



The Baker's Dozen



THE TOP 13 PROVIDERS OF FULL-SERVICE WORKPLACE SCREENING. BY DENISE DOIG

This is the second year we have published a listing of workplace screening and security providers. Thanks to feedback from our readers and some helpful direction from industry leaders, we have taken steps to improve our approach. This year's annual listing of the top 13 full-service screening providers has undergone notable changes. With more providers witnessing an upswing in screening activity, which has translated into growth, competition is stiff. Some names from last year are missing, some new names are on the list, but the core players are still present.

The 13 companies acknowledged as full-service, end-to-end workplace screening providers offer an

array of services—criminal background checks, credit checks, reference checks, motor vehicle reports, identity verification, employment verification, work eligibility, physical security, drug testing, physical examinations, data and network security, security monitoring, and security training and staffing.



With more businesses actively recruiting new hires to fill employment gaps, foreign workers for international assignments, and contingent workers for short-term projects, there is an increasing need for effective screening practices and policies. Providers have acknowledged the link between staffing and screening, and now many are offering ATS (applicant track-

ing software) integration. Technology has an integral role in screening. Not only are providers accessing databases for background searches, but clients can receive reports and track screening records via vendor web-interfaces. Providers are also offering quicker turnaround times and more accurate information, thanks to a combination of technological innovation and old-fashioned sleuthing.

This special section also includes user feedback from HR leaders who have seen success with screening programs and an in-depth look at how screening works, from choosing a provider to industry trends.

Methodology: This list was developed by contacting 27 screening providers and requesting the number of employees screened in 2005. We asked how many individuals were searched, not how many different searches were conducted. Respondents were also asked to estimate the number of screenings their top 10 to 15 competitors executed in 2005 and rank their top 10 competitors. Based on these responses, a final list of 13 was generated. Because of the amorphous definition on employee screening, we felt a ranking would be an unfair comparison. Instead, the 13 providers are listed in alphabetical order with a description of services they offer, and other vital information.

* Number provided by the vendor.

Company	* Employees Screened (2005)	URL
  <p data-bbox="486 1390 673 1451">ACXIOM RISK MITIGATION</p> <p data-bbox="408 1461 1474 1680">A pioneer in the employment screening industry, Acxiom offers nearly 30 years of experience and offers to meet clients' evolving background screening needs with the latest technology options and a fully diligent solution. Acxiom helps to ensure a consistent, legally insulating background screening program is created and maintained. Based in Little Rock, AR, Acxiom provides multi-layer, 100-percent, in-person/real-time FCRA-compliant reports including but not limited to criminal record checks, credit reports, and driving records. These services, in combination with others such as employment, education, and professional license verifications, aid businesses in reducing turnover and shrinkage, leading to decreases in training costs and increases in productivity while protecting the integrity of the companies utilizing them.</p> <p data-bbox="408 1703 523 1728">Clients: N/A</p> <p data-bbox="408 1751 1474 1871">Workplace Screening Services: County criminal record checks, statewide criminal record checks, federal criminal record checks, ID verification/Social Security traces, civil record checks, motor vehicle records, credit reports, employment/education/license verifications, workers' compensation checks, national criminal access search, international checks, applicant scoring services, adverse action fulfillment services, InsightHire (applicant tracking system), and drug screening.</p> <p data-bbox="408 1894 1474 1950">Most Important Metrics: Hit rates—percentage of criminal records found among a screened population; turnaround time; and cost.</p>	1.5 million	acxiom.com

