

COMMERCIAL INVESTIGATIONS LLC

CI TIMES



MYSPACE IS EVERYONE'S SPACE

Out of the many social networking websites, two of the most well known are MySpace and Facebook. There are over 150 million members of MySpace's worldwide virtual community. Members are able to make their own layout, put up their pictures, tell their life stories and have everything about them open for the world to see. They can post blogs, bulletins, comments, slideshows and surveys telling or showing all different aspects of their personal life. What some people may not realize is that their private life is out there on the Internet for the public to see and the public bases their judgment of these people's character on what they see on their MySpace page. It is a personal website, but if it isn't on a private setting where only "friends" can view the page, then anybody can and the owner has waived any right to privacy.

Many members of MySpace and Facebook may not realize that the information they post could be used against them. Many high school and college age members post pictures of themselves and their friends at parties where there is usually alcohol and even illegal substances visible. Members put things on their websites to be funny, but they can often be seen as inappropriate. Employers look at these websites to get a better look into who somebody really is, rather than relying on just an interview.

Many employers are now doing their own background checks on potential employees by using social networking websites along with basic search engine queries. By using these websites, employers may acquire information that a standard background check would not provide them. These employers don't see this as an invasion into an applicant's private life. These internet searches are easy, free and legal. Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, applicants must be told the reason why they were not offered a position. The problem for applicants is that these new "cyber searches" do not fall under the Fair Credit Reporting Act when conducted by the prospective employer. This means that applicants being denied positions don't know that they might not be getting jobs because of something they have posted on their personal website.

Personal characteristics such as race, religion and sexual orientation are listed on many social networking websites. This information could lead to discriminatory acts against applicants or the perception and allegation of discrimination. Although these categories are protected by law in most states, there currently isn't any proven enforcement method to protect applicants discriminated against by this new search method.

Employers who are interested in this type of information should look into cyber searches offered by background investigation companies. All of CI's background investigation inquiries, including Cyber Investigation are reviewed and processed to assure Fair Credit Reporting Act protection. Professional Internet background investigations provide employers with a more ethical search that includes information provided on social networking sites. In addition, they are also able to find illegal or unwanted activities, such as cyber crime, data piracy or drug use through special archived (cached) databases.

With CI's Cyber Investigation employers can choose the parameters of the data revealed in their reports. These parameters are customizable on an employer-by-employer basis. For example, an employer can indicate that they do not want to know personal characteristics that are protected by discrimination laws. Another popular choice is excluding legal activities, such as drinking by individuals over the age of 21. Even more specifically, an employer can choose to obtain information specific to their products or services and the subject's view point of those products or services, e.g. animal rights, abortion and even politics.

The use of an applicant's Internet information by employers is and will continue to be a topic of debate. However, it is a legal method for obtaining more information about a potential employee who will be trusted with company assets, trade secrets and most importantly the company's clients and reputation.

Article written by Sarah Rosney, Intern Investigator, Sage College of Albany

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CLIENT CLUE

HAPPY BIRTHDAY CI!

We are excited about reaching our 3rd Birthday milestone and look forward to our fourth year in business.

Our continued growth is greatly accredited to client referrals. Thank you! If there is anyone you know that can also benefit from our Background Investigations services, please let us know.

Although Michelle ran her first background investigation in 1991, our industry is still considered to be in its infancy. Our membership and active involvement in the National Association of Professional Background Screeners enables us to offer you the best available information and service. We are continually researching industry changes and potential enhancements to our services. Please do not ever hesitate to contact us about ways we can better serve your Background Investigation needs.

Thank you for three great years and for your continued trust in us. We look forward to continuing to assist you in enhancing the quality of your employees, volunteers, business partners and tenants. We greatly appreciate the fact that you have selected CI to be your First Choice for a Second Impression!

DUE DILIGENCE: CYBER SUPPLIED INFORMATION, MYSPACE REVEALS BAD DILIGENCE

This month we review Due Diligence's online presence. When recruiting and hiring, it's important to review and verify all available applicant supplied information. In today's digital age, applicants often have a vast online public presence. This can be a great source of more applicant supplied information to compare for inconsistencies with the application and resume.

CI's Cyber Investigation includes a review of an applicant's online presence including MySpace, Facebook, LinkedIn and Plaxo as well as many other social and professional networking sites. CI's Cyber search also includes a review of archived or "cached" web pages. Due is still seeking employment and in the next CI Times we will review CI's Cyber Investigation Report conducted on Due Diligence through which CI discovered Bad Diligence's MySpace page, a page under Due's alias containing several significant pieces of incriminating information.

Due has a significant online presence and has outlined a good portion of his employment history—much of which contradicts his resume—in terms of employers and timeframe. Several other inconsistencies in Due's job application and resume can be spotted by reviewing more of his own posted information including job positions, titles and dates of employment. Date of birth, important for valid criminal record searches, could also be compared to the birthday provided on Plaxo and age displayed on MySpace with the birthday supplied by the applicant on his consent form (although a DMV report is suggested to verify DOB).

Due Diligence has two MySpace pages, one for Due Diligence and one for his alias Bad Diligence. Both pages are assigned to different e-mail addresses. CI discovered both pages through its Cyber Investigation because an e-mail address on Due's resume was an address tied to Bad Diligence's page. In Bad Diligence's MySpace blog, he has bad mouthed his supervisors, co-workers and employers. Bad Diligence has joined MySpace groups related to marijuana, methamphetamines and other drug use in general. He has posted incriminating photos of himself showing drug use.

