



# IAPI NEWSLETTER

IOWA ASSOCIATION OF PRIVATE INVESTIGATORS

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FOUNDED 1985

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March 2009



## President's Message By Delbert King

Conference time is just around the corner. Be sure and

make your room reservations as soon as possible and mention you are an IAPI member for the better hotel rates. The conference is July 23-24, 2009 at the Holiday Inn, 4800 Merle Hay Road in Urbandale. We have a top notch assortment of speakers that should make for an excellent conference.

Our next two board meetings are scheduled for Friday, April 10, 2009 and Friday, June 5, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. at the conference site. All members are invited to attend.

Membership dues dates were changed at last years conference from July 1-June 30 to the new dates of January 1 through December 31. If you haven't paid your dues yet for 2009, the deadline for being delinquent is March 1.

Current members are listed on our website. Members who have not paid their dues will have their information removed.

Letters are being mailed out to private investigators who are not members in hopes of bringing more investigators into our association.

If any member knows of vendors or businesses that might contribute door prizes or give-away items for our conference, please call or email me so they can be contacted. Any suggestions are appreciated.

Remember to contact Jeff Marlin, our editor, if you want to submit an article about your business to be printed in the newsletter.

In closing, I would like to mention that your board of directors and regional directors are doing everything possible to insure a great conference. They are very professional and a joy to work with. Their efforts should be applauded.

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## Advertising

*Published Quarterly: December, March, June & September.*

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The IAPI Newsletter is published quarterly by the Iowa Association of Private Investigators. Please make checks payable to IAPI and send all inquires, articles and related informational materials to: Jeff Marlin, Editor, IAPI Newsletter, PO Box 11183, Cedar Rapids, IA 52410 or email [jmarlin@marlinsspecialinvestigations.com](mailto:jmarlin@marlinsspecialinvestigations.com)

# “Third Source” credit header data is back!



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## New Data Recovery Division

*Welcome to Eye For An Eye Investigations, Matt Julius.*

Matt is a great asset to our company adding a Data Recovery division.

His experience includes software engineering, computer forensics, medical & biological research, and education. He is the owner of Dr. J's Computer Service & Software Development and teaches computer science, math, computer networking, and humanities at Iowa Central Community College and Des Moines Area Community College.

Some of Matt's capabilities that he brings to our company includes, but is not limited to the recovery of deleted files, including documents, email, music, programs, photo, digital files and more. These can be recovered if emptied from the recycle bin or file recovery after accidental format, even if you have reinstalled Windows Recovery. Other data recovery includes disk recovery after a hard disk crash software, getting back files after a partitioning error data, and retrieving data back from RAW hard drives. Matt also has experience in recovery from hard drive, camera card, USB, Zip, floppy disk or other media. If you have any questions, feel free to contact [info@iowapi.net](mailto:info@iowapi.net)

## 2009 Conference update

The 2009 conference is shaping up nicely. Jimmie Mesis of PI Magazine will be back again as both a presenter and a vendor. His presentations are always great and he will be speaking on Insuring Your Retainer Agreement Protects You, Increasing Your Internet Based Income and Website Ranking and Double Your Income with Referrals and Networking. He will bring along all the favorite toys from PI Gear to purchase.

We will have a presentation on Cognitive Interviewing Techniques, Surveillance, Forensics, Hate Group Recognition, The Care and Feeding of Attorneys and Clients and Attainment of Public Records from Police and Other Government Entities.

IRBsearch will be here for the fourth year in a role and will have their class on Internet searches. We will have an insurance representative from California who will present some information on PI Insurance and we will have a class on Service of Process.

So far, we have received verification on five vendors. They are: PI Magazine - PI Gear, IRBsearch, Central States Fire, Iowa Interactive and Insurance Tek.

As you can see this is going to be another great conference and the Board hopes that everyone can attend. Don't forget to make your hotel reservation early. The cost is \$83.00 a night and we will be back at the Holiday Inn and Suites, 4800 University Avenue in Des Moines.

