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WHITE PAPER

# HOW TO IMPROVE THE CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE WITH AN ATS AND BACKGROUND CHECK INTEGRATION

**Learn about the benefits of integrating your applicant tracking and background screening solutions. This is a must read for HR professionals interested in streamlining the employment screening process and accelerating time to hire.**

If you are a recruiter or human resources professional working for an enterprise or mid-market size organization, you are more than likely using an applicant tracking solution (ATS) to manage various tasks including:

- Managing job requisitions
- Drafting job descriptions
- Posting open jobs to your career site and distributing them on job boards, social media and your employee referral program
- Sourcing and nurturing talent, filtering candidates by relevant skills
- Communicating with candidates at key milestones including interviews
- Managing approvals and reporting key performance indicators (KPIs) to hiring stakeholders

Once you've identified a candidate you would like to hire, you work with your background screening provider to conduct a thorough background check to ensure the safety and security of your employees and customers as well as to protect your brand. It is also important to note that employers should work with a screening provider accredited by the Professional Background Screening Association (PBSA), which is an organization that establishes high standards of professionalism, ethics and accountability for Consumer Reporting Agencies (CRAs) like IntelliCorp.

During the recruiting and background screening process, you collect information and required forms from candidates as prescribed by the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA), state, local, country-specific, and industry-specific legislation and regulations. You must then validate information provided by the candidates and review their completed background reports to determine whether you should initiate the Adverse Action process based upon information uncovered in the report. Lastly, you share key metrics that summarize results to demonstrate the value of your screening program.

When selecting the right applicant tracking and background screening solution providers, you must consider how it may impact your organization's efficiency, security and user experience. These two important solutions for recruiting and hiring should be seamless and securely integrated. As you

will find in this white paper, integrating your background screening with an ATS has several benefits. Recruiting and human resource teams can dramatically improve their candidate experience and much more.

## **IMPROVE RECRUITING & HUMAN RESOURCE PRODUCTIVITY**

An ATS-background screening integration streamlines the initiation of the employment screening process and improves your recruiting and human resource team's productivity and accelerates time to hire.

When you decide to move a job applicant to the next stage of the hiring process and conduct a background check – most often after an employment offer contingent on the background check results – you can do so from within your ATS. If the background screening solution is not integrated, you would need to separately log into your screening solution and then follow the process of keying in all the applicant data already entered into the ATS. If the two solutions are integrated, you can trigger the background check within the ATS and it will securely transfer the applicant's data to your screening solution to begin the background check process.

## **ELIMINATE DUPLICATE DATA ENTRY, INCREASING ACCURACY**

When an ATS-background screening integration is done effectively, duplicate data entry on the part of your busy recruiting and HR team is eliminated. The integrity of candidates' data is also improved, as it is securely transmitted to the screening provider exactly as it is stored by the ATS. The consistency of applicants' information in your ATS and screening solution is important to ensure accuracy of their background check report.

When you update your applicant's status to "Background Check" in the ATS, the type of background check to be conducted (the types of searches and verifications based upon the position applied to) will be sent to the employment screening solution with all other required data – including full name, current address, and email address – to begin the background check process. Securely transferring this information from your ATS to your employment background screening solution not only saves time, it also reduces the potential for human error that may occur if data needed to be manually entered.

## IMPROVE CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE

Organizations that have integrated their background screening with their ATS have seen an improvement in candidate experience. This stems from a greater level of transparency in the background check process, candidates' personal involvement in data collection, enhanced security with their personally identifiable information (PII), and legal compliance measures that protect candidates as much as their potential employer.

While an ATS can securely transfer your applicant's name, current address, and email address to the employment screening solution, the ATS does not contain other PII, data and documents that are required in the background screening process.

A successful integration workflow involves candidates in the process of gathering this information. When your screening solution receives information from the ATS indicating a new background check request, an email will be sent to your candidate. The email should describe your decision to move the candidate to the next stage of the hiring process and request other vital information required to continue the screening process via an online applicant portal. The email would include a link to the applicant portal along with their username and initial password. The candidate is prompted to enter the secure portal with their username and password, and answer specific security question(s) to confirm the email was received by the candidate. ATS providers should also extend your brand to a mobile-optimized applicant portal to make your candidates comfortable providing information while still maintaining transparency that they are in an environment maintained by the screening provider. Once logged into the portal, data stored by your ATS should pre-fill specific fields of the page.

