

CASE STUDY

Accelerating hiring with early Identity Verification

How organizations reduced screening turnaround time by up to 35% while improving candidate experience and identity assurance

**Customer profile**

First Advantage customers in the Financial & Business Services, Industrials, and Healthcare industries between January 2023 and February 2026. This analysis reflects aggregated screening data across multiple organizations to demonstrate the impact of starting identity verification earlier in the hiring process.

Evolving hiring landscape

Across industries, hiring teams are balancing two priorities that can no longer be traded off: speed and risk. At the same time, identity-related threats are becoming more complex, with organizations reporting more instances of candidate misrepresentation and advanced fraud techniques becoming more prevalent.¹

This shift is driving greater focus on identity assurance as a foundational component of modern screening strategies.¹

CHALLENGE

In competitive labor markets, days matter when hiring. Across organizations in this dataset, longer screening processes slowed hiring momentum, reduced engagement, and increased the risk of losing candidates to faster-moving offers.

Traditionally, identity discrepancies that surface after the screening process can lead to delays, which could postpone hiring decisions and increase the risk of candidates dropping out of the process.

At the same time, identity risk is becoming a more visible concern across the hiring process. Data from First Advantage's 2026 Global CHRO Priorities Report, drawing on insights from CHROs across a variety of industries and regions, identified increased instances of candidate misrepresentation, placing additional pressure on screening programs to strengthen verification while still maintaining hiring momentum. Risk and speed are no longer competing priorities according to our survey; they are now dual mandates.

These dynamics are compounded by rising identity-related risks, increasing the need for earlier verification without slowing the hiring process.

SOLUTION

The analysis showed that organizations that introduced identity verification at the start of the screening process saw measurable improvements in both speed and data accuracy.

Shifting identity verification to occur prior to the background check has helped to minimize friction that can arise later in the screening process. Customers experienced up to a 35% reduction in screening turnaround times in certain industries, decreased candidate misinformation, and maintained higher candidate engagement throughout the process.²

Before and after: screening workflow shift

Before

Identity discrepancies surfaced later in the process, often resulting in manual follow-up, rework, and delays that slowed hiring decisions.

After

Identity verification completed upfront, enabling cleaner data inputs, fewer downstream issues, and a more efficient screening process.

RESULTS

Based on aggregated customer data across industries:

Across multiple organizations, running identity verification prior to a background check reduced overall screening turnaround time up to 35%² versus running traditional background checks alone.

What's driving the improvement

The data highlighted several drivers behind the improvement:

- **Less candidate misinformation:** Early resolution of discrepancies removed manual follow-ups and rescreens
- **Streamlined checks:** Verified identity data pre-populates background check fields, improving first-pass yield
- **Stronger identity assurance:** Early verification supports more confident hiring decisions amid rising concerns around candidate misrepresentation¹
- **No compromise on rigor and risk posture:** Faster turnaround times while maintaining strong risk controls and supporting compliance requirements

Strategic HR impact

Today, organizations are operating under a dual mandate: accelerate hiring while strengthening identity assurance and workforce trust.¹

- **Accelerated time to hire:** Up to a 35%² faster turnaround time improves hiring velocity at scale
- **Higher candidate satisfaction:** Reduced friction helps minimize candidate drop-off and builds trust
- **Recruiter productivity:** Less misinformation reduces manual administrative tasks
- **Operational scalability:** Supports efficiency as hiring volume increases without adding operational burden

Candidate perspective: trust is a shared priority

Beyond operational efficiency, the impact of early identity verification extended to candidate experience and trust. Hiring speed is only one part of the candidate experience — trust plays an equally important role. Research shows:

- 97% of candidates see value in the screening process¹
- 7 in 10 say it increases their trust in the organization¹
- Delays and lack of transparency are among the most frustrating aspects of hiring¹

When identity verification is introduced earlier in the process, it can help:

- Reduce confusion and rework later in screening
- Create a more transparent and streamlined experience
- Reinforce confidence that the organization is secure, professional, and committed to fair hiring practices¹

Security perspective: identity as a foundation for workforce risk

The shift also aligned with broader workforce risk priorities across organizations.

Identity verification is increasingly viewed as a foundational control within broader workforce risk strategies.¹ The roles involved in risk management conversations are expanding to include the CISO, CTO, CIO, and CFO, as identity risk now directly impacts security posture, operational resilience, and financial exposure — shifting responsibility beyond HR into a shared, enterprise-level concern across the C-suite.

Why starting with identity improved outcomes

- **Why it works:** Establishing identity upfront helps streamline downstream screening and reduce delays caused by candidate discrepancies
- **Where it applies:** High-volume and regulated hiring environments — and any organization balancing speed, risk, and candidate experience at scale

Why First Advantage?

First Advantage helps organizations integrate background screening with confidence. With coverage in more than 200 countries and territories and 100+ ATS and HCM integrations, we support faster, candidate-friendly hiring across the entire workforce lifecycle.



“We’ve been early adopters of First Advantage’s identity services, and it’s been game-changing.”

— Jeff Ellis, Senior Leader at AT&T

Know your people™

¹First Advantage, January 2023 to February 2026

²2026 Global CHRO Priorities Report, First Advantage

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