Company	*Employees Screened (2005)	URL
	<p>CHOICEPOINT WORKPLACE SOLUTIONS INC.</p> <p>As one of the nation's leading employment screening providers, ChoicePoint offers comprehensive employment screening solutions that include background investigations, drug screening, online applications, fingerprinting, global screening services, and vendor credentialing. With more than 60 years of experience in the employment screening business, ChoicePoint serves businesses of all sizes across all industries with specific employment screening needs ranging from a la carte-ordering capabilities to high-volume screening and compliance with strict industry regulations. ChoicePoint provides the experience, comprehensive product selection, and personalized support to help organizations implement a lasting, successful screening program.</p> <p>Clients: ChoicePoint services more than half of America's 100 largest employers who rely on ChoicePoint to provide the intelligent information needed to reach a hiring decision.</p> <p>Workplace Screening Services: Database criminal records checks; direct court access criminal records checks; verification of employment and education; terrorist watch list and sanctions checks; drug testing; global background screening; vendor credentialing; online applicant data capture tools; integration with ATS and HRIS systems; specialized screening solutions for retail, banking and healthcare; volunteer and nonprofit screening programs; and fingerprinting.</p> <p>Most Important Metrics: Effectiveness: measures the ratio of derogatory information developed and successful candidate hiring outcomes; performances: measures cycle time delivery against service-level requirements; quality: tracks errors, root cause analysis, and resolution; reliability: reports on system "up time," unscheduled outages, and adherence to service levels requirements; user satisfaction: measures user feedback on customer service, responsiveness, problem resolution, and the program's effectiveness against success criteria.</p>	<p>9 million</p> <p>choicepointinc.com</p>
	<p>EMPLOYMENT BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS, INC. (EBI)</p> <p>Employment Background Investigations offers background checks, drug testing, and occupational healthcare solutions. Worldwide capabilities tailored to meet exact background screening needs and integrated seamlessly with existing internal workflow.</p> <p>Clients: EBI services more than 3,000 clients worldwide, including many <i>Fortune</i> 500 companies.</p> <p>Workplace Screening Services: Background screening: credit reports, motor vehicle records, employment verifications, educational verifications, licensing and military verifications; drug testing; and occupational healthcare services.</p> <p>Most Important Metrics: Criminal records and SSN trace reports, drug testing, and physicals.</p>	<p>1.1 million</p> <p>ebiinc.com</p>
	<p>FIRST ADVANTAGE</p> <p>First Advantage offers advanced and integrated employer services including recruiting solutions, hiring management systems, automated skills and behavioral assessments, national and international background verifications, fingerprinting, drug-free workplace programs, employee assistance programs, and other related services to facilitate and expedite hiring and recruiting processes and employee retention initiatives.</p> <p>Clients: N/A</p> <p>Workplace Screening Services: background verifications, criminal reports, SSN verifications, Nationscan national criminal database search, federal criminal records, statewide criminal records, state and federal civil records, education verification, employment verification, international searches, motor vehicle records, professional license verification, OFAC (Office of Foreign Assets</p>	<p>6.75 million</p> <p>fadv.com</p>

Company

*Employees Screened
(2005)

URL

 Buyer's Choice

Best 3 Services:

1. Customer service
2. Accuracy in background check
3. Criminal background screening

Control), terrorist searches, substance abuse testing, and biometric—fingerprinting.

Most Important Metrics: Turnaround time.



GENERAL INFORMATION SERVICES, INC. (GIS)

7 million

geninfo.com

GIS has grown from being simply a provider of pre-employment screening services to offering a robust, single-source human resource hiring and retention technology platform available through the GIS Pangea Human Capital Management System. Covering salaried or hourly positions, clients can successfully recruit, screen, onboard, and retain the best talent and maximize their HR return on investment. GIS understands that no two hiring programs are alike and offers solutions that help clients understand their applicants and employees. GIS has been trusted by thousands of customers, from small businesses to *Fortune* 100 companies, for the past 40 years.

Clients: GIS is a provider of screening services for fast-food, retail, insurance, trucking, convenience stores, banking and many other industries.

Workplace Screening Services: Criminal history, court searches, national government watch lists (including OFAC), credit history employment, education and reference verifications, sex offender registries (from all 50 states and Washington, D.C., including photos), international screening, drug testing and program management, fingerprinting, USA Patriot Act compliance, retail theft database, attending physician statements, employment eligibility verifications (I-9), state-specific regulatory forms, corporate security services, configurable online application, behavioral assessments, powered achievement interviews, strategic employee onboarding, talent optimization scorecards, workforce reporting analytics, automated report grading, integrated progressive screening, and web-based ordering.

Most Important Metrics: Industry-leading turnaround times on background reports, leading customization and automation in the industry, and robust reporting and analytics.