The candidate will be prompted to complete additional information including Social Security Number (SSN), full date of birth (DOB), and residential history beyond their current address. Applicants' SSNs are among the PII that ATS providers typically do not request and store. SSNs are not needed in core ATS functions, so with incidences of identity theft at an all-time high, not storing SSNs limits candidates' exposure to ID theft and reduces your risk of liability. However, the SSN is required to conduct a background check, so your candidates will be prompted to enter their SSN in the screening provider's applicant portal.

Additionally, ATS providers and the recruiting modules of full-stack talent management and core HR solutions do not collect applicants' full DOB. Delaying collection of the DOB to the background screening stage protects candidates from potential age discrimination and reduces your risk of age discrimination lawsuits. DOB is a required field for background checks, however, as it is a primary identifier that helps ensure accurate criminal records reporting. Therefore, your candidates will be prompted to provide their full DOB in the screening provider's applicant portal.

ATS providers collect job applicants' current address in the job application process. If they were to also obtain past address history, it would not have the same inherent risks as SSNs and DOBs; yet, completing additional fields would negatively impact candidate experience for everyone who submits a job application and this information is only relevant for candidates undergoing a pre-employment background check. By not requesting such information that employers do not need at earlier stages of the hiring continuum, ATS providers optimize the candidate experience, reduce job application abandonment, and ensure proper completion of required data.



In the employment screening applicant portal, your candidates will be prompted to provide their past addresses in order to ensure an accurate and thorough background check is conducted in the jurisdictions they have lived.

## **ENSURE COMPLIANCE TO IMPROVE TIME TO SERVICE**

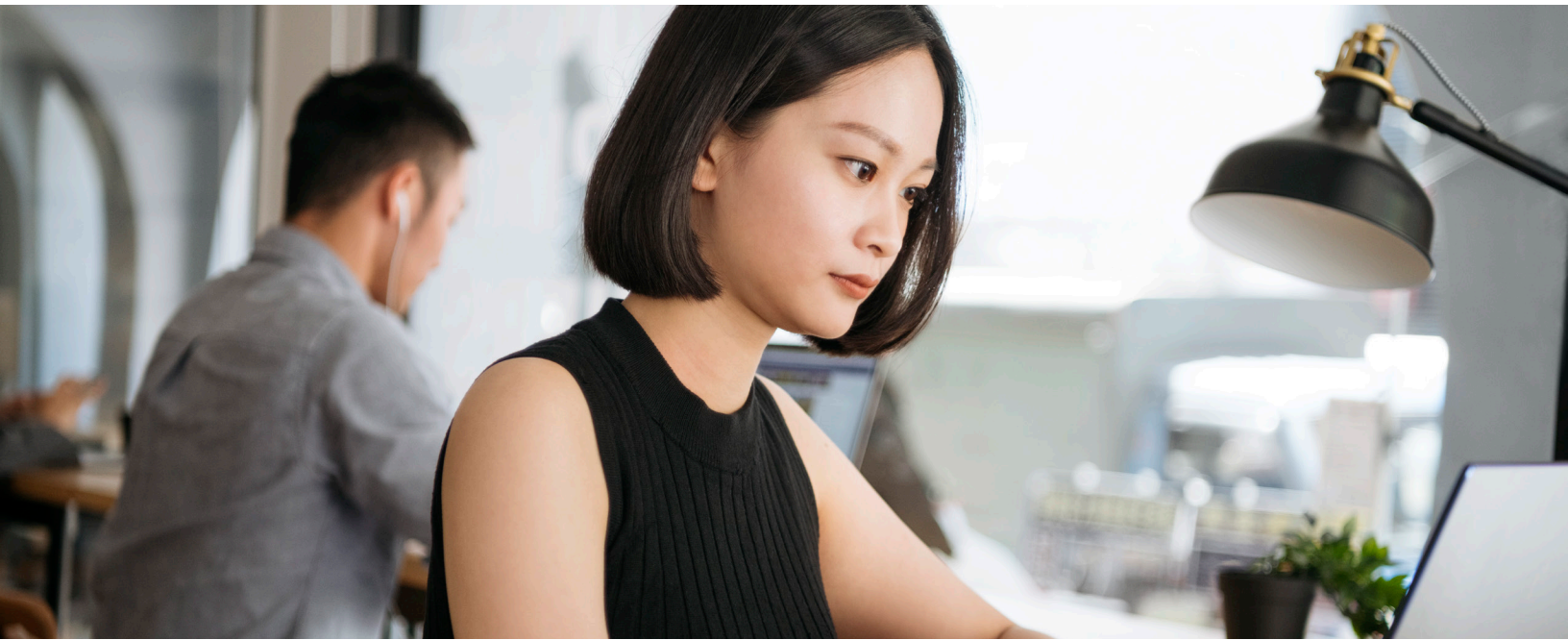
Integrating background screening with your ATS adds efficiency to the document completion process and helps ensure compliance with the FCRA Disclosure and Authorization process. As described above, an ATS does not contain all of the information an employment screening solution obtains from candidates. While some ATS providers present an FCRA Disclosure and Authorization, without the additional data that the employment screening providers obtain via an applicant portal, an ATS cannot accurately determine all of the authorization forms and documents that may be relevant to the candidate.

