Page Vault

Social Media Collections for Legal Professionals: X

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

January 2025

Sharing best practices from more than 10 years of Social Media Collections

Who is Page Vault?

Page Vault specializes in full-page screen captures of web content such as social media sites like Facebook and Instagram, videos, web pages, full website captures, and more.

Page Vault solutions archive web pages exactly as they appear online and preserve key metadata such as URL and date of access. Page Vault also provides eDiscovery load files, and affidavits are available for any capture.

If you're tasked to collect a relevant party's social media presence, you might wonder: what do I even need to look for and capture?

That question often leads people to Page Vault. Since 2013, we've been collecting and preserving online content for legal professionals, with social media making up a huge portion of those preservations.

This guide distills the advice we give to clients day-in and day-out into an easy to follow step-by-step guide for your own investigations and preservations. The recommendations we provide here are what most attorneys and investigators end up needing for their projects.

This guide walks you through:

1. What you can find on X

2. Key features to keep in mind when accessing the platform

3. Step-by-step instructions of what to look for and capture on X

Note: Social media platforms change often! You can visit the resource page on Page Vault's website to check if you have the latest version of the guide.

X: What to Know

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X is a website and platform that allows people and businesses to share videos and pictures with followers, usually accompanied by a text caption, for entertainment and marketing.

Each user has a profile page with the following features:

1. A short, personal summary commonly called the 'bio'
2. A summary feed of all of the videos/photos they have posted; all of the comments a creator has made or other posts they have reposted; and a tab to see pinned or "highlighted" posts of that creator
3. A profile design feature called the banner
4. A place of data for viewers to see others' comments, likes, reposts, and views

Do I need an account?

☐ Yes ☑ No

Most common uses

- Personal sharing of and engagement with text, photos, and videos
- Businesses maintaining an account to update their customers or users

Common content types

- A photo or group of photos put together in a grid
- Looping videos
- Polls

A piece of text or caption of the content types is typically included with each post. This can include descriptions, opinions, instructions, or explanations of the post.

Can users see I viewed their profile?

☐ Yes ☑ No*

*Users are unable to see who viewed their profile, but are able to see the number of people who viewed their profile under "profile visits"

What information can I see?

- An entire account is either public or private - you cannot have public posts for private accounts
- Content shared on public accounts can be seen by anyone logged in to X
- Content shared by private accounts can only be seen by approved followers (see warning below!)

Other commonly used features

- Private messages with individuals and/or groups of people
- AI service named "Grok"

Warning! Do not request to follow a private account for the purpose of accessing information. This could be an ethics violation.

What to collect: The Profile

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The Profile is a summary view of an account

Bio

The "bio" can show information such as interests, occupation, supported causes, and more. Since it is variable, businesses will often change their bio to support their newest products

Posts

A general place to view all of the creator's posted content. These will typically contain some form of visual content alongside a text or caption.

Posts can:

- Display products
- Showcase trends, topics, or campaigns
- Express opinions of events

Verified Badges

Confirm that the account is authentic to the notable person or brand

The Banner

The banner is used to visually personalize a profile. For businesses, it is typically for advertising content

Information

As a part of the bio, X allows users to see creators information. This sometimes includes when the creator joined, their location, business information, and email adress or phone number

Post Data

Users can view the comments of other users, however, creators can limit commenting to specific people. Who has reposted, liked, or viewed the post is not able to be viewed directly

What to collect: Individual Posts and Comments

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

When clicking into a post on the grid you will open up the photo(s), video, comments, and caption to the post. Some posts may have multiple photos, so be sure to capture all content for the full-context of the post. If there are multiple photos within a post, all comments are associated with the post as a whole, not with each individual photo or video. As long as you are a follower of the account, you are able to see all individual posts. Posts will also show the day/time it was posted, the caption, a search bar at the top to view similar posts/creators, and all of its user data.

