

Employee Screening Takes On New Capabilities

Expect employment screening services to increase integration with other systems with an emphasis on international capabilities.

Eric Boden

Chairman and CEO, HireRight

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— Eric Boden



stand or be familiar with standard HR and security practices.

At the same time, these workers represent a major security risk. Our research demonstrates that vendor employees are 92 percent more likely to have a felony record than full-time employees of the same company. This security hole is now on its way to being plugged with recent software solutions that enable employers to effectively operate an extended workforce screening program. In 2007, look for HR departments to institute increased security policies and best practices regarding extended workforce personnel and increased screening of these workers.

Another significant HR trend for 2007, related to employment screening, is the increased screening of workers with international experience. In the past, the complexity of international background checks and the widely divergent rules related to screening in each country led most companies to simply skip the process. The increasing internationalization of the workforce, however, combined with escalating security and compliance concerns makes it impossible for companies to continue to ignore international background checks.

Finally, as background screening becomes a standard practice for HR, expect employers and screening solution providers alike to get more sophisticated in deploying solutions that provide greater value to the hiring organization. Continued evolution in background screening technologies will help HR professionals to continue to streamline processes, better operate and control their screening programs, and improve organizational performance.

Dave Dickerson

President, Accurate Background Inc.

"Hiring managers are now requiring ... the ability to access a technology such as an automated rules engine that provides the intelligence to correctly adjudicate a background check and automatically suggest a hiring decision."

— Dave Dickerson



As the demand has risen for background checks, technology has improved overall efficiency and expenditure. Technology allows hiring managers to have a completed background check report in less than two days, a process that previously took several days.

However, even with advanced technology, the process can come to a screeching halt. Why? The report must still be read in its entirety. If the report is clear with no derogatory information, the manager can proceed to make an offer. If there is derogatory information, the manager needs to cross reference against the company's hiring guidelines for potential disqualification and then review state and local laws to ensure compliance to protect the rights of the applicant. Hopefully, the process is not further complicated by multi-state jurisdictions. The fact is, most of managers' time is spent on the 10 to 12 percent of applicants they are not going to hire anyway. Hiring managers are now requiring not only cost-effective background-screening services that deliver timely, accurate results, but also the ability to access a technology such as an automated rules engine that provides the intelligence to correctly adjudicate a back-

With varying economic projections and continued pressure on HR organizations to help improve organizational performance, 2007 will be a year in which HR professionals look for ways to tighten controls, meet compliance requirements and work smarter. Supporting these efforts are significant developments in background screening practices and technologies that, along with an increasingly fluid workforce, represent the driving forces behind some of the major trends we see for 2007.

One of the significant trends we see on the horizon is the increased screening of the extended workforce, including part-time employees, contract workers, vendor employees and consultants. During the past few years, HR professionals have come to realize that while all full-time employees within a company may receive extensive background checks before being granted employment, a large number of "non-standard" employees are receiving security badges and entering the workplace virtually unscreened. This is often due to the fact that these workers are not controlled by HR, but instead are being contracted by other departments that may not under-

ground check and automatically suggest a hiring decision. Technology like this allows companies to develop hiring criteria that ensure compliance with local and federal laws while reducing their liabilities. Utilizing this technology delivers consistency across all levels and branches of an organization, especially those in multiple states. Special thresholds for certain crimes also can be included to help reduce the risk for employee-related loss or industry-specific criteria such as banking.

Companies are quickly learning that effective background screening requires a knowledge base well beyond their core competencies. Fortunately, technology is a trend that makes it simple and cost-effective.

Reid E. Klion, Ph.D.

Chief Science Officer, pan – A TALX Co.

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– Reid E. Klion, Ph.D.



In recent years, there has been a growing trend for organizations to use assessments in the employment screening process. Looking forward into 2007, there are some specific trends to watch for.

The undercurrent throughout 2007, and the foreseeable future, will continue to be the Internet. Whether in regard to talent recruitment, applicant tracking systems, pre-employment testing or background checking, Web-based systems will play a significant role. While the focus is often on how the Internet makes information more readily accessible to people, an equally important factor to consider is the “behind the scenes” role that Internet technologies, such as Web services, play in helping IT systems to share information. As a result, we will see an acceleration of efforts to link the systems involved in the human capital acquisition process. For example, an organization’s recruitment Web site will be fully integrated with its applicant tracking system (ATS), assessment vendors, background checking providers and HRIS systems so that the entire talent acquisition process can function as a seamless whole.

Looking to the coming year, we will also see an increased use of assessment at the time of job application. Until recently, the type of assessment typically used was a simple questionnaire that determined if an individual

meets a position’s basic qualifications, for instance, willingness to relocate. There will be growth in the use of more sophisticated assessments such as personality and biodata tests because of their increasing capabilities to predict work performance. While tempered by a justified wariness about the potential for cheating when nonproctored assessments are used, these concerns are being allayed by the development of techniques such as assessments with correct answers that are not obvious and proctored follow-up verification testing of short-listed candidates.

Another trend we also expect to emerge in 2007 is the use of test results obtained during the pre-employment process later in the employee lifecycle. By repurposing valuable assessment data, critical information about a new employee’s strengths and training needs can be determined when the person starts the job as well as later in his or her tenure.

Finally, 2007 will also see a demand for the use of assessments by multinational organizations. Motivated by a desire for a single employment screening process to be used across worldwide operations, this will remain an achievable but long-term goal because of significant challenges that can emerge when adapting assessments for use across multiple languages and cultures.

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