HIRERIGHT

785,000

hireright.com

HireRight is a worldwide provider of on-demand employment background and drug screening solutions that help large organizations efficiently implement, manage, and control multi-faceted screening programs. HireRight delivers effective, customer-focused solutions that provide greater efficiency and faster results. HireRight is a pioneer and leader in providing pre-integrated employment screening services through enterprise e-recruiting solutions from best-in-breed providers such as, Oracle/PeopleSoft, Vurv, VirtualEdge, Taleo, Deploy Solutions, and PeopleAdmin. HireRight's worldwide headquarters are located in Irvine, CA with offices and affiliates around the globe.

Clients: HireRight today serves more than 15 percent of the *Fortune* 100 and delivers innovative solutions that meet the needs of today's large and emerging organizations.

Workplace Screening Services: Background screening, international screening, drug screening, extended workforce screening, and online employment applications.

Most Important Metrics: Turnaround time, first-time quality, customer satisfaction, and uptime.



INTELLICORP RECORDS, INC.

1.2 million

intelicorp.com

IntelliCorp is a nationwide provider of background checks, employment screening, and drug testing products. IntelliCorp's secure and instant online access to criminal records and other public information 24/7 helps companies and organizations reduce exposure to fraud, workplace violence, and negligent-hiring lawsuits. Additionally, IntelliCorp is

Company

*Employees Screened
(2005)

URL

 Buyer's Choice

Best 3 Services:

1. Quick return on requested background screenings with specific information on individual
2. Customer service relationship with sales rep all the way to the VP of sales, and quick service to the customers is outstanding
3. Turn around time

HR-XML certified and offers flexible, customized solutions with integration technology. IntelliCorp is FCRA compliant and delivers comprehensive, accurate, and reliable information along with integrated solutions necessary to make the best possible risk decisions.

Clients: IntelliCorp clients include nonprofit organizations, human resource, loss prevention, risk management, investigators, finance industry, government, and senior management. Markets served include hospitality, staffing, transportation, retail, nonprofit, medical, tenant screening, reseller, finance/banking, and government.

Workplace Screening Services: Criminal history searches, sex offender records, civil records, federal criminal records, inmate records, SSN verification, education verification, employment verification, credit reports, drug testing, motor vehicle reports, DOT verification, medical fraud and abuse/national practitioner's databank, payroll verification, professional licenses, bankruptcies/liens/judgments, international searches, OFAC (office of foreign assets control), and scoring.

Most Important Metrics: Aggregated data, superior products, flexible options/comprehensive solutions, pre-defined client-specific package selection options, dedicated client-service initiatives, accuracy, turnaround times, and privacy and security.



KROLL BACKGROUND AMERICA, INC.

1 million

kroll.com

Kroll helps clients reduce their exposure to global threats, seize opportunities, and protect employees and assets. Kroll's background screening division helps companies and government agencies verify the backgrounds and resumes of potential new hires. For more than 30 years, Kroll has researched job candidates at all levels, from *Fortune* 500 managers and university coaches to mid-level executives, entry-level personnel and temporary workers. In background checks, accuracy is critical, and Kroll maintains a 99-plus percent accuracy rate by adhering to a strict company-developed quality assurance program, which ensures that information gathered is of the highest quality and accuracy.

Clients: N/A

Workplace Screening Services: Background screening (U.S. and international)—address histories, civil and bankruptcy records, credit reports, criminal records, driving histories, education and employment histories, liens and judgment histories, media coverage, professional licenses and certifications, regulatory sanctions (industry-specific), employment physicals, substance abuse testing, form I-9 services, identity fraud solutions, vendor screening, and employee reference database.

Most Important Metrics: Quality/accuracy of data, time, service, compliance with jurisdictional regulations (FCRA, industry-specific guidelines, data protection guidelines), and price.



