPPORT". A horizontal menu bar includes "MY IP", "IP LOOKUP", "HIDE MY IP", "VPNS", "TOOLS", and "LEARN".

In the main content area, it displays "My IP Address is:" followed by the IPv4 address **115.113.39.67** and "IPv6: Not detected". It also shows "My IP Information:" with details: ISP: Tata Communications Limited, City: Mumbai, Region: Maharashtra, Country: India. A red button labeled "HIDE MY IP ADDRESS NOW" is visible. A warning message "Your location may be exposed!" is present. To the right, there is a map of the Mumbai area with a red dot indicating the location. A tooltip on the map says "Click for more details about 115.113.39.67". Below the map, there are links for "Show Complete IP Details" and "Update My IP Location".





kali-linux-2025.3-virtualbox-amd64 [Running] - Oracle VirtualBox

File Machine View Input Devices Help 2:28

Session Actions Edit View Help

```
(kali㉿kali)-[~]
$ echo -n "Password123" | sha256sum
008c70392e3abfb0fa47bbc2ed96aa99bd49e159727fcba0f2e6abeb3a9d601 -
```

```
(kali㉿kali)-[~]
$ echo "008c70392e3abfb0fa47bbc2ed96aa99bd49e159727fcba0f2e6abeb3a9d601" >
hash
```

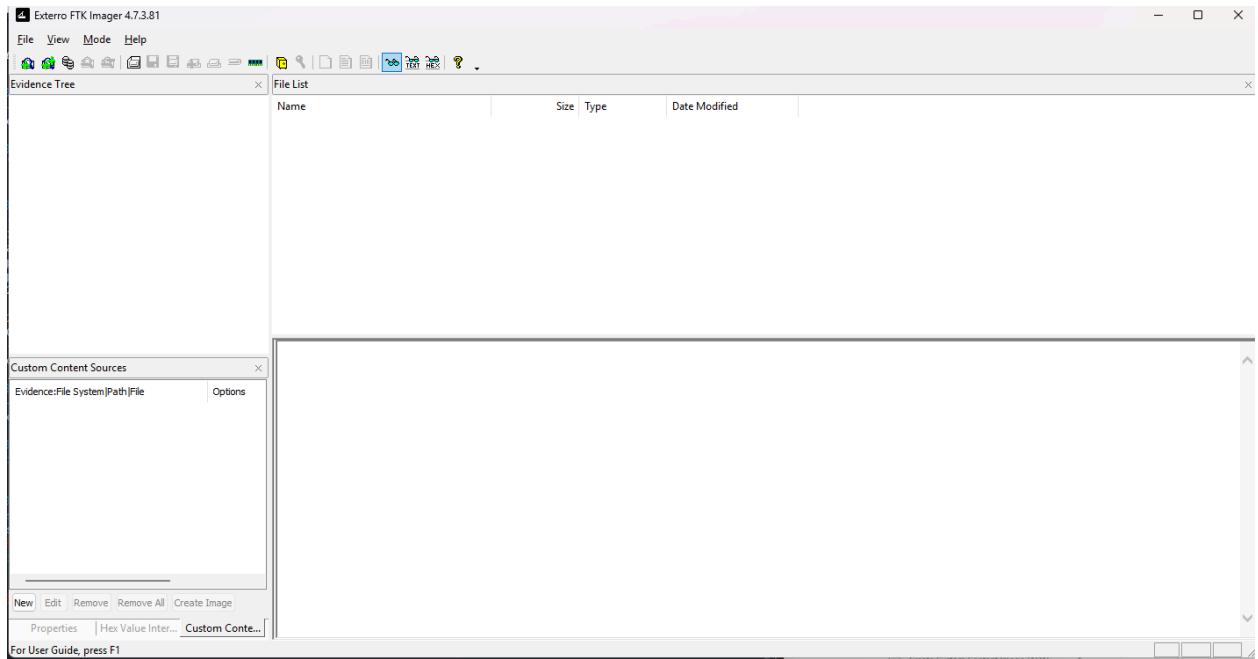
```
(kali㉿kali)-[~]
$ john --wordlist=/usr/share/wordlists/rockyou.txt --format=raw-sha256 hash
Created directory: /home/kali/.john
Using default input encoding: UTF-8
Loaded 1 password hash (Raw-SHA256 [SHA256 256/256 AVX2 8x])
Warning: poor OpenMP scalability for this hash type, consider --fork=2
Will run 2 OpenMP threads
Press 'q' or Ctrl-C to abort, almost any other key for status
Password123      (?)
1g 0:00:00:00 DONE (2025-10-28 02:26) 8.333g/s 546133p/s 546133c/s 546133C/s dyesebel..sabrina7
Use the "--show --format=Raw-SHA256" options to display all of the cracked passwords reliably
Session completed.
```