Additional Features: X Shopping, Jobs, and Live

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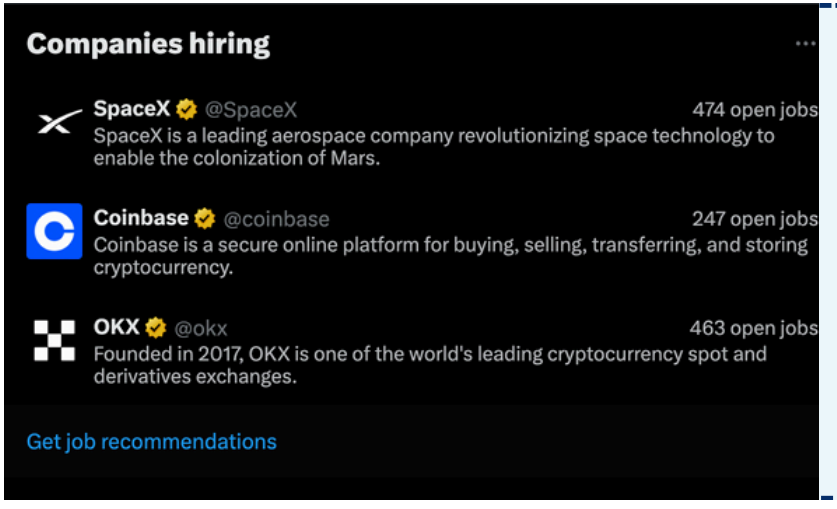
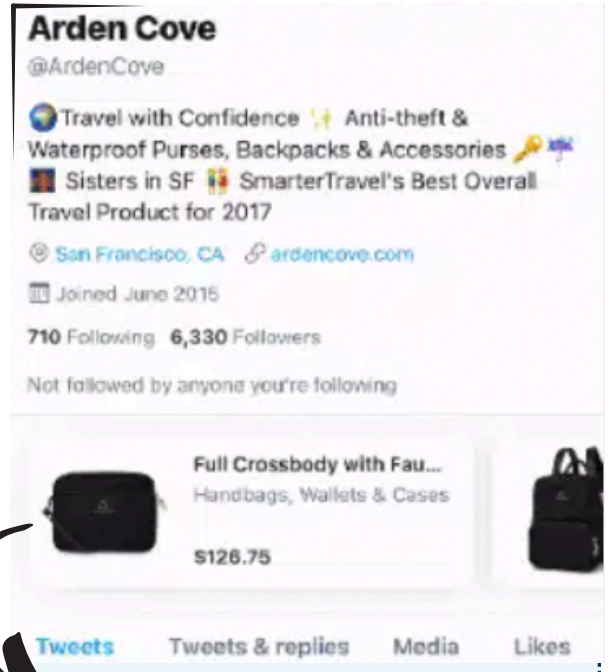
X Live

X Live allows users to start live broadcasts and chat with their audience. Creators can receive donations, use the "multi-stream" feature to invite friends, and see who is watching their stream.



X Job Search

X will take users past activity (i.e. hashtags, following, and liked and reposted posts) to find companies, recruiters, and industry leaders, as well as job openings and networking opportunities.



X Shopping

Brands can sell directly from X, without directing users to their website. Users only have access to the creator's products through the module in their profile.

★ **Tip** Users can pay for reply boosts, unlimited access to "Grok", the ability to edit posts, and much more with "X Premium"

Pro-Tips

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☑ *Collect early and often*

X posts can quickly be deleted. As a best practice, capture any potential evidence early, even before litigation.

☑ *Overcapture, don't undercapture*

Search for and capture posts across all X features for potential evidence use later on.

☑ *Capture all metadata*

Underlying an X post is a vast amount of information including timestamps, IP address, and more to prove a posts authenticity.

☑ *Maintain the digital chain of custody*

Leverage a legal-grade tool or third-party experts to collect X evidence and maintain the chain of custody.

☑ *Be aware of 'anonymous' profiles*

There are many accounts on X without much user data, typically used for activities such as stalking, trolling, or maintaining privacy while interacting with close friends.

☑ *Understand privacy settings*

Users may limit followers to see different posts, block specific users from viewing their profile, or have a private account altogether.

☑ *Look to FRE 901 and 902*

Federal Rules of Evidence (FRE) 901 and 902 govern the admissibility of digital evidence. Stay up to date with admissibility rules and use them as a framework for your collection strategy.