PRE-EMPLOY.COM

1.125 million

preemploy.com

Founded in 1994, this web-based company focuses on providing pre-employment screening services that help employers hire people faster, easier, and less expensively. The addition of a free applicant tracking system allows employers to have a "push of the button" solution that stops any data entry requirements from the employer. Pre-employ.com's technology gives customers the information to make informed decisions that can reduce cases of workplace theft, embezzlement, violence, and sexual harassment. By allowing both recruiters and applicants to submit their requests and view the results directly over the Internet, employers are saved from cumbersome data entry. This also allows recruiters to track the status of all their requests, whether in progress or completed, via a secure web site 24/7. Employers can divert incoming employment verification calls to a related division, Past-Employ.com, for free. With a focus on free services and a commitment to speed and accuracy, Pre-employ.com has extensive offerings nationwide.

Clients: Focus on *Fortune* 1000 employers.



Company

*Employees Screened
(2005)

URL

Workplace Screening Services: Applicant tracking, incoming employment verifications, criminal history, federal criminal, sex offender, terrorist alert, drug testing, OIG/GSA, civil history, federal civil warrants, credit report, social security, past employer, references, education, driving, vehicle insurance, and licenses.

Most Important Metrics: Turnaround time of 1.67 day average (with a 72 hour-or-it's-free guarantee); extensive network of more than 3,500 field researchers—accuracy is a major emphasis; testing; utilizing the best sources and researchers; and price—providing the lowest search costs available based on volume.



STERLING TESTING SYSTEMS, INC.

2.1 million

sterlingtesting.com

Sterling Testing Systems, Inc. is a provider of pre-employment screening, HR outsourcing services, information, and solutions. The company's proprietary technologies—Sterling Direct and Court Direct—seamlessly link HR professionals to a host of pre-employment screening and background information and data. Court Direct is Sterling's proprietary technology platform providing electronic access to primary source records at federal, state, and county courts throughout the U.S., including criminal conviction searches and national criminal database searches. Sterling maintains a 99-percent client retention rate and boasts 6,000 clients ranging from *Fortune* 500 companies to small- and mid-sized companies in a range of industries including healthcare, retail, financial services, insurance, manufacturing, transportation, professional services, and telecommunications among others. Sterling's services are available in more than 190 countries across the globe.



Company

*Employees Screened
(2005)

URL

Clients: Bed Bath & Beyond, Daimler Chrysler, Echostar Satellite Corporation, Staples

Workplace Screening Services: Court direct, drug testing, social security trace, consumer credit report, sex offender search, department of motor vehicle reports, employment verifications, professional license verification, personal and professional references, electronic fingerprinting, terrorist watch list, Office of Inspector General search, fraud and abuse control information system (FACIS) search, national practitioner data bank, workers' compensation search, applicant evaluation and skills assessments, tenant screening, and legal and compliance counsel and information.

Most Important Metrics: Revenue per year (\$60 million for 2006); industry ranking; and number of clients (6,000 corporate clients).



TALX CORPORATION

1.93 million

talx.com

TALX provides employment verifications online via www.theworknumber.com. Authorized users can check a prospect's employment history in the database, which contains more than 100 million records of past and current employment from more than 1,000 employers. Major users (such as staffing agencies) pay for TALX's The Work Number solution for instant verifications.

Clients: Aetna, Alcoa, American Express, Home Depot, Hewlett-Packard, Ingersoll-Rand, Merrill Lynch, Stanford University, Walgreens Co.

Workplace Screening Services: Employment verification.

Most Important Metrics: Turnaround time (20- to 30-second verifications using The Work Number); labor savings (recruiters save 20 to 30 minutes finding information online); and accuracy (direct date from employee payroll information).



VERIFICATIONS, INC.

1.1 million

verificationsinc.com

Verifications, Inc. is a provider of global employment screening and applicant processing services. Since 1987, more than 5,000 companies have chosen Verifications. It helps its clients to make timely and informed hiring decisions. Verifications is ISO 9001:2000-certified in both its background checking and drug testing service operations. An internal compliance team and hiring-process experts ensure compliance with federal and state regulations and that best practices are applied uniquely to each client's hiring process. The company utilizes state-of-the-art technology to provide services, including background investigations, substance abuse testing, and a full suite of applicant processing services.

Clients: Verifications services more than 5,000 clients each month, including almost 50 percent of the *Fortune* 100. Industry serviced include aeronautics, financial, food services, staffing, technology, healthcare, and medical.

