



# Five things employers should know about background screening in APAC

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Damage to the company's reputation. The costs of replacing employees who did not have the qualifications stated on their resumes. Risk to the safety and security of fellow employees and customers. These are just some of the many problems that can arise if a company hires the wrong candidates. To avoid such instances, many employers have recognised the benefits of comprehensive screening programs. Yet, as more companies look to the growing markets of the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region to expand their businesses, they often find the population to be not yet fully accustomed to or accepting of the idea of screening candidates.

With employers increasingly leveraging the workforce of the emerging markets of APAC, many have tried to replicate their domestic screening practices and apply them to their hiring efforts in the region. Unfortunately, these efforts don't always prove to be successful, and companies that fail to get the screening process right, or lack one altogether, open themselves up to compliance risk. As a result, they may then contend with negative attention to the company, harm to the brand and excessive financial costs and penalties.

In its recent research, *First Advantage Employment Screening Trends Report: Asia Pacific*, First Advantage provides an in-depth exploration of background screening processes in APAC and uncovers many facts that employers hiring workers in the region should know to ensure a successful and fully compliant screening practice.

Five of the most important takeaways from this research are included here:

## The Biggest Challenges

One of the biggest concerns among employers, and one of the reasons why some are reluctant to implement a screening program in APAC, is the rapidly changing legislation regarding screening and data security. These laws vary

widely between the different markets of the region and differ greatly between cities in the same country, causing many companies to fear the risks that can arise if their screening processes do not comply with local regulations.

Even companies with enterprise-wide screening programs find difficulties when transferring their processes to the APAC region. For instance, candidates may feel that they are being subjected to a private investigation that is beyond their control. However, candidates should be reassured that all screenings are conducted with their full consent.

## Growing Acceptance

Although background screening is not yet widely practiced, there is rapidly growing acceptance. First Advantage reports that there was more than a 10 percent increase in the number of background checks conducted in APAC between 2012 and 2013.

In particular, performing background screening can help the company ensure it hires the right people the first time, thereby eliminating the costs and extra time involved with finding replacements for an employee who resigns or is let go. The company can also protect itself from the reputational damage or potential risk to workplace safety or confidential data that result from negative hiring.

## Effectiveness of Background Screening

As First Advantage has discovered, employers that do conduct background screenings of their candidates are able to screen out a large number of candidates who pose potential problems. In the first quarter of 2013 alone, one in 10 screening reports conducted in APAC resulted in discrepancies or areas of concern. Companies that conduct six

checks or more for each candidate, a practice accounting for nearly half (40.4 percent) of all background screenings in the first quarter of 2013, are nine times more likely to uncover an alert than employers that only conduct one or two checks.

## Differences by Countries and Industries

Despite more employers throughout the APAC region conducting background screening, their use varies widely across the different countries of the region. For example, instances in which companies conducted six checks or more checks per candidate are most prevalent in the more established markets of Singapore, Hong Kong, Australia and New Zealand.

## How to Get Started

The findings from First Advantage's research show that employers in APAC that screen their candidates find a larger number of discrepancies, and employers that have yet to adopt the practice may end up hiring those individuals with false credentials.

In order to ensure a reliable and compliant screening program, companies can benefit from working with a background screening partner experienced in the dynamic regulatory environment of APAC. The right provider should be up-to-date on the latest legislation governing the background screening process, helping to ensure the company continually hires the right talent while checking their credentials in a safe and legally compliant manner.

With an effective background screening program in place, managed by a trusted screening solutions provider with proven expertise in the region, the company can ensure a successful hiring program across APAC. Visit [www.fadvasia.com](http://www.fadvasia.com).