Bumps in the Night!!!!

Paranormal "U"

Data Cross Reference Technique

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Data Cross Reference, also referred to as Triangulation, is a technique we use during data review to cross-reference a data event that "is possibly" paranormal. Before we get too far into the technique, let's first define a few terms such as Data Event and Triangulation.

"Data Event" Defined

For us, "Data Event" means a piece of data that we found during a case data review that has a possibility of being paranormal in nature. These Data Events could be an EVP, a shadow on video, a light anomaly on video or photo, etc. Once the Data Events are reviewed closer and are deemed paranormal in nature we call them Paranormal Data (or some call evidence).

"Triangulation" Defined

The term "Triangulation" is defined by the Qualitative Reasoning Group at Northwestern University as follows: "Triangulation is a way of determining something's location using the locations of other things." (http://www.qrg.northwestern.edu/projects/vss/docs/Navigation/1-what-is-triangulation.html). We learned of the term from a friend of the team that worked for a cell phone carrier. They use the "Triangulation" technique on the cell towers to get a possible area, based on their cell phone usage, to search for a missing person and/or kidnapped victim. That gave us the idea to try to a similar process for data review.

For us, "Triangulation" means to cross reference data from several devices to try to prove (Paranormal Data) or disprove (False Positive or Debunk) a Data Event. We do this by reviewing other data files (audio, video, or photos) for an investigation to see if the Data Event was captured in another file as well. We try to review at least two other data files, for a total of three files, if possible. By locating that same point on another file it can assist us in identifying if the Data Event is possible Paranormal Data or a False Positive.

Data Cross Reference Technique

The technique starts by syncing the date/time stamp for all equipment used during an investigation. This syncing includes all cameras, DVRs, digital recorders (digis), and digital cameras. See the Time Syncing article in "Paranormal U" for more information (http://www.tntparanormal.com/Articles/Article10-Time%20Syncing.pdf).

The second step is to start all of the digis at the same time. That way they are all synced together. At the time of start we also state the time of the start, such as "Started at 7PM".   We then log the time we started the recorders. Since the DVR, digis, and digital camera are synced in time stamps that makes them fairly synced for recorded time and easy to go between the devices. Also note we always have audio with every camera on an investigation, whether it's placing a digi with a camera or relying on the built-in audio for camcorders.

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"Triangulation" Technique

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The next step occurs during the review of the data. If a Data Event occurs, the reviewer should document the time stamp, as well as what happened, what was going on, who was present, and what they think occurred. A time stamp example for a Data Event will be something like 2:13:46, meaning at the 2 hour, 13 minute, and 46 second mark in the file.

The last step is to "Triangulate" using data from other devices in the area. If the digis in the kitchen is where the Data Event was captured we will look at the data files for the digis in the next room and/or next adjacent area. We will also cross reference data from different types, such as looking at the camera to see what was going on at that time in the room. By looking at these other data files it gives us a more holistic view.

"Data Triangulation" Examples

A few examples of how we have used this technique are:

- Several photos were taken in a room and some of leaves of a plant appeared to move for no apparent reason. The Data Event was logged and a data file for an IR camera was reviewed. What we found is that an investigator had walked into the room a little before the Data Event and had brushed against the plants causing the leaves to move back and forth. The photographer had not noticed the investigator had passed by, so was not aware during review. **Result**: False Positive.

- A faint whisper was captured on a digi during an EVP session where two investigators and the client where present.   The Data Event was logged and a data file for another digi was reviewed. The second recorder more clearly captured that the client whispering under their breath. **Result**: False Positive.

- An office style chair in a room had moved for no apparent reason and was fairly pronounced lasting for several seconds. The Data Event was logged and a data file for another camera was reviewed. What we found was that an investigator in the room had bumped against the chair when passing by to look at something during the investigation. The investigator never came into view of the first camera so the reviewer had no idea that had occurred. **Result**: False Positive.

- A voice was captured on a digi during an EVP session where investigators and the client where present, but it did not sound like a voice of any of those present at the time. The Data Event was logged and a data file for another digi was reviewed. The second recorder more clearly captured that it was indeed a voice and what it said. Additionally, the Data Event was more closely reviewed in our audio software and it was in a frequency below the human ear range. **Result**: EVP.

Conclusions

As you can see from the examples using this technique has allowed us to get a better look at the Data Event and provide us with a better picture before making a decision. By not using this technique we might have provided data to a client that leaned toward the paranormal when it actually had an explanation of why it happened.