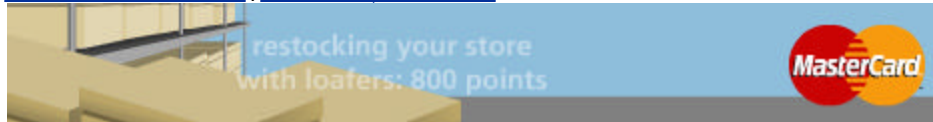


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**FRONTIER -- INSTANT EXPERT**

## Background Checks

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These days, it's tempting to hire the first person who seems capable of doing the job. But do you know what lurks behind that spiffy resume? The Association of Certified Fraud Examiners estimates that employee fraud costs small companies an average of \$120,000 per incident. It's a good idea to check the backgrounds of all applicants. At the very least, you'll be certain the person has the credentials they claim.

### CASE IN POINT

Clik Communications Inc. in New York designs reports that management consultants present to clients--which means Clik is privy to plenty of inside information. Three years ago, managers hired a security expert to conduct background checks on employees and potential hires, examining credit and criminal backgrounds and verifying education and experience. Good thing they did--Clik was on the verge of hiring a director of finance who turned out to have neither the MBA nor any of the experience he said he had. "It's the most valuable recruiting tool that I use," Clik President Kristine Doyle says of the checks. "At about \$100 per person, it's worth every penny."

### RESOURCES

The Fraud Defense Network's Fraud Tools page ([www.frauddefense.com](http://www.frauddefense.com)) provides links to free search engines to verify Social Security numbers, addresses, and phone numbers. KnowX.com lets you check lawsuits and bankruptcies for as little as \$6.95. Employeescreen.com offers full background searches, including employment verification, for \$85. The Association of Certified Fraud Examiners ([www.cfenet.com](http://www.cfenet.com)) can help you find a professional examiner.

*Get the Facts on Anyone*, by Dennis King (ARCO, 1999, \$14.95), explains how to find out as much as legally possible about an individual or a company.

By ALISON STEIN WELLNER

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