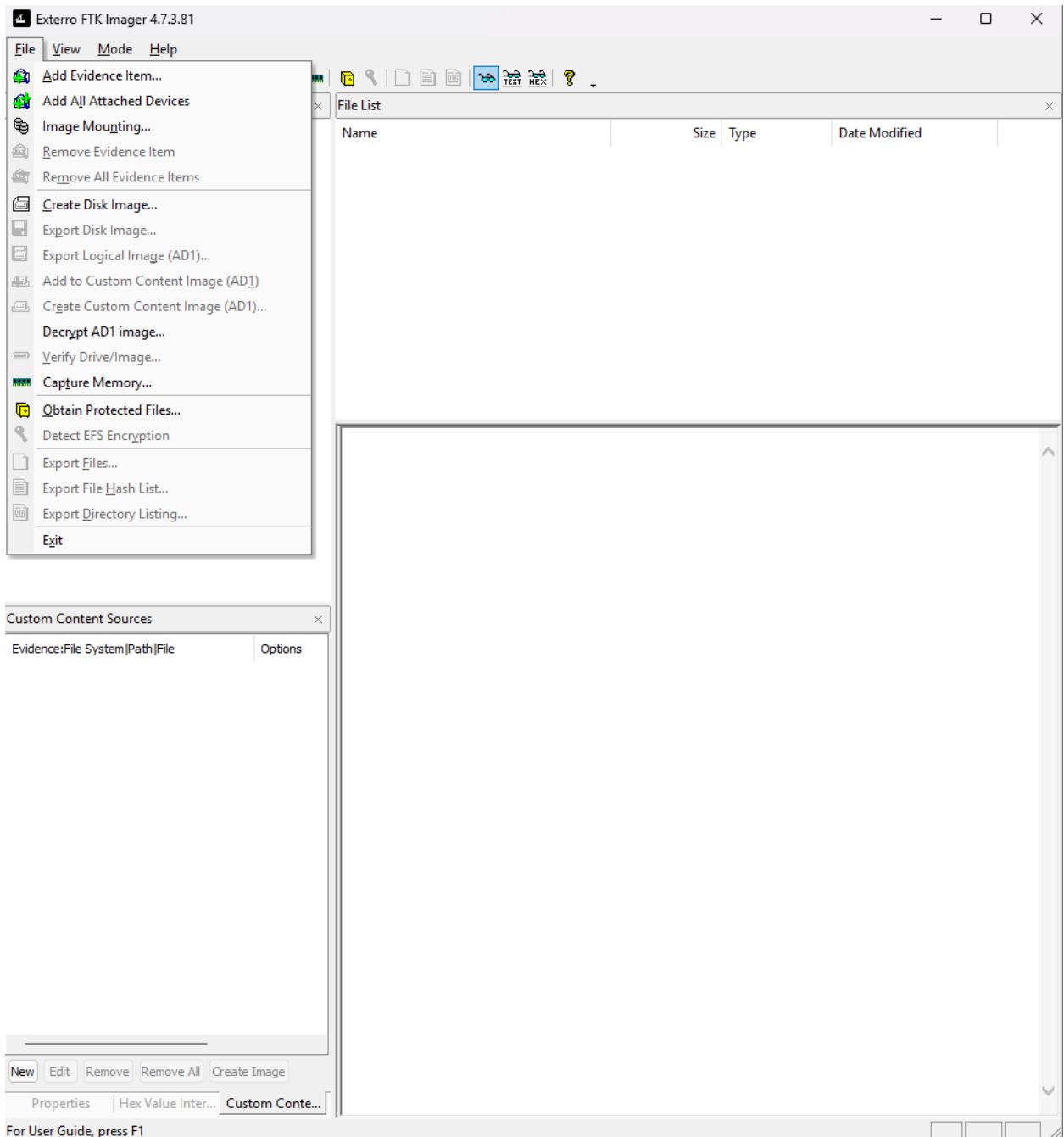
```
(kali㉿kali)-[~]
$ echo -n "qwertyuiop" | sha256sum
9a900403ac313ba27a1bc81f0932652b8020dac92c234d98fa0b06bf0040ecfd -
```

```
(kali㉿kali)-[~]
$ whoami
kali
```

```
(kali㉿kali)-[~]
$ sudo su
[sudo] password for kali:
(root㉿kali)-[/home/kali]
# whoami
root
```

```
(root㉿kali)-[/home/kali]
#
```





