

# The Complete Guide to CRM Data Strategy

Laying the foundation for scalable, high-growth sales processes.

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## INTRODUCTION

Advances in machine learning (ML) and artificial intelligence (AI) are causing AI-enabled technology to rapidly gain traction in sales and marketing organizations. In B2B sales and marketing organizations, this trend is tied to the rise of account-based marketing (ABM). As more organizations seek to concentrate sales and marketing resources on best-fit accounts, there is a growing need to rapidly identify high-value accounts and timely, relevant account insights. High-quality data and comprehensive data management enables laser-focused targeting.

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AI-enabled technology, such as high-velocity data collection and distribution into CRM systems, enables robust, automatic delivery of valuable insights on accounts. With personalization at scale, high-value accounts are the gold standard of modern revenue-generating teams.

For AI-enabled technology to offer intelligence, the datasets feeding the algorithms must be robust and high quality. Revenue-generating teams must prioritize comprehensive data management to ensure they have a solid foundation of company data before implementing any AI-enabled technology that will support their strategies. A high-quality foundation of company data is paramount to revenue-generating teams wanting to seriously leverage AI.

This white paper addresses how B2B sales and marketing teams can gather high-quality company data and implement basic data management processes to build a strong CRM data foundation capable of supporting AI-enabled technology.

A high-quality foundation of company data is paramount to revenue-generating teams wanting to enter the impending age of AI in earnest.

## THE DATA MANAGEMENT LANDSCAPE

A look at the history of CRM and data management—and how best practices of the past can help us embrace the CRM of tomorrow

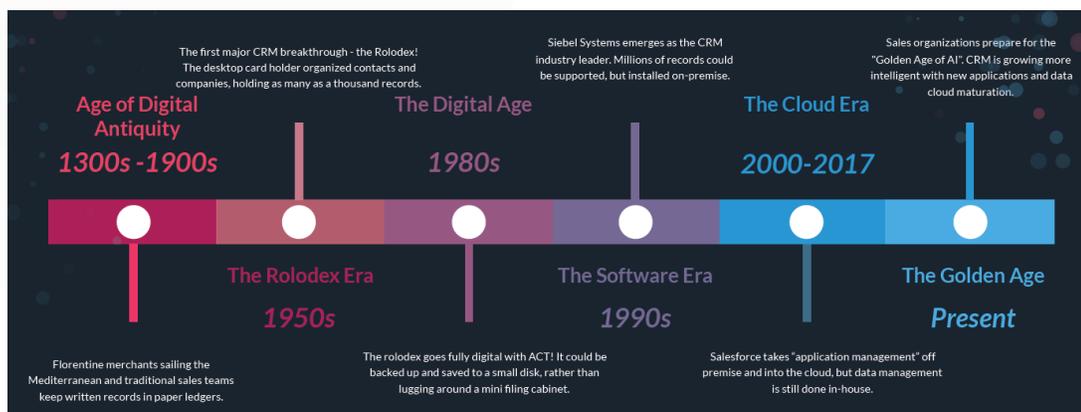
### Where is the CRM Industry Headed?

Maintaining customer records has been crucial, but keeping them clean and updated has always posed a challenge. When company data became digitized in the 1980's, the challenge was exacerbated by data silos and the accelerating proliferation of dirty data. When cloud-based CRMs emerged, many of the challenges presented by clunky on-premises CRM software were mitigated, but new ones have surfaced.

While CRM systems exist in the cloud, the data that feeds them is not, creating disparate data problems. In bringing CRM to the cloud, Salesforce accomplished something revolutionary, but with the rapidly expanding influence of AI, a new revolution for CRM is already on the horizon.

In the next three years, CRM customers will adopt AI-enabled technology en masse. These advances will catalyze a new wave of AI-enabled technologies and empower sales and marketing teams to prospect and target with greater efficiency and accuracy than ever before.

While CRM is in the cloud, the data that feeds it is not, creating disparate data problems.



**Figure 1.** The history of CRM begins in the age of digital antiquity when Florentine merchants sailing the Mediterranean and traditional sales teams kept written records in paper ledgers. The 1950's saw the invention of the Rolodex, the desktop card holder that organized contacts and companies, holding as many as a thousand records. In the digital age, the Rolodex became digital with ACT! It could be backed up and saved to a small disk. In the software era, Siebel Systems emerged as the CRM industry leader. Millions of records could be supported, but installed on premises. The cloud era began when Salesforce took application management off premises and put it into the cloud; data management was still done in house, however. Today, sales organizations prepare for the golden age of AI as CRM becomes more intelligent with new applications and data cloud maturation.

### Why is Data Quality so Important Right Now?

Ensure that large quantities of data don't drown out insight, but result in heightened intelligence.

As AI-enabled technologies begin to take hold, the datasphere is accelerating—reaching a trillion gigabytes by 2025. In the world of CRM, that translates to a lot of company data. In a report commissioned by Salesforce, the global market intelligence firm IDC outlined just how impactful AI will be for CRM users. According to the report, that impact (from increased revenue) is projected to reach US\$120 billion by 2020 with US\$33 billion of it from improved productivity alone.

This massive impact can only occur after companies get a handle on their customer data. If a CRM system does not have a clean data foundation, algorithms based on that data will give unreliable

If a CRM system does not have a clean data foundation, algorithms based on that data will give unreliable results. Even the very best algorithms cannot deliver valuable insights when they are built on bad underlying data.

results, rendering “intelligence” essentially useless. This problem is known in computer science lingo as “garbage in, garbage out”—even the very best algorithms cannot deliver valuable insights when they are built on bad underlying data.

Most B2B sales and marketing orgs still grapple with profound CRM data issues that prevent them from implementing the new wave of AI-enabled technology. According to a 2013 IBM study, 82 percent of CMOs felt underprepared to deal with the data explosion (up from 71 percent in 2011). This is in large part because they lack necessary data management systems and scalable techniques that can make sense of the overwhelming amounts of data being generated every second of every day.

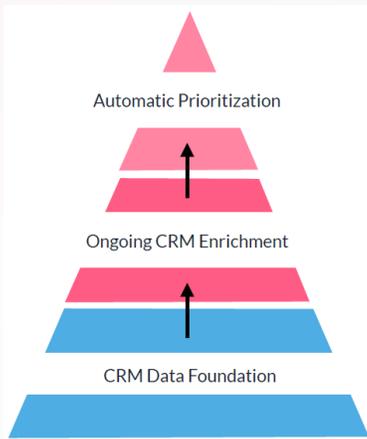


Figure 2. