

## CASE STUDY

# How Social Media Screening Strengthened Workplace Safety for a Large Manufacturing Employer



## Background

Traditional background checks provide important hiring insights, but they don't always reveal behavioral risks that may appear online. Our customer, a large manufacturing organization, already conducted rigorous criminal background checks during hiring. However, leadership wanted additional visibility into potential risks that could impact workplace safety, brand reputation, and company culture.

Based on their concerns, we recommended adding social media screening as part of the hiring process, and they opted to launch a pilot project to test out the new service. The goal was to review candidates' online profiles in order to flag potentially problematic online activities, including threats, violent content, harassment, hate speech, trolling, and other potentially harmful online behavior. By identifying toxic patterns of behavior before they could have a negative impact on the organization, they hoped to reduce workplace conflicts, improve retention, and support a healthier and more inclusive workplace culture.

## Customer Profile

Our customer is a major manufacturing organization, with 57 locations across 20 states and approximately 85,000 employees in the US, representing one-third of their global workforce. They typically hire 12,000 to 15,000 new employees annually, making them the largest employer in many of the communities in which they operate.

“Social media screening was piloted as a part of our background check process to take a step further on workplace safety and support more responsible hiring practices. The pilot demonstrated that reviewing available online activity provides insights beyond traditional background checks while remaining efficient and compliant. Because adding the social media check did not impact overall processing times and provided additional protection on who is invited into our workplaces, we decided to expand the initiative across our facilities. This helps to add another layer of risk mitigation by helping identify potential concerns that could conflict with improvements to our safety-first workplace policies and culture.”

— Manager, Labor Affairs, Negotiations & Hourly Hiring Strategy

## Implementation

In order to help our customer test out the value of social media screening, the controlled pilot project was implemented during a major hiring push at a single plant. The pilot would cover approximately 1,000 candidates over a three-month period, giving the employer a representative workforce sample. Custom packages and workflow mapping were used to ensure social media screening services would only be applied to the pilot group.

The social media screening services we offered our customer can be broken down into three steps:

- 1. Search:** Automated tools analyze thousands of publicly available social media posts and online content to identify potential risk indicators while filtering protected-class information.
- 2. Match:** Discovered content is checked by both advanced automation and expert human review according to defined best practice methods to help confirm that the online source relates to the candidate or employee.
- 3. Report:** A streamlined social media report compiles flag content that may present a workplace concern for customer review and consideration.

Adding social media screening had **no impact on turnaround times** for the background checks completed as part of the pilot project. The initial report review rate for the organization hovered around 7%, indicating that approximately 7% of candidate files included content that warranted closer scrutiny.

Towards the end of the pilot, the review rate reached 8%. Compared to the 4% manufacturing industry benchmark, our customer's review rates were on the higher end, indicating the presence of potential red flags on social media which had previously been overlooked. By painting a broader picture of candidates' off-the-clock activities that could ultimately impact their behavior at work, social media screening helped our customer make more informed decisions and take steps towards building a healthier and more diverse workplace culture.

Following the successful implementation of the pilot program, the organization decided to expand social media screening across the entire division, resulting in an additional 4,000 screenings. Another division is currently being considered for 5,000 screenings.

## Conclusion

Workplace harassment and misconduct have a documented negative impact on employee morale and retention.<sup>1</sup> Traditional background checks provide valuable hiring insights, but they don't always reveal behaviors that appear publicly online. For our customer, the data-driven insights provided by social media screening filled a critical gap in their pre-hire screening program that justified the additional investment.

Learn how social media screening can strengthen your workplace's safety and support even more informed hiring decisions. [Talk to an expert](#) →

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.hracity.com/resources/research/workplace-harassment-and-employee-misconduct-insights/>



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