Workplace Screening Services: Criminal background investigations, academic and employment verifications, SSN traces, driving records checks, government watch lists, drug testing, and a wide range of other services.

Most Important Metrics: Accuracy, time to hire, percentage of hits/clears, turnaround time, quality of hire, value per applicant, and value per screening package.



Company

*Employees Screened
(2005)

URL



USIS

7 million

www.usis.com

USIS is an information and support-services company serving human resources, insurance, government agencies, and national security markets. Headquartered in Falls Church, VA, USIS offers background screening and risk management solutions for the transportation, healthcare, financial, gaming, and retail industries that enable companies to make informed decision about people and investments. In addition, USIS is a leading provider of government program administration and background investigations to the federal government and U.S. interests worldwide.

Clients: N/A

Workplace Screening Services: Background screening, drug and alcohol testing, MVR (Motor Vehicle Report) records, DAC services, USMA theft database, national criminal record search, sex offender search, and workers' comp fraud investigations.

Most Important Metrics: N/A. 



Screening Buyers Weigh In

WE SURVEYED A DIVERSE ARRAY OF CLIENTS WHO HAVE PARTNERED WITH LEADING PROVIDERS FOR THEIR FIRST-HAND INSIGHT ON SCREENING SERVICES. THE FOLLOWING ARE THEIR THOUGHTS ON WORKPLACE SCREENING.

Most important qualities to look for in a full-service screening and workplace security provider?

- 1 Accuracy
- 2 Customer service
- 3 Timeliness

- 4 Integrity
- 5 Pricing

Other areas:

- Flexibility
- Data security
- Adaptability
- Attention to detail
- Due diligence

One thing HR departments most often overlook when screening new employees:

HR managers tend to miss errors, falsifications, or incomplete answers on applications. Instead of following up with applicants, these oversights are sometimes ignored. According to a regional food retailer, "Missing the opportunity to ask questions when crimes are disclosed or when the conviction question is left blank" was common. Other responses included:

- Verifying any criminal history that may not have been disclosed on the application and ensuring the SSN belongs to that individual.
- Failure to adequately validate their prior work history, questioning employment gaps.
- The overall connection between credit issues as it relates to future potential criminal activity.
- Not understanding the data they receive from the screening provider.
- Doing a complete check.
- Gaps in work history.
- Reasons for leaving that don't make sense (for example, an applicant who claims to have been laid off from a toy store in mid-December).
- Theft database inquiry.
- Thorough personal reference checks.

Current trends in the screening market

1 Screening will become non-negotiable (29%)

As buyers recognize the need for screening services, more organizations will implement screening policies.

2 More screening of all employees (14%)

Traditionally, companies screened only employees based on their work function. Buyers predict current employees, not just pre-hires, will be screened as well, regardless of title.

3 Databases (14%)

Greater reliance on databases, especially on a national level, is expected. This will help provide more comprehensive searches.

Other trends include:

- The burden/liability is shifting from the states to the carriers to conduct extensive background checks.
- Greater acceptance of criminal background checks.
- Screening online usage, i.e. Myspace.
- Rapid drug testing.

Biggest challenge associated with workplace screening and security

- Logistics of getting all business locations to be consistent in the process
- The accurateness of SSN in verifying that the employee is a citizen and that number belongs to that individual. With an increasing number of undocumented immigrants, it's becoming difficult to identify that the number is valid.
- Making consistent decisions with candidates and staying on the proper side of the FCRA laws
- Making sure that you continue to use an effective screening process because it is a key component in helping reduce workplace violence and pilferage while increasing employee morale.
- Taking the information and forecasting to the person and what future results can be achieved
- Finding a good provider, comparing costs, establishing and conforming to a uniform policy, and interpreting results.
- Accurate information
- Finding the right company
- Turnaround time for screening (even same day isn't fast enough sometimes) and restrictions placed on Social Security number verifications
- Mobility of workforce—from both employment and residential history—has expanded the scope and cost of conducting investigations. People are no longer in an environment where they live and work at same place for an extended period
- Turnaround time for results
- Roadblocks providers face with their outside sources for information
- Cost
- Enforcing submission of applicants; compliance.