With more professionals having an online presence that includes pages on MySpace, Facebook and LinkedIn, much can be discovered about someone's past just by visiting their pages. In fact, many companies have turned to reviewing social networking sites as part of their recruitment process. Due has used MySpace and LinkedIn to network and as a part of conducting his job search. Still, many employers have mixed feelings about viewing an applicant's online presence. Viewing the information published online by applicants can be a valuable tool to screen out undesirables.

Many professionals are linked to both current and prior co-workers through the popular networking sites—and they may be less inclined to inflate job titles which they may feel safe doing on a resume. The public nature of these sites can actually encourage honesty as there are more eyes viewing the information posted.

Watch for CI's Cyber Investigation report on Due Diligence in the next edition of CI Times. See the links to the right to view Due's online pages to see if you can spot the inconsistencies and incriminating data he has posted.

Due's MySpace page:

<http://www.myspace.com/duediligence2>



Bad's MySpace page:

<http://www.myspace.com/baddiligence>



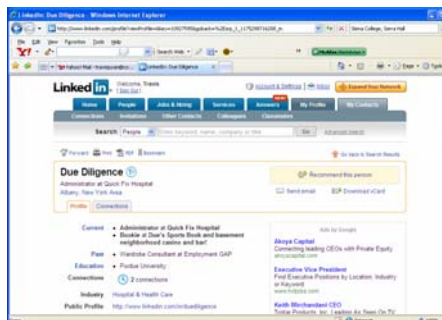
Due's Facebook page:

<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=552825663>

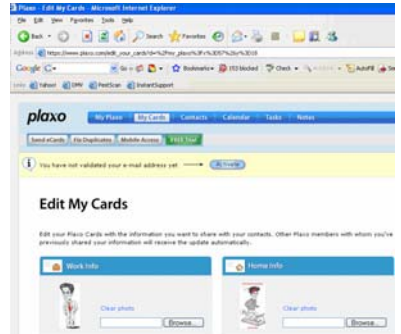


Due's LinkedIn page:

<http://www.linkedin.com/in/duediligence>



Due's Plaxo cards:



MYSPACE REVEALS BAD DILIGENCE

MEET DUE DILIGENCE

Last "Scene" from Due

In the last edition of CI Times, the youth center Due was volunteering at ran an annual DMV check on him. Due was using the center's vehicles to drive children between facilities—without a valid driver's license.

In This edition we review Due's online presence, including his MySpace, LinkedIn, Facebook and Plaxo pages.

Next Issue: We will review Due's Cyber Investigation report.

To see Due's past reports, view his page online at www.commercialinvestigationsllc.com/duespage. Read previous issues of CI Times to see the full details of Due's life at www.commercialinvestigationsllc.com/Newsletter.

SMALL BUSINESS INFORMATION EXPO MAY 10TH, 2007

The Small Business Strategic Alliance (SBSA) in conjunction with the Internal Revenue Service Small Business/Self Employed Division will host a free Small Business Expo at the Saratoga Springs City Center on May 10th, 2007.

Commercial Investigations LLC is a member of the SBSA and is one of over 80 confirmed vendors at the Expo. Expo and Seminar hours are 12 PM–6 PM with a 6 PM - 8PM Mixer. There is no charge to attend.

This one day event will offer current and prospective small business owners vital information from State and Federal Agencies for the successful operation of a business in the State of New York.

Attendees can visit 80 plus booths for business owners, manager and operators to have direct contact with the NY State and Federal Agencies and some of the area's finest businesses that impact, influence or support a company's successful operation.

The expo will provide an opportunity for face to face conversation with someone who can provide answers and solutions to

your every day business challenges. Seminars are being offered throughout the day on relevant topics such as:

- Health Insurance
- Business Compliance
- Financing
- Taxation
- Business Insurance
- Doing Business with State/Federal Government

Additionally, there will be a round table discussion by top agency officials.

The Small Business Strategic Alliance is your premier concierge, one stop service of all your business needs. To pre-register for this event or for further information, go to www.businessfirstclass.org or call 518-383-5668.



COMMERCIAL INVESTIGATIONS LLC

A LICENSED PRIVATE INVESTIGATIVE AGENCY

Dedicated to providing innovative Private Investigative solutions to its clients and working with them to develop tailored services that meet their needs.

Services provided include:

BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS

CI provides accurate, timely, cost-effective and fully compliant reports delivered with exceptional client service.

CONSULTING SERVICES

CI assists you in implementing a compliant background investigation process as well as providing assistance in implementing in-house procedures.

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∞ INQUIRY SPOTLIGHT ∞

CYBER INVESTIGATION

An employer's interest in a subject's online life, because of its potential effect on their business, necessitates CI's CYBER INVESTIGATION. A subject's online life relates to:

- How a subject might follow a company's IT protocol by providing a track record of responsible use of information systems including data protection.
- Involvement in illegal activity and/or groups with concerns that are adverse to a company's products and services.
- Offensive postings and activities by a subject that may reflect negatively on the employer and jeopardize its reputation.

Starting with a subject's cyber identities and disclosed online activities, CI's CYBER INVESTIGATION searches through current and archived Internet sites. The search includes an exclusive illicit activity search of current and archived sites identified as potential places for illegal and offensive behavior. This exclusive search covers data collected over a seven plus year period.

For more information on CI's CYBER INVESTIGATION inquiry, or to add this inquiry to your current requests, please contact a CI representative.

This publication is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information with respect to the subject matters covered. It is distributed with the understanding that CI is not engaged in rendering accounting or legal services.