*Clare Reed*

# BRB Publications Record Research

## MN Public Record Research Tip

Minnesota offers the Trial Court Public Access (MPA) at <http://pa.courts.state.mn.us/default.aspx>. Search statewide or by county. Records available include criminal, civil, family, and probate. Searches can be performed using a case number or by name. Calendars can be looked-up by district at [www.mncourts.gov/default.aspx?page=512](http://www.mncourts.gov/default.aspx?page=512).

But there are a number of caveats - certain publicly-accessible case records cannot be viewed online.

Electronic copies of public documents filed by parties also cannot be viewed online at this time. Name searches for criminal case records will not return pre-conviction criminal records. A state-wide case inquiry may exclude district courts that have not yet converted to the system. Also, the public access terminals found at the courthouses do not use this system. For example, party street address and name searches on criminal pre-conviction case records are publicly accessible and available at the courthouse, but not online. The federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) also prevents the state from displaying harassment and domestic abuse case records online, but these are available at the courthouse. Comment fields for all case types are not available online but are available at the courthouse. Online users are not notified when such public data is restricted from online viewing.

The bottom line is the public access terminals found at courthouses are still the most accurate searching locations. In Judicial Districts (arranged by number and often covering several counties) many court's public access terminals contain court records for that entire district. The online system is supplemental at best.

## Wisconsin Driver License Status Check

Check the status of a Wisconsin driver license free at [www.dot.wisconsin.gov/drivers/online.htm](http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/drivers/online.htm). The status can be requested using the DL, or by SSN/DOB, or name/sex/DOB.

## Nebraska Driver License Status Check

Nebraska provides its online **License Status Check**. Enter the full name, DOB and either the DL or SSN.

Results include DL reinstatement requirements if any, license status including points, and ending date for SR-22 Insurance Form. There is no fee. Visit <https://www.nebraska.gov/dmv/reinstatements/client.cgi>.

**Your Business Card, Your Brand**  
**Posted November 26, 2008**  
**by ServeNow.com Staff**

Business cards have changed dramatically since they first appeared in China in the 15th century. At that time, they were essential tools of etiquette that were only for aristocrats and royalty, but in today's competitive market, business cards are an essential tool for any business interaction. With the sheer amount of business cards that are distributed today, it is more important than ever before to set your company apart from the rest.

Think of your business card as a first and last impression. People can make assumptions about your business based on the information on and the quality of your business card. It also serves as a lingering reminder of you long after you have parted ways with a potential business associate. What do you want your business card to portray about your business? There are some simple rules to follow regarding what should and shouldn't be on your business card.

**Business Card Do's**

*Brand Your Company.*

Your business card is your first opportunity to brand your organization with a potential client, or peer who could offer you referral work. If prospective clients receive your business card from a friend or coworker, it is the only information they have about your company and thus it is your one opportunity to impress them. Put your logo on your business card, and use fonts and colors that are consistent with what is on your website and other printed materials. It is important that your branding is professional. Do not include clip art or cartoon images on your business card.

*Include All Contact Information.*

It sounds simple, but make sure your potential clients have all of your contact information. List a telephone number that will always be answered, a mailing address, a fax number, email address and website. If you have a toll-free number include that with a local phone number. You never know when an out-of-town client will choose to call a toll-free number over a local number.

*Use Back of Card.*

The backside of your business card is the perfect place to include information that makes your card worth holding on to. According to Chris Brunner, owner and developer of GreatFX Business Cards, business cards with printing on both sides are the most effective. If a card is extremely unique or rare (laser cut metal or chocolate for example) it may have a better chance of marketing success...but unique and rare comes with a price. In order to be effective on a budget, you should plan ahead for what content to include on the card. List information such as additional office locations, services offered and professional memberships. These details often are what makes a client take notice of your business over another. Don't let this space go to waste.

## **What Do You Do?**

“One of the biggest mistakes I see on business cards is that it is not clear what a company does,” said PI-now.com Brand Manager Troy Piegols. “People may put emphasis into the color and design of the business card, but if you don’t have a strong, relevant tagline it is ineffective. Someone who receives your card may not be clear on what you do if it does not mention your core business practice.” Examples of strong relevant taglines are: XYZ Company – Successfully Serving Papers Since 1980; or Riviera Enterprises – Professional Private Investigation Services.

