

COMMERCIAL INVESTIGATIONS LLC

CI TIMES**DOES OPENSOCIAL MEAN****YOU SHOULD BE OPEN TO SOCIAL NETWORKS AT WORK?**

Many companies block employee access to social networking sites such as MySpace and Facebook. In the future this may seem as ridiculous as blocking employees from using Microsoft Windows. Social networking is becoming less of a novelty and more a part of the functional web. Salesforce.com, LinkedIn, MySpace and Facebook as well as Microsoft, Yahoo and Google are all trying to compete, yet collaborate, as the web continues to evolve.

The result is that online social networks may finally be turning a corner towards becoming useful business tools. The days of “poking” your friends online, getting bit by a virtual vampire or sending someone a virtual margarita may finally give way to productive workdays spent in social networks getting some actual work done. LinkedIn, Facebook and MySpace are already useful for networking and collaborating with people in your field as well as prospecting for new clients or employees. But will the web “widgets” or “gadgets” of the future that are developed and deployed in “containers” or “platforms” like MySpace and Facebook change the way we use the web for business? With the OpenSocial standard being led by Google, more companies are definitely going to try.

OpenSocial is an initiative being led by Google, in partnership with MySpace and others, to develop a common set of application programming interfaces (APIs). This means that a developer can create an application in OpenSocial and not have to write separate code specifically for each “container” that it will run in. Over 18 companies and social networks have joined the OpenSocial initiative. Facebook is not one of them.

Prior to the OpenSocial announcement by Google, there was tremendous buzz within Silicon Valley when Facebook launched its own API and opened up its site to developers early in 2007. Later in 2007, Microsoft purchased a 1.6 percent stake in Facebook for \$240 million. In the middle of the Yahoo! and Microsoft merger talks there is a battle for the big web companies over a piece of this “platform” pie. Much of this positioning seems related to developing and leveraging a web operating system, further evident by Google’s introduction of it’s own web browser, Google Chrome.

So what does OpenSocial mean for business networks or established companies looking to monetize and extend their presence on the web? There is a thin line between a social network and a professional network. For example, Oracle and Salesforce.com were early supporters of OpenSocial.

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CLIENT CLUE**PARTIAL CRIMINAL RECORDS**

Occasionally, criminal records inquiries require additional investigation after initial results are received. CI delivers partial criminal records to clients so that results of cases disposed with convictions are not delayed because of older pending charges or incomplete database information.

For example, the New York Statewide criminal records search returns felonies and misdemeanors for all 62 counties in NY. Although this is one inquiry, it can contain information regarding many different cases. If one or more cases are disposed of with a conviction—we deliver those results as a “partial criminal record” and continue to pursue additional information on any pending charges or cases where the final disposition is not available in the database.

Delivering criminal records on completed cases improves turn-around times and communications with the client. With CI completing out partial inquiry results with convictions, Clients become fully aware of the existence of criminal convictions in a more timely manner.

NAPBS 2008 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

CI President Michelle Pyan attended the 2008 Annual Conference of the National Association of Professional background Screeners in New Orleans this past Spring. In addition to her committee work on the Certification Committee, Michelle attended sessions covering topics including:

- How to Address HR's Top 10 Background Screening Needs (see sidebar)
- Customer Service
- Substantiating Identity
- Data Security / Data Breaches
- Ethical Responsibilities for the Background Screener
- Entrepreneurial Operating System
- Online Marketing

If you'd like to learn more about any of these topics, please contact Michelle at michellepyan@commercialinvestigationsllc.com or 800-284-0906.

Stay tuned to CI Times and visit our website to see how CI puts into action enhancements to its current services as well as new services inspired by this conference.

HR'S TOP 10 BACKGROUND SCREENING NEEDS

1. Price
2. Customer Service Wants and Needs
3. Service Level Agreements and Service Guarantees
4. Dealing with Timeline Constraints
5. Hiring Ex-Offenders
6. Self-Sleuthing and Internet Screening
7. Screening Policy and Implementation Plan
8. Periodic Management Reporting and Return On Investment (ROI)
9. Data Security and Disaster Recovery
10. FCRA and State Compliance

∞ INQUIRY SPOTLIGHT ∞

NATIONAL TENANT CHECK

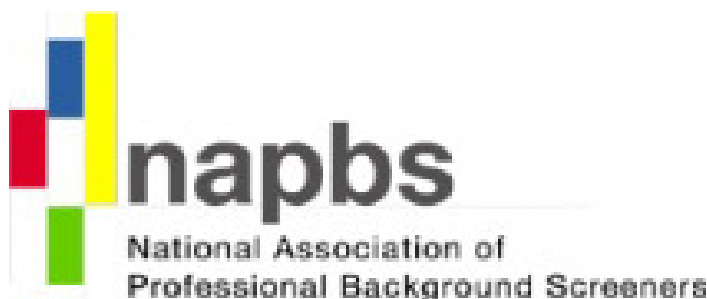
Better tenants mean a better bottom line. Reducing evictions mean increasing profits. With CI's National Tenant Check™, Landlords can view the past rental experiences of a potential tenant as an important indicator of possible future rental behavior. National Tenant Check™ provides exclusive access to substantial landlord-tenant records, offering more critical information than what is found on a credit report.

National Tenant Check™ is ideal for multifamily housing communities and helps select the best residents. Sophisticated search logic is used to compare and uncover information across many databases to deliver past court actions, prior landlord inquiries and landlord-reported history. Results are reviewed by CI and presented in an easy to interpret format delivered via CIware usually the same day a request is submitted.

National Tenant Check™ helps landlords:

- Reduce evictions by using past rental experiences as a possible indicator of future rental behavior.
- Improve the bottom line by reducing costs associated with collections, lost rent, evictions, vacancies and property damage.
- Save time because better residents mean more time to spend on revenue generating activities.

To learn more about National Tenant Check™, or to add this inquiry to your policy, contact a CI representative today at 800-284-0906.



DOES OPENSOCIAL MEAN YOU SHOULD BE OPEN TO SOCIAL NETWORKS AT WORK? (Continued from page 1..)

A likely trend is that more established brick and mortar companies will be developing APIs. With other initiatives like OpenID, users will expect more data portability. This is likely to affect online business models as well. If the right application related to your business expertise and niche is developed, it could become useful and portable across many sites and be different software.

At Commercial Investigations, we have developed an application called Clchecked or Certified Identification. Currently, it's an online identity verification trust mark that can be purchased at Clchecked.com and then displayed on users online profiles and e-mail signatures. As more real world transactions and interactions happen online, our model will be able to integrate background screening into many online environments.

In the future your clients may spend a majority of their work day in the "container" of their choice, and the availability of your application to run within that container could mean getting their business or not. An open mind and being open to OpenSocial could make all the difference.



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COMMERCIAL INVESTIGATIONS LLC

A LICENSED PRIVATE INVESTIGATIVE AGENCY

Dedicated to providing innovative Private Investigative solutions to its clients and working with them to develop tailored services that meet their needs.

Services provided include:

BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS

CI provides accurate, timely, cost-effective and fully compliant reports delivered with exceptional client service.

CONSULTING SERVICES

CI assists you in implementing a compliant background investigation process as well as providing assistance in implementing in-house procedures.

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