Select Source



Please Select the Source Evidence Type

Physical Drive

Logical Drive

Image File

Contents of a Folder

(logical file-level analysis only; excludes deleted, unallocated, etc.)

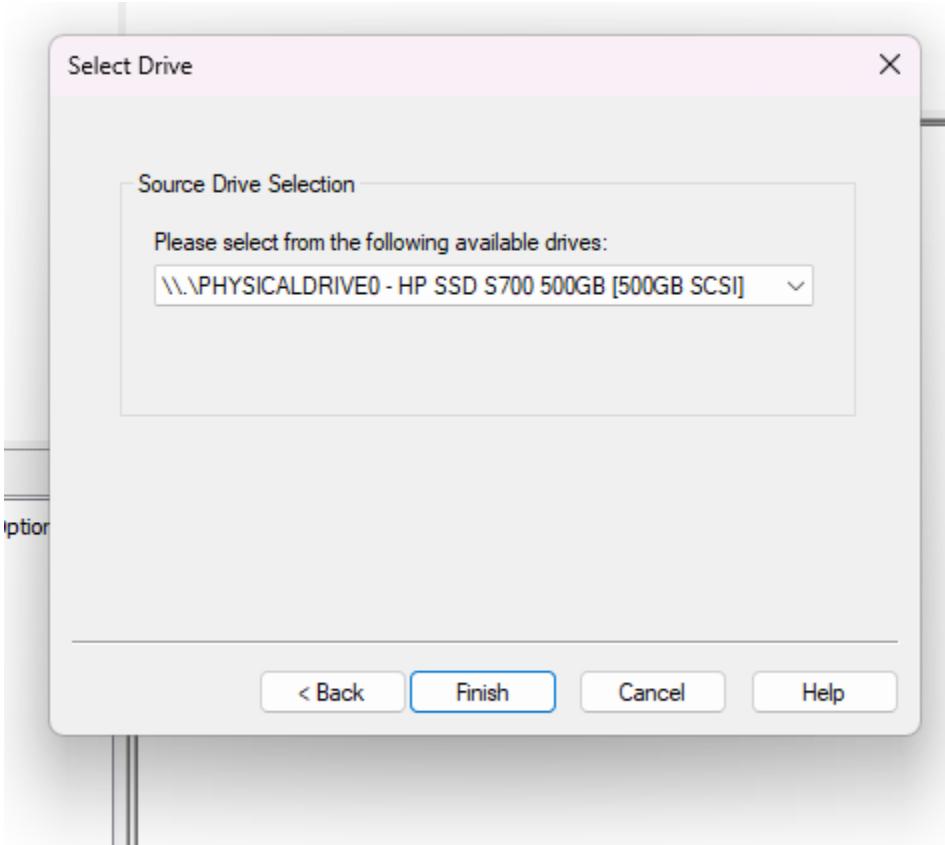
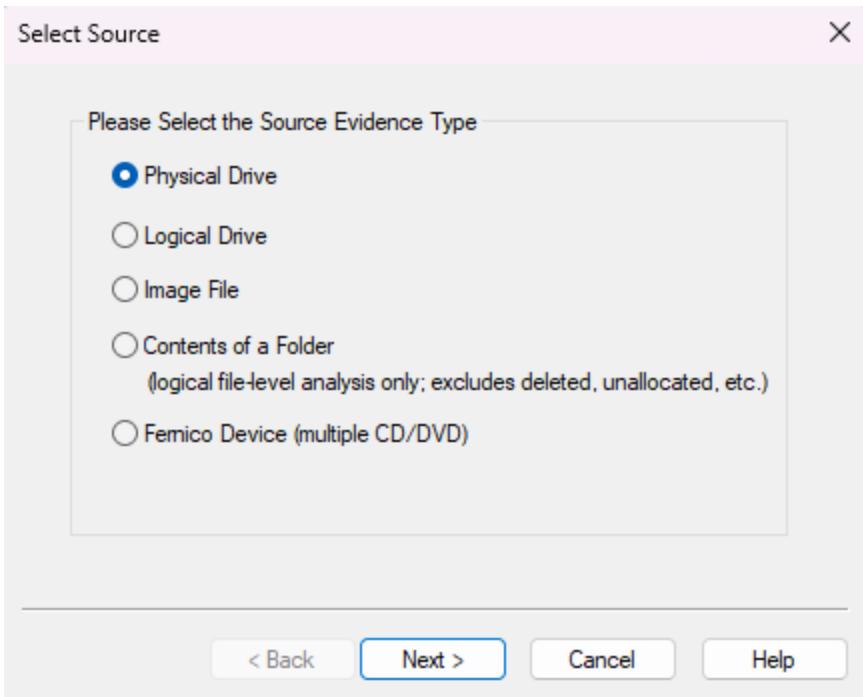
Options

