



THOUGHTFOCUS BUILD

When 240,000 Hours Vanished The AI Evolution That Bolstered a Background Check Giant

A case study

THE BIG TAKEAWAY

Because speed, scale, and compliance were paramount, a background check leader turned to us to build “hands off” automation and grow market share without proportional staff increases.

Our AI Workforce strategy eliminated 240,000 manual hours, 120 FTE-equivalents, and cut processing costs by 90%. Critical workflows were automated, delivering \$2.4M in annual savings all while maintaining FCRA compliance.

Measures & Key Results

- Scalability
- Reduce staffing
- Reduce error rate
- Automate most processes
- Realize ROI from investment

 **8,736 hours**

Annual lights-out capacity gain

 **90%**

Case processing time reduction

 **60%**

Adjudicator workforce reduction

 **50%**

Human capacity increase

\$2.4M

Annual cost reduction

CLIENT PROFILE

A leading background verification company with \$100M+ revenue and 800+ employees processes hundreds of thousands of criminal checks annually for enterprise healthcare, finance, and staffing clients.

Despite their FCRA-compliant reputation, 200+ adjudicators manually reviewing records couldn't scale with increasing demand, and created turnaround bottlenecks. They needed infrastructure transformation to capture share of projected market growth, from [\\$15.5B to \\$39.6B by 2032](#).

OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

Our client faced a perfect storm of operational inefficiencies threatening their revenue, market position, margins, and ability to efficiently scale.

Manual Process Bottlenecks Criminal record adjudication required human review of 11 complex process areas, each involving numerous dynamic steps. With 500,000+ annual checks, manual errors created massive liability exposure. This created cascading delays:

- **Inconsistent processing speeds** - cases varied from 30 mins to 8+ hours
- **Quality variance** - decisions differed between adjudicators reviewing identical cases
- **Capacity constraints** - peak demand created 72+ hour backlogs
- **Training overhead** - new adjudicators required 6-8 weeks to reach competency
- **Knowledge silos** - expert adjudicators became bottlenecks for complex cases

Skills Mismatch Crisis Workforce allocation created operational chaos:

- **Expert adjudicators** (10%) wasted time on routine decisions
- **Junior adjudicators** (60%) escalated 40% of cases, creating review backlogs
- **Mid-level adjudicators** (30%) over-researched simple cases, reducing throughput by 35%

The Breaking Point: Their largest client (30% of revenue) demanded 18-hour turnaround times or face contract termination. Manual processes couldn't scale, forcing a choice: massive workforce expansion or transformative automation.

REQUIREMENTS

Flawless integration with legacy systems, airtight SOC 2-compliant security, and regulatory precision across FCRA and 150+ local, state, and national laws. In addition, must pass Fortune 500 audits, encrypt sensitive data, maintain audit trails, and meet 99.9% uptime demands to protect against class-action liability, operational disruption, and the high cost of compliance errors.

STRATEGY

We approached this transformation with a surgical precision strategy: preserve human expertise where it adds value, automate routine decisions at machine speed, and create a foundation for continuous evolution.



The AI Workforce Architecture We designed an AI workforce that amplified human capabilities:

- **Fully automate** routine cases (70% of volume, rule-based decisions)
- **Human-in-loop** for complex cases requiring contextual judgment
- **Hybrid processing** for mid-complexity cases with AI assessment + human verification
- **Reposition select adjudicators** from manual processing to quality assurance and client service
- **Enable 24/7 processing** without fatigue, breaks, or capacity constraints
- **Scale 3x volume** without proportional workforce growth
- **Process routine cases** in less than 2 minutes vs. previous 2.5 hours
- **Create fixed-cost scaling** where additional volume requires minimal incremental costs

IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

 CHALLENGE	 OUR SOLUTION
Data Standardization Chaos Criminal records from 3,000+ counties in dozens of formats - PDFs, handwritten notes, inconsistent terminology/acronyms.	Universal Data Translator Built adaptive preprocessing system that standardizes jurisdictional variations while preserving original record integrity.
FCRA Compliance Precision Every AI decision must meet stringent Fair Credit Reporting Act requirements. Single compliance error could trigger class-action lawsuits.	Compliance-by-Design Embedded FCRA compliance into AI decision-making with complete audit trails and automated adverse action workflows.
Legacy System Integration AI workforce needed to communicate with 15+ year old case management systems and client portals not designed for automation.	API-First Integration Developed middleware enabling AI communication with legacy systems through standardized interfaces.
Performance Optimization Initial AI models made correct decisions but missed nuanced judgment of experienced adjudicators.	Continuous Learning Loop Expert adjudicators continuously refined AI decision-making through feedback mechanisms and performance monitoring.
Client Confidence Enterprise clients needed assurance AI decisions would maintain quality and compliance standards.	Transparent Validation Parallel processing during transition with detailed performance analytics and client-facing compliance dashboards.

OUTCOMES AT A GLANCE

METRIC	BEFORE	AFTER	IMPACT
Annual Operational Costs	\$4.8M	\$2.4M	\$2.4M saved
Case Processing Time	2.5 hours	15 minutes	90% reduction
Daily Case Capacity	1,600	4,800	200% increase
Adjudicator Workforce	200 FTE	80 FTE	120 FTE reduction
Peak Market Turnaround	72 hours	18 hours	75% improvement
Routine Case Processing	2.5 hours	2 minutes	98.7% reduction
Complex Case Processing	4+ hours	45 minutes	81% reduction
Compliance Errors	3.2%	0.4%	87.5% reduction
Capacity Lift (Human)	500,000	750,000	50% increase
Quality Consistency	82%	97%	18% improvement
Escalation Rate	100%	30%	70% reduction
Client Onboarding Time	6-8 weeks	2-3 weeks	60% faster
Adverse Action Compliance	70%	98%	40% improvement