## **Business Card Don'ts**

### *Don't Design Your Own Business Cards.*

Unless you happen to be a trained graphic designer, do not design your own business cards. You work with professional clients, and should give off a professional image. Your business card is fundamentally a first impression and is a lasting reminder of you. Do not let your lasting impression look like the “Before” example in the image above.

### *Use a High-Quality Printer.*

Do not use perforated business card templates that you printed on your office printer, or free business cards that place the printer’s logo on the backside of the card. Your business card is first and foremost a reflection of your business. You should not be sharing that space and co-branding it with a printer. This can muddle your message, and confuse people who aren’t familiar with your company. Customers’ first impressions will be “free business cards” instead of impressing them with your professionalism. Business cards can be more reasonable than you think and a tax write off.

### *Keep Them With You*

Once you create a top-notch business card – distribute it! Have you ever met a potential new client and realized you left your business cards at the office? Have you attended a conference and met someone who could have referred you business, but instead of your business card they have a name and number on a cocktail napkin? Make sure you always have a stack of business cards with you, and remember to treat your business card as an important branding opportunity. Keep in mind that your business card is one of the most basic, but most effective forms of marketing and branding your company.

# ***2009 IAPI Conference***

Please keep looking at the conference banner ad or the IAPI conference weblink on the IAPI homepage for continued updates on speakers, vendors, entertainment and other news. As we get the information in it will then be posted on the IAPI website. This is a great opportunity to learn from some of the best in our industry, earn your CEU’s, buy new investigative gadgets and network amongst other PI’s from Iowa and surrounding states.

As a side note, March 1st was the deadline to renew your membership with IAPI. If you forgot to do so you can still remain a member by filling out a renewal application which can be found as a link on the IAPI homepage. There is a \$25 late fee you would have to pay but the benefits you receive by remaining a member far outweigh the cost.

## FTC Issues Report on Social Security Numbers and Identity Theft

### Agency Makes Five Recommendations to Reduce Role of SSNs in Identity Theft

The Federal Trade Commission issued a report today recommending five measures to help prevent Social Security numbers from being used for identity theft. Principal among the report's recommendations is that Congress consider taking action to strengthen the procedures that private-sector organizations use to authenticate their customers' identities.

"Identity theft continues to be a major problem in this country, with victims numbering in the millions each year and out-of-pocket losses (primarily to businesses) in the billions of dollars," the report states.

The FTC report states that adopting nationwide standards for how businesses and other organizations verify the identity of new and existing customers would make it harder for identity thieves to use SSNs and other stolen information to consummate their fraud.

"The first step in minimizing the role of SSNs in identity theft is to limit the demand for SSNs by making it more difficult for thieves to use them to open new accounts, access existing accounts, or obtain other benefits or services," the FTC states in the report. Currently, the only private-sector organizations subject to nationwide authentication standards are financial institutions regulated by the federal banking agencies. The FTC's report recommends that Congress consider establishing similar standards to cover all private-sector entities that maintain consumer accounts. Such standards would require organizations to adopt reasonable procedures for authenticating customers, but also would allow them to adopt a program that is compatible with their size and the nature of their business, the report states.

The FTC report also recommends that steps be taken to reduce the unnecessary display and transmission of SSNs, but noted that such restrictions must be approached carefully. A number of important functions in the U.S. economy depend on use of and access to SSNs and the report concluded that overly restrictive attempts to limit the availability of SSNs could unintentionally curtail those functions. Finally, the report recommends steps to improve data security, increase outreach to consumers and businesses on the protection of SSNs, and enhance coordination and information-sharing among organizations that routinely use SSNs.

The Commission vote to issue the report was 4-0. The report was developed pursuant to a recommendation of the President's Identity Theft Task Force, which was established in May 2006 to develop a coordinated plan to prevent identity theft, prosecute identity thieves, and help victims recover from the crime.

The report is based on extensive fact-finding by the FTC and other federal agencies, including public comments and a workshop the FTC conducted on December 10-11, 2007. The workshop provided a forum for public-sector, private-sector, and consumer representatives to discuss the various uses of SSNs by the private sector, the necessity of those uses, alternatives available, the challenges faced by the private sector in moving away from using SSNs, and how SSNs are obtained and used by identity thieves.