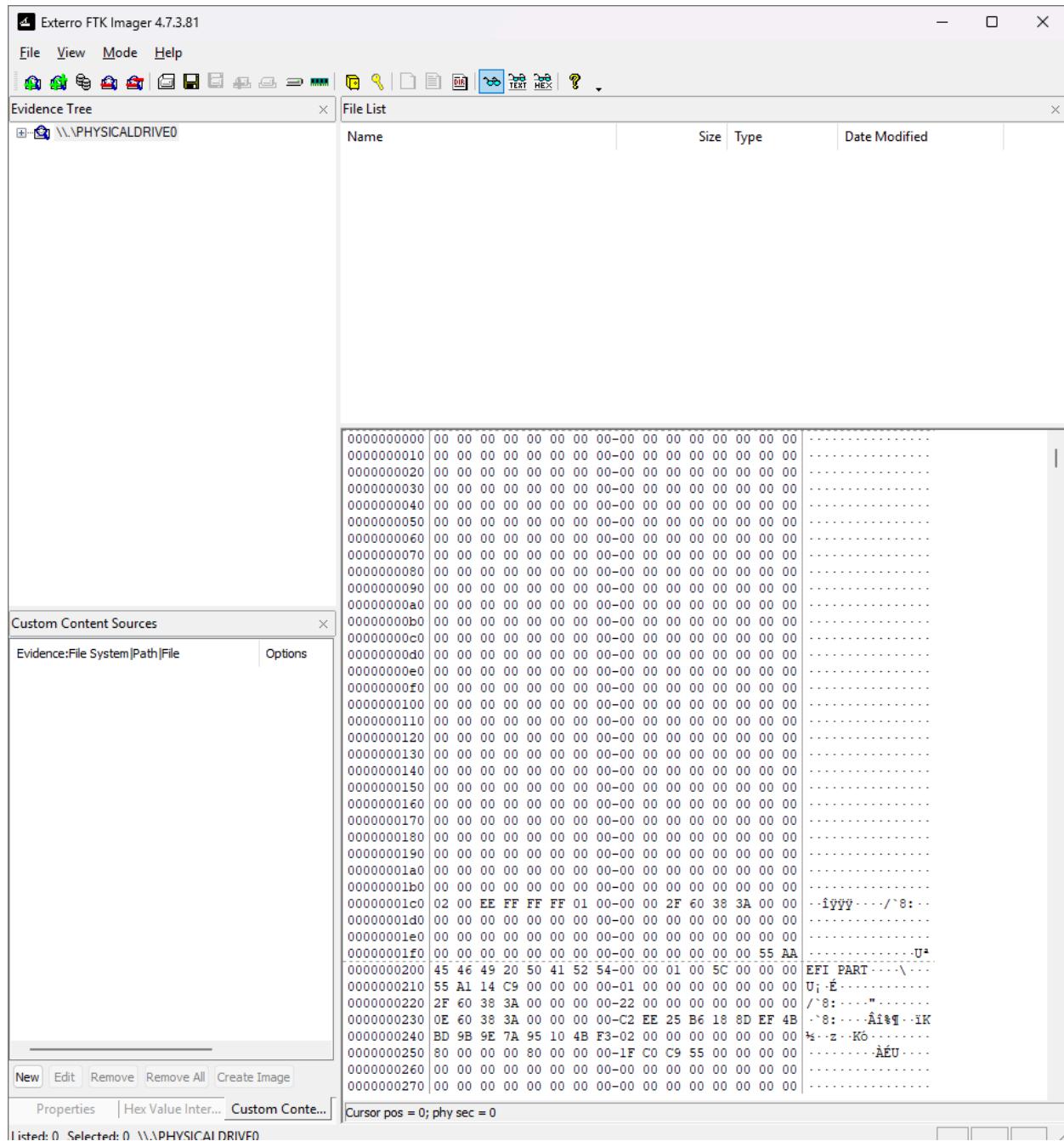
< Back

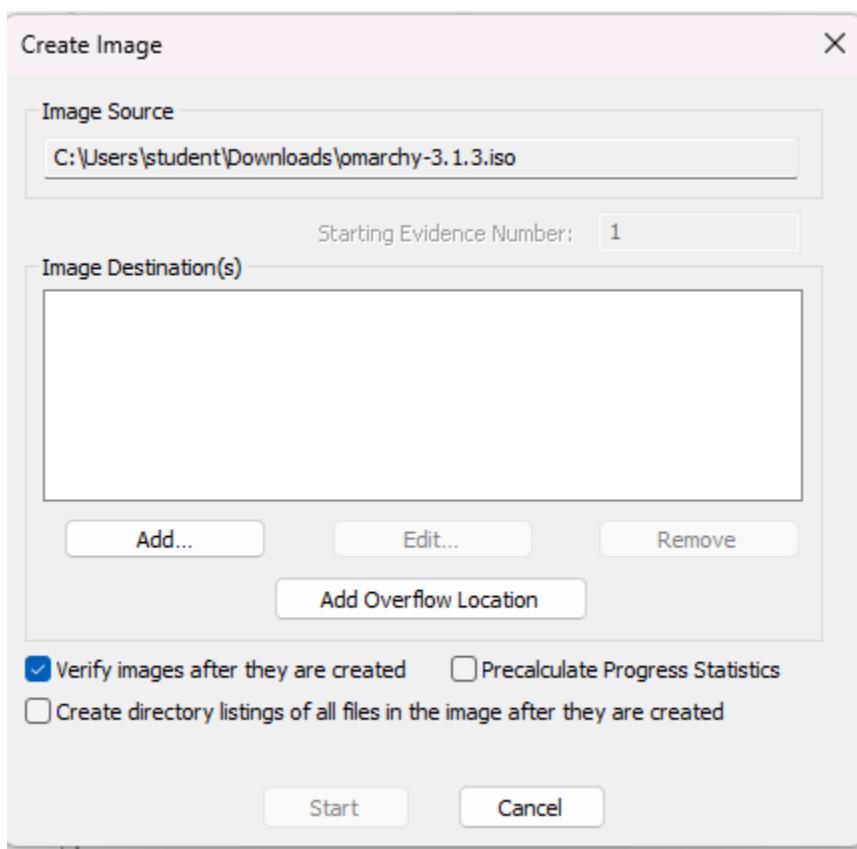
