

## Case Study

# Wesleyan University

## Legal Hold & Automation



Industry  
Higher Education



Company Size  
1200 Employees



Location  
Connecticut



Topic  
Legal Hold

## Background

Wesleyan University, a private liberal arts school in Middletown, CT, needed to strengthen its legal hold processes. They had processes in place to preserve physical information relevant to potential or existing litigation, however the university's legal team wanted to update its existing manual processes to ensure that all electronically stored information (ESI) was also protected. Before working with CrashPlan, their process relied on a lean IT staff and individual staff action to ensure that all data was accurately collected — resulting in a higher potential for human error, inconsistent compliance, and out-of-date information.

### Key Challenges

- ❗ Risk of legal damages due to spoliation or adverse inferences
- ❗ Lack of documented chain of custody
- ❗ Human forgetfulness
- ❗ Inability to preserve multiple file versions

## Users forget they're under a legal hold

Prior to implementing CrashPlan, the legal hold preservation process was often run on a system of trust. Effectively, users were notified of being placed on hold and were asked to not delete any data in case it might be needed in the future. This system worked in theory, however users could become unresponsive, respond with confusion, or eventually forget they were on hold altogether. "Trusting the end user to remember they have a legal hold isn't something you should do," says Joe Bazeley, CISO for Wesleyan University.

For example, he continued, "at my previous institution, whenever a litigation hold got released, we'd send out notifications that the hold had ended, and 10-15% of them would write back, "what litigation hold?" After enough time passed, the users forgot that they were supposed to preserve their data. "I love my users, but I don't trust my users," says Joe. "As an institution, we want to take that responsibility away from them."

**"I love my users, but I don't trust my users,"**

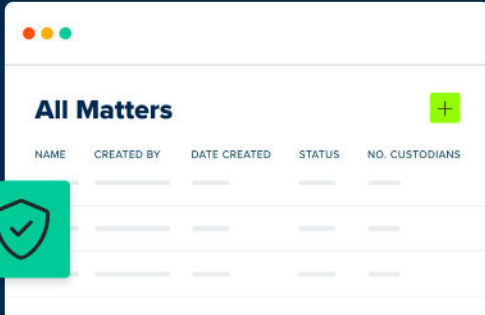
**Joe Bazeley, CISO, Wesleyan University**

## Complicated and inconsistent data retention

Previous attempts to solve the problem resulted in backup systems in decentralized locations and often involving multiple unencrypted USB drives, the bane of any security team's existence.

"Wesleyan has less than 5,000 people, including faculty, staff, and students. We've got at least a dozen litigation holds right now. It's not that we're being sued a dozen times right now; it's about believing that someone will sue you...You need to be able to hold onto all this data, and you can not trust your users to do it," says Joe.

Having a centralized system to automatically and continuously protect users' data with or without their knowledge was imperative for Wesleyan's Legal Hold program.



By working with CrashPlan, **Wesleyan University** created a more efficient way to automatically collect and preserve user-created data in a centralized and secure location.

## Solution

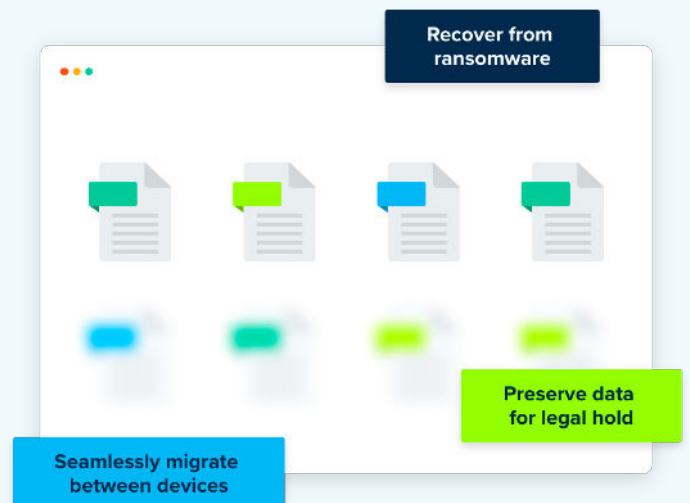
**CrashPlan provides an automated system that scales beyond basic email and spreadsheet applications to cover all user-created data on a device.**

Instead of manual or ad hoc processes, by using CrashPlan's services, Wesleyan was able to streamline the collection and preservation of users' ESI and support automated tracking of activities.

CrashPlan's dedicated enterprise solution supports legal hold backup, recovery, and device migration. Deploying CrashPlan enabled the Wesleyan team to optimize their collection, preservation, retention policy enforcement, and data access processes all in one console.

### Key Use Cases

- ❗ Chain-of-Custody Validation
- ❗ Version Retention
- ❗ File Metadata Preservation
- ❗ Custodian Transparent
- ❗ Separation of Duties



## Continuous protection on all devices

CrashPlan's legal hold solution transcends changes in staff and devices. "When staff get a bright and shiny new machine, they forget about their legal holds and don't tell their desktop support person..., and I could lose all the important information," says Joe. "With CrashPlan, I no longer need to worry about that."

With CrashPlan's backup, Joe and the rest of Wesleyan's team can ensure that data from every device in the organization is automatically stored and available before, during, and after a user is placed on legal hold. "I love just being able to say, 'Oh, it's got CrashPlan on it. It does everything that I need it to do.'"

"I love just being able to say, 'Oh, CrashPlan's on it. Great. I don't need to worry about legal holds. It does everything I need it to do.'"

**Joe Bazeley, CISO, Wesleyan University**

The legal hold process isn't only necessary to defend against legal liability. Legal holds affect everyone, from the legal team members responsible for distributing hold notifications and tracking compliance to everyone who may interact with custodians.

While the legal hold process might not require specialized legal knowledge or in-depth technical skill, there are many moving parts and opportunities for mistakes. Having CrashPlan in your corner helps organizations be best prepared with a repeatable, automated and pain-free process that puts everyone's mind at ease.



[crashplan.com](https://crashplan.com)

CrashPlan® enables organizational resilience through secure, scalable, and straightforward endpoint data backup. With automatic backup and customizable file version retention, you can bounce back from any data calamity. What starts as endpoint backup and recovery becomes a solution for ransomware recovery, breaches, migrations, and legal holds. So you can work fearlessly and grow confidently.

For more information, visit [crashplan.com](https://crashplan.com).

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