

5 free ways to screen people online

By Vince Pontorno, Komando.com, September 5, 2019

Finding someone online is fairly easy. Finding the right somebody as a potential employee or business partner may require a bit more effort. You can pay a service to do background checks but with so much information available at your fingertips for free, why not start there? We've got 5 free sites you can use to do just that.

We live in an information age, where everything we want to know is posted, published or made public online. Take advantage of the free tools available at your fingertips.

1. The first place everyone goes to search for someone

When in doubt, Google. You may be surprised just how much information you can find with a simple [Google search](#), but it should be your first step when taking a closer look into a person or business of interest. Of course, a search can quickly become more difficult to navigate if a potential candidate has a more common name.

If that's the case, you can narrow down your search by searching their names plus:

- Locations
- Job titles
- Universities
- Previous employers
- Volunteer work they've listed on their applications or resumes

You can even get Google alerts your potential candidates when their names re-surface online. This will enable you to get notifications that provide ongoing monitoring throughout the application/interview process.

Click beyond the first page of Google results -- go deeper by clicking into pages 2, 3 and further to see what you can find.

2. The second place you should look for people online

Several surveys suggest that as many as 80-90% of employers use some form of social media to find and/or screen potential employees. You should be no different. Because Facebook is an open and often public forum, anything that's posted is fair game to anyone who goes looking for it, unless someone is smart enough to understand they should keep their profiles private and share their content with only their friends and family.

A quick search on a social network can give you a brief glimpse into the social life of a job seeker and perhaps provide you further insight as to what kind of person the candidate is outside of work. You can decide whether or not those traits will play a role in the workplace.

3. Use this social media channel to screen applicants

LinkedIn is not only a great tool for recruiters, but it's also great for potential customers, partners, and employees. By searching for a specific person or company, LinkedIn can give you a wealth of information when it comes to a candidate's resume/work history, education, skills, and connections.

The system will even let you know if you and the person or company you're searching for share a mutual connection, which is great for getting references. Of all the social networks, searching on LinkedIn gives you a better perspective of what kind of worker a candidate may be before you hire them. You can also see endorsements or reviews that the person was given at previous jobs.

4. A people-search tool you may not have heard of

The ZabaSearch website finds personal data through publicly listed information. Anything from property and work records, Yellow Pages, to social media profiles are used to gather info on ZabaSearch. Simply start by typing a person's first and last name in the search bar, along with the state they live in, and that's it. You can even search for someone on Zaba just by entering a phone number.

This is a good tool to verify information that someone gave you about past employers, education, and locations, but we wouldn't recommend paying for the additional information.

5. Do a reverse image search

Let's say you've got a strong candidate, and you did your due diligence by searching for him or her on the above sites. If you found images of the candidate, you can do a reverse image search to see what else might come up, including any aliases they may have used.

Take a screenshot of the image. Go to Google Images and click the camera icon in the search bar.



Search bar with icons for image search, voice search, and text search.

Drag the image onto the screen, and Google will look for the image and similar ones.

Search by image ✕
Search Google with an image instead of text. Try dragging an image here.

Paste image URL Upload an image

[Search by image](#)