The report issued by the FTC today focuses on the use of SSNs in the private sector. The Task Force agencies have undertaken a series of measures to curtail the use of SSNs by federal agencies as well. Information on those efforts can be found in the President's Identity Theft Task Force Report, <http://www.idtheft.gov/reports/IDTReport2008.pdf>, issued in September 2008, which summarizes the steps taken to implement the Task Force recommendations.

Keeping investigators informed,

Jimmie Mesis

## Nebraska man sues ex-wife for putting recorder in toy

OMAHA, Neb. - An Omaha man has filed a lawsuit accusing his ex-wife and former father-in-law of hiding a recording device inside his daughter's teddy bear in order to spy on him.

The lawsuit filed last week in U.S. District Court in Omaha claims Dianna Divingnzzo and her father, Sam Divingnzzo, tried to use the audio recorded by the toy in the divorced couple's custody case.

Dianna Divingnzzo had been awarded sole custody of the young girl when the couple divorced in May 2004, but William Duane Lewton was seeking custody rights.

The lawsuit says Lewton learned about the audio recordings when his lawyer was given copies by Divingnzzo's then-lawyer in advance of a June hearing.

Lewton's lawyer, John Kinney, said Tuesday that it's believed the teddy bear recorded several hundred hours of conversations from just before Christmas 2007 through mid-May.

Lewton, his daughter - who is now five - and five other plaintiffs who were recorded by the bear are requesting a jury trial. They seek \$20,000 each, plus other damages and court costs, from each defendant for invasion of privacy and violation of state and federal wire-tapping laws.

In addition to the Divingnzzos, the lawsuit names Dianna Divingnzzo's former lawyer, William Bianco; his law partner, Chris Perrone; and their Omaha law firm.

Perrone said Tuesday that the firm no longer represents Dianna Divingnzzo. He also said he and Bianco did not know about the recordings until Divingnzzo presented them.

"We had nothing to do with it," he said. "We did not advise her to do so."

But according to the lawsuit, Bianco consulted with Perrone about the legality of the recordings and determined they would be admissible in court.

During a June 3 hearing in the custody case in which the recordings were discussed, Judge David K. Arterburn ruled that they violated Nebraska's wiretapping law and couldn't be used as evidence.

By Timberly Ross, The Associated Press

## Panel proposes expanded privacy in public records

By JASON CLAYWORTH • jclayworth@dmreg.com • January 3, 2009

Iowa governments would have greater authority to black out personal information from public records under proposals recommended by a legislative committee.

Advocates say the proposals would protect citizens from identity theft.

But opponents say the unintended results could be alarming, particularly if the public is unable to differentiate between, for example, a convicted sex offender and another citizen with the same name.

"The public has more to fear from government records containing information about them of which they are unaware than the release of information pertaining to them," said Bill Monroe, executive director of the Iowa Newspaper Association.

Lawmakers formed the Identity Theft Prevention Study Committee, which met in November, to consider how the release of personal information in Iowa could make residents vulnerable to identity theft.

Public concern heightened this year when privacy advocates complained about a land records site, IowaLandRecords.org. The Social Security numbers of thousands of Iowans from all 99 counties were listed on the site, including those of Gov. Chet Culver and Secretary of State Michael Mauro.

Administrators of the site quickly shut down the ability to view details of the records after the advocates pointed out the problem. The group says removing personal information from all the records - called redaction - will cost the state as much as \$2.3 million, which includes \$500,000 to update its computer programs.

Culver said in an interview this week that he agrees steps should be taken to redact personal information from public records that can be used to steal Iowans' identities.

However, he said he was not sure how the state would pay for such efforts. County recorders, for example, have proposed increasing an electronic filing fee from \$1 to \$3 to pay for the redaction effort.

"I think protecting individuals' identity is important," Culver said. "Once it gets to the level of security risk, we should take steps to limit how far we go in terms of disclosing things like Social Security numbers."

The committee made 11 recommendations, several of which would give governments more power to remove Social Security or bank account numbers.