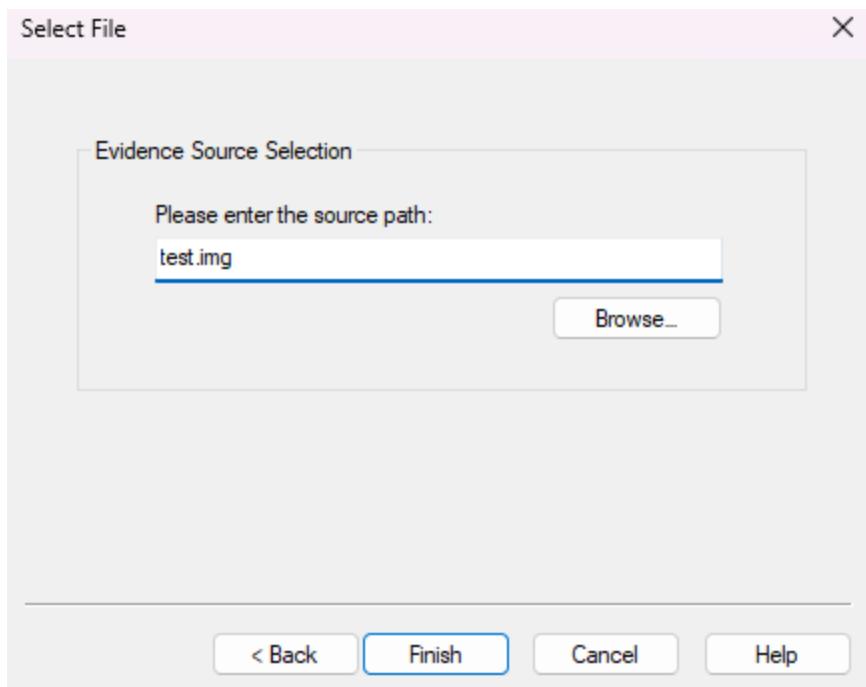
Next >