☑ *Be careful of some verified accounts*

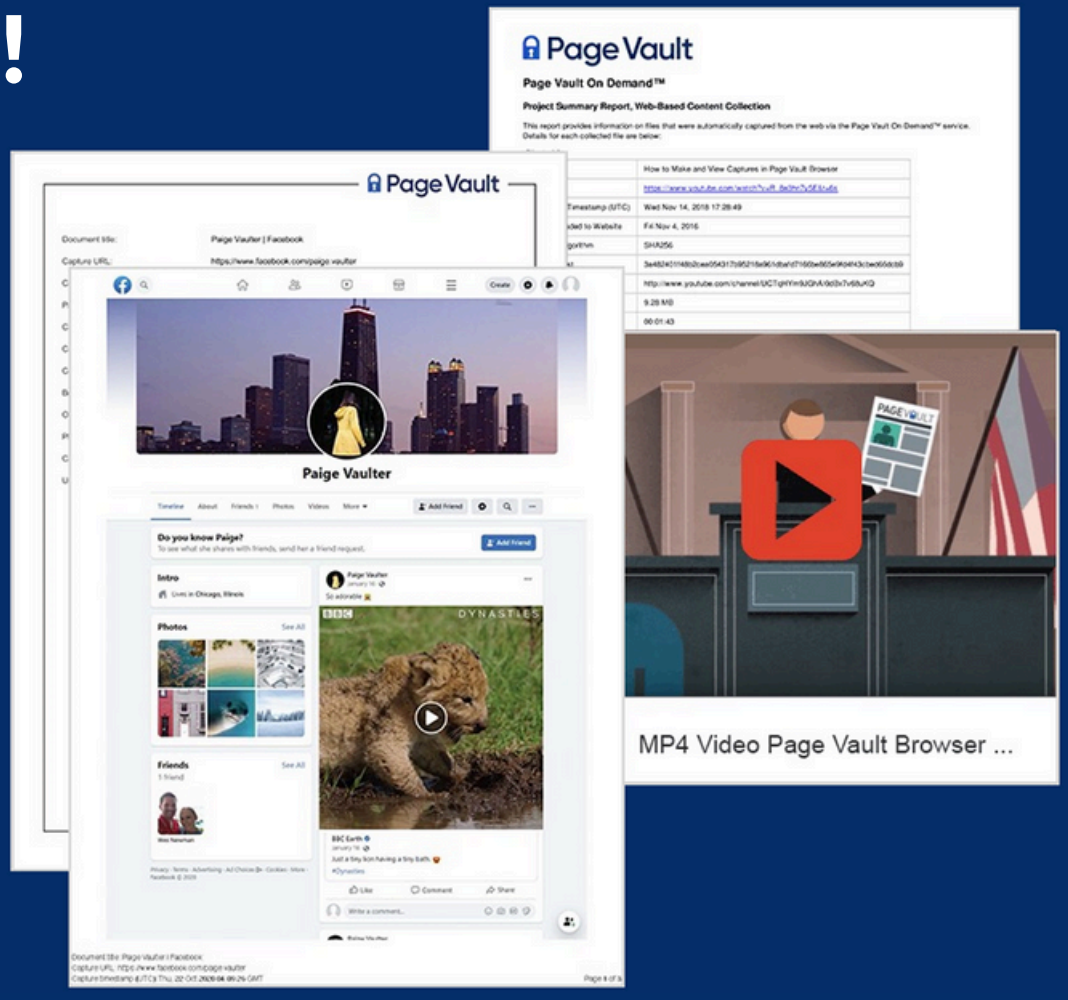
Some verified accounts have access to webpages that allow them to pay to become verified, meaning they did not truly meet the verification requirements of X and are illegitemit.

Need to preserve web content?

Page Vault can help!

Page Vault specializes in full-page screen captures of Facebook and web pages, videos, full website captures, and more.

Outsource to our capture experts with Page Vault On Demand, or get our award-winning software capture as you go.



Contact our sales team anytime at page-vault.com/contact