

## “ADVENTURES IN DATA DUMPING.”

### GETTING WHAT YOU PAY FOR... OR NOT.

Multi-national law firm engages budget-priced pre-employment background investigation company to assist their HR Department with vetting lower-level administrative employment candidates. The motivation seemed completely logical since a comparatively small number of databases would be required. Not to say that even at minimum, these investigations are incredibly important elements of a professional services risk management program. After all, law firm personnel at all levels have access to highly sensitive and confidential client information.

### MORE IS LESS.

When the law firm administrator signed for the delivery of the budget-priced pre-employment background investigation report, she was filled with anticipation. Because the envelope was remarkably thick and heavy, it portended a highly-thorough document. It was, in fact, 52 pages in length, however she quickly discovered most were jam-packed wall-to-wall with single-spaced text in capital letters. After a cursory scan she absolutely could not figure out where to begin because it was all raw data with no analysis. It was filled with caveats such as “possible records” and “no positive match.”

Note: This characterization is based on an actual file, with certain circumstances and references altered to protect confidentiality.

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### NO NAME MATCHING EQUALS WORTHLESS.

As a result, there's no way to confirm whose data are being reported because there are hundreds of thousands, if not millions of people and companies with the same names. The result is page after page of the same name. For example eight pages of 52 fictitious business names. 20 pages of corporate affiliation references, 18 pages of corporate tax base data. AKA, a “data dump.” Or, “Here it is, figure it out.”

### SPEND A LITTLE MORE, GET A LOT MORE.

After reviewing samples of our lower-level pre-employment reports, and understanding how the executive summary and report organization function, the administrator realized it was similar to our senior management report. She concluded that the additional cost was more than worth it to the firm. There simply was more information and it was all for a *matched name*. No confusion, no wasted time, and more importantly, thoroughness and accuracy. All very important when character counts...and it always does.

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