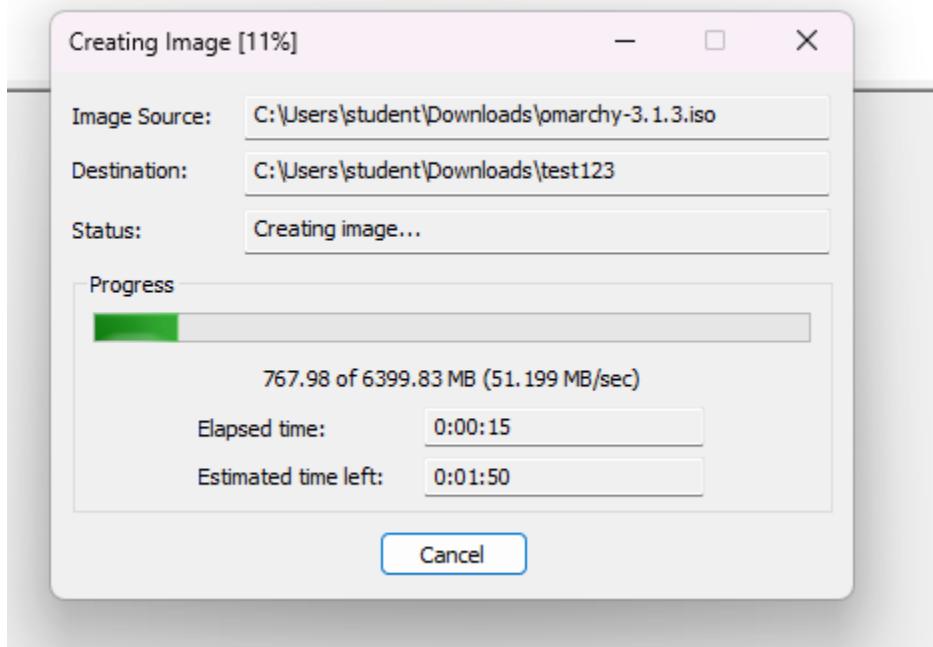
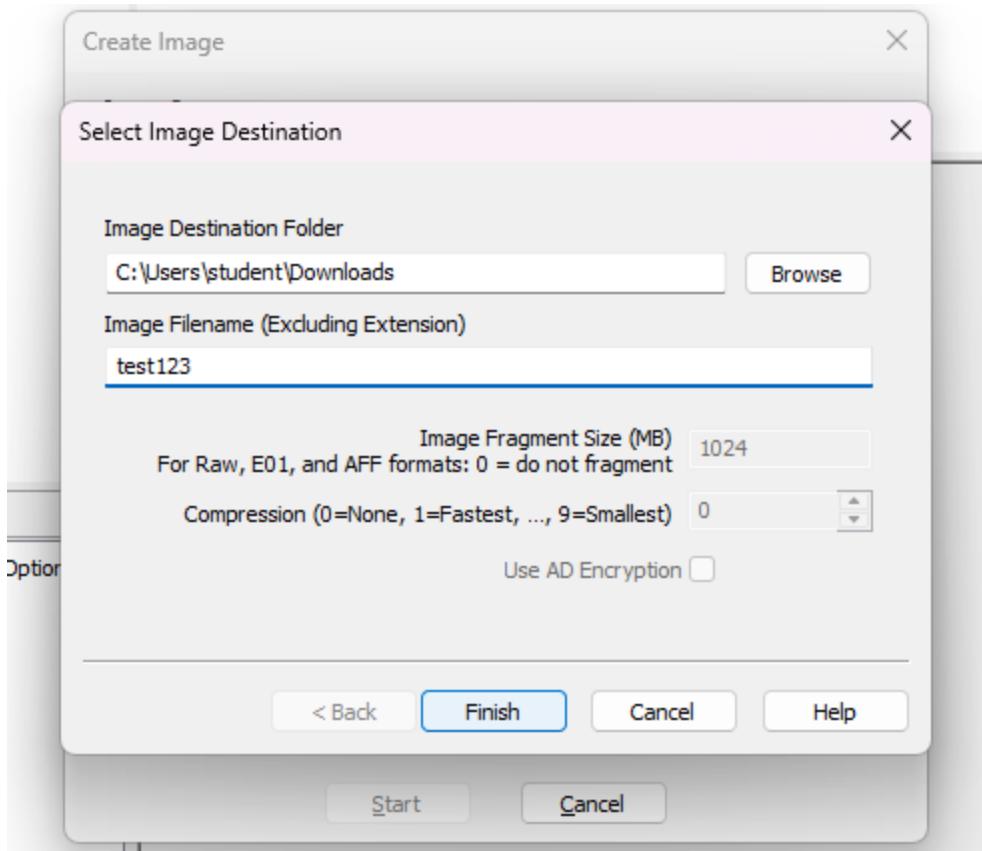
Cancel