Sen. Steve Kettering, R-Lake View, a member of the study committee, said there is no simple answer to the problem. Lawmakers must find the appropriate balance between protecting identities and maintaining public records that protect the public through transparent government.

"There isn't an easy solution, and that's the hard part," said Kettering, who noted that detailed records are critical in his profession as president of Farmers State Bank in Lake View.

Open-records advocates generally agree that some sensitive information like credit card numbers should not be released. The problem arises if governments redact information such as dates of birth, addresses or other unique identifiers, said Kathleen Richardson of the Iowa Freedom of Information Council.

Richardson said lawmakers need to establish how frequently identity theft occurs through public records. She believes the problem is rare.

"I think there needs to be a demonstrated need of why we need to vacuum public records," Richardson said. "We also have to carefully consider what our definition of personal information is and make sure it's not so broad that it wipes out too much information."

Sen. Steve Warnstadt, D-Sioux City, said the committee has tried to be sensitive to the concerns brought forward by open records advocates when making its recommendations. The recommendations will likely be used to help draft proposals during the 2009 legislative session, which begins Jan. 12.

"The point of this is not to restrict access. The point is to prevent identity theft and personal information from being disclosed from people who don't have a legitimate reason to have that information," said Warnstadt, the committee co-chairman.

### [Information from Iowa DOT concerning the requests of Driver's License Photographs](#)

Please be sure all privacy forms are being fully completed with the necessary attachments as outlined on the privacy form.

All investigators requesting record requests must complete the privacy form as outlined in the four bullets in the INSTRUCTIONS located on the upper left hand corner of first page of the privacy form. They must include all required attachments,, including a legible photocopy of their DL or ID and they must print their full name on each page of the agreement. Part C tells you what must be attached for each number in Part C in parentheses. For example - If a person initials box #1 as their reason for requesting the record, then the required attachment is shown as: (Please attach proof of Requestor's authority to act on behalf of a government agency). The person must provide this in addition to a copy of their DL/ID.

Photos are "highly restricted personal information" under federal law. A photo can only be disclosed if the requestor marks one of the first four boxes in Part C of the privacy form. A person may have an additional box checked but unless they are eligible under 1-4, initialed, and have the required attachments, they cannot have the photo.

An example would be a private investigator needing a photo. They would need to:

- (1) complete the privacy form
- (2) provide us with a copy of their driver license or ID
- (3) initial box 10 as a private investigator which includes providing a photocopy of their Private Investigator's License (this cannot be a business card)
- (4) initial another box (1-4 because it's a photo request) which indicates their permitted use to obtain the photo, and provide proof as outlined in the parentheses.

# PI BUZZ

## ~ National Motor Vehicle Title Information System Database ~

The [National Motor Vehicle Title Information System](#) (NMVTIS) database is active now in 27 states. Check automobile titling information, including some historical theft data. This U.S. Department of Justice project was initiated to curb title fraud and the sale of junk cars.

NMVTIS provides consumers and others with vehicle information such as:

- \* Current and previous state of title.
- \* Title issue date.
- \* Most recent odometer reading.
- \* Any brand(s) applied to the vehicle.
- \* Date the brands were applied.
- \* Any auto recycler or junk or salvage yard history for the vehicle.
- \* Any insurance company salvage determination (including “total loss”) history for the vehicle.

The data is hosted by two vendors. Check vehicles by VIN through [Auto Data Direct](#) or [CARCO Group](#).

<http://www.nmvtis.gov/>

<http://www.add123.com/>

## ~ Real Time Tracking On Microblogging Search Engines ~

By now everyone who discovered the Internet knows about finding background on people at two of the most popular social networking sites — Facebook and My Space. But you may not have ventured into the microblogging world of Twitter, where people are just as unguarded, albeit in smaller doses — messaging in less than 140 characters. Use the [advanced search function](#) to find words and phrases in the body of a message or find someone by user name. If a participant is writing under their real name try finding their postings by putting their first and last name together, or just the first initial with the last name. Search by full name in a profile [here](#). The use of pseudonyms makes it harder to find your subject, but check the user names she has at other sites.

Follow topical threads and users by RSS or receive instant updates to your mobile phone. [Mydigimedia.com](#) devotes a post to Twitter applications that extend your Twitter features, and other Twitter related services — including a few that give you other ways to search. Blogger [Phil Bradley reminded](#) me of the alternative search engine, [Icerocket](#), which now has Web, Twitter and Image search in addition to its long-standing blog search. Enter your search terms, select “Big Buzz” to see search results grouped by blogs, Twitter, News Feeds and Images. Track new appearances of your search terms through RSS.

<http://search.twitter.com/advanced>

<http://twitter.com/login>

<http://www.icerocket.com/>

## ~ Think Twice Before Going Undercover ~

Who would have thought that creating a fake profile on MySpace (a violation of their user agreement) could lead to a criminal conviction? The [recent verdict in the case of Lori Drew concluded that she was guilty of computer fraud](#) for doing just that. Of course the verdict was influenced by the belief that the email messages sent under the false identity contributed to a girl's suicide, and certainly gave the impetus for the criminal charge.

Let this be a warning to information researchers and investigators who are collecting data on subjects through their social networking sites.

As part of my investigations I do passive information gathering on the Internet, like monitoring MySpace sites. Other investigators have asked me if they should create a profile to become a "friend" of someone who has a private MySpace page in order to get access to the full site. Before you do it you better be tech savvy so you can cover your footsteps.

Like with any other investigative action keep in mind: Is this legal and ethical? How would it be perceived by a jury? Will this be detrimental to the overall case? Are there unintended consequences that may reflect badly on my client?

**[http://blog.ericgoldman.org/archives/2008/11/lori\\_drew\\_guilt.htm](http://blog.ericgoldman.org/archives/2008/11/lori_drew_guilt.htm)**

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*PI buzz (<http://pibuzz.com>) is a free webzine of tips, links, news and research guides to assist the information professional and private investigator, and businesses and attorneys, on topics ranging from database searching, business background, to privacy and public records. Free registration is available at the site. Tamara Thompson and Rosemarie Mesis are the editors and primary writers for PI buzz.*

*Tamara Thompson is a well-known investigator, speaker and blogger who is recognized for her expertise in Internet data gathering, genealogical tracing, witness background development and locating people. Before starting PI buzz, Tamara operated the blog PI News Link.*

*Rosemarie Mesis has been conducting private investigations for the last 8 years specializing in locating people, especially custodial kidnapping victims. "Roe" is also the co-owner and Publisher of PI Magazine, the largest trade publication for private investigators and law enforcement detectives in the USA.*

# I API is pleased to welcome these new members to our Association

## **Matthew Pierce (Full)**

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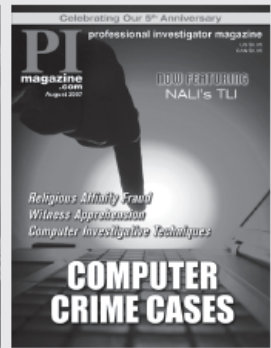
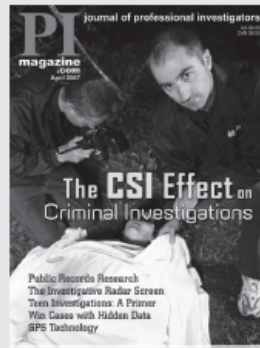
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## **Legal Technology Services, Inc and Sheila A. Lacy MBA, MS, BS will be hosting training on:**

Excel, Office 2007, Word, Power Point, Outlook, Computer Basics, What to purchase, maintain, and how to protect your computer. Training will be held at 2900 Justin Dr. Suite A, Urbandale, Iowa 50322. For dates and cost please visit us online at [www.ltsia.com](http://www.ltsia.com) or call (515) 276-9889.



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# NCISS



National Council of  
Investigative & Security Services

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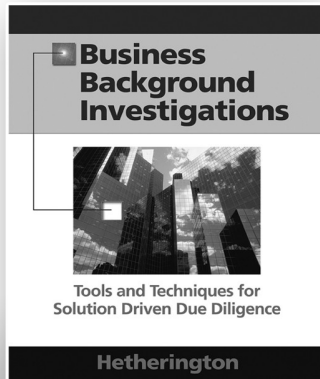
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