The final step in the applicant portal is for the candidate to electronically sign FCRA authorization forms and relevant state, international and country-specific authorization forms and documents. Based upon the information your candidate provides, many employment screening solutions will systematically prompt the candidate to complete and sign all relevant country and state specific authorization forms and documents.

This importance of compliance in the background check authorization process cannot be overstated, as there are a growing number of lawsuits citing non-compliance – either not following proper legal procedures or providing a noncompliant authorization form, such as including a waiver of liability. A best-in-class, PBSA-accredited employment screening provider should have subject matter expertise in all aspects of compliance, including the FCRA Disclosure and Authorization process and relevant state and country-specific authorizations. It can safeguard your organization from lawsuits arising from noncompliance.

Relying on your employment screening provider to obtain electronically-signed authorization forms and documents via a secure applicant portal also adds efficiency to your screening process. It will eliminate the additional burden to contact candidates later in the process for additional forms and documents. Background screening solutions with workflows that do not have the intelligence or rules to determine which authorization forms to present in an applicant portal may cause employers (or their screening providers) to search for additional documents later in the process, resulting in a longer





report turnaround time and poor candidate experience. By obtaining the right forms while your candidate is logged into the applicant portal and presently engaged in the process, you can avoid time-critical delays as well as poor candidate experience that would occur if a state-regulated or international form must be obtained from them later in the process.

### **OBTAIN REAL-TIME STATUS, AIDING PRODUCTIVITY**

When background screening is integrated with your ATS, real-time background check report status is available within the system, increasing your team's productivity. After a background check has been submitted, your screening provider can communicate synchronously with an ATS and provide real-time status of the background check. ATS providers typically display the status in a dashboard and from within an individual's "candidate profile." This functionality will save time for your busy HR and recruiting team because they will no longer need to log into your screening solution to check its status.

While ATS providers may vary in the terminology displayed, most include statuses such as "In Progress" and "Complete." If you are working with your screening provider to flag information that may potentially lead to an adverse decision, customizable employer-defined "Review" statuses may also be implemented and displayed within the ATS while your "individualized assessment" process takes place. Lastly, many screening providers can implement single sign-on technology

so when you click on a candidate's report from within your ATS, you will be automatically signed into your employment screening solution where you can view the candidate's background report in full detail.

### **BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER**

Your recruiting and HR team members, as well as your candidates, will appreciate the increased efficiency, security, and compliance gained by integrating your ATS and background screening solution providers. Your internal teams will become more productive as time spent toggling between systems to enter data from the ATS to the screening solution will be a thing of the past. So too will separately logging into your screening solution to check status or view completed reports – simply view status from the ATS dashboard and click to view completed reports. Security and data integrity will be dramatically improved by integrating, automating processes and creating a paperless process, not to mention the cost-savings from no longer printing forms, documents and reports.

PBSA-accredited background screening providers will protect your organization from compliance violations by ensuring the correct compliance forms and documents are completed and electronically signed at the beginning of the background check process. And lastly, you will improve the candidate experience as they will enjoy the ease-of-use and transparency of your employment screening process and applicant portal.



## ABOUT INTELLICORP

Since 1996, businesses and organizations have depended on IntelliCorp to help them hire and recruit quality talent and volunteers. Whether you operate locally or internationally, our products and services assist you in making better decisions and promoting a safe workplace.

Our commitment is to provide you with a full circle of excellence in background screening. We think you'll find everything you need to create a program that meets your business or organizational requirements. With easy-to-use technology, best-in-class service, regulatory compliant processes and cost-effective solutions, we give you the tools and resources needed to onboard your applicants and volunteers with confidence.

The background screening industry is continually evolving, and we make it a priority to be at the forefront of the changes that impact the screening industry, especially when it comes to newly enacted legislation, legislative updates or shifts in compliance guidelines. We provide many resources to help you stay compliant, including training courses, sample forms, manuals and a complete learning center full of materials.

We're dedicated to keeping our clients and their screening programs at the center of everything we do. IntelliCorp is a Civerse Company, and we continue to grow and invest in our employees, products and technology. We also place a high value on corporate citizenship; serving others and giving back.

## CONTACT US



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