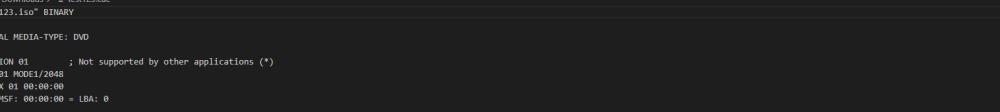
Help









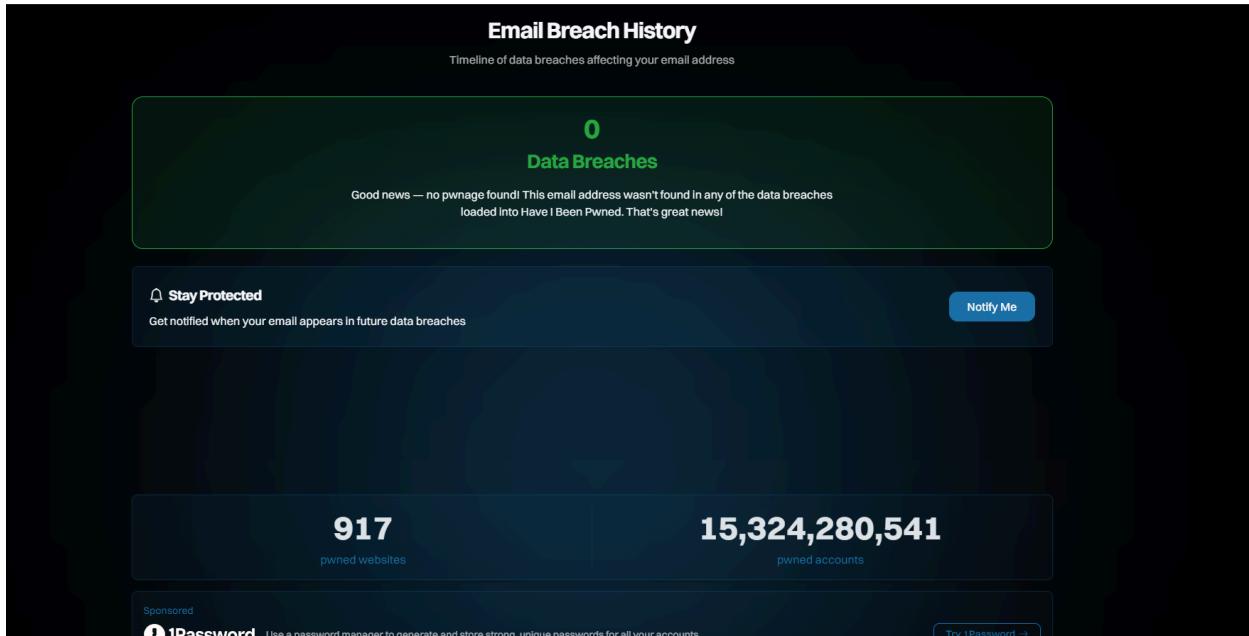


The screenshot shows a terminal window with the following content:

```
File Edit Selection View Go Run Terminal Help ← → Search
Restricted Mode is intended for safe code browsing. Trust this window to enable all features. Manage Learn More

test123.cue X
C:\> Users > student > Downloads > test123.cue
1 FILE "test123.iso" BINARY
2
3 REM ORIGINAL MEDIA-TYPE: DVD
4
5 REM SESSION 01 ; Not supported by other applications (*)
6 TRACK 01 MODE1/2048
7 INDEX 01 00:00:00
8 REM MSF: 00:00:00 = LBA: 0
9
10 REM (*) SESSION directives are unfortunately not properly supported
11 REM 'out there'. IsoBuster however supports them !
12
```

A screenshot of a Microsoft Edge browser window. The address bar shows 'File test123.cue'. A download dialog box is open, prompting the user to save the file 'test123.cue' to the 'Downloads' folder. The file is described as 'CSV (Text File)'. The browser interface includes a navigation bar with File, Edit, Selection, View, Go, Run, Terminal, Help, and a search bar. The main content area shows a list of files from a directory, including various versions of 'OMARCYH_202510' and other system-related files like 'ARCH', 'BOOT', 'EFI', and 'IMM'. The status bar at the bottom indicates 'Restricted Mode is intended for safe code browsing. Trust this window to enable all features.' and shows the file size as 1.00 MB.



12.7 Conclusion:

Understanding how to geolocate IP addresses aids in identifying the physical location relevant to cyber incidents, which is essential for pinpointing suspects or compromised systems.

Analyzing email headers reveals detailed information about the route and authenticity of emails, helping to detect phishing, spoofing, or unauthorized access.

Recovering browser search history provides crucial insights into user intent, digital footprints, and evidence of potential malicious activities or information gathering.

Collectively, these methods empower forensic investigators to construct a comprehensive timeline and narrative of cyber events, supporting accurate incident resolution and legal proceedings.

Effective use of these techniques is vital to maintaining cybersecurity and supporting law enforcement efforts in today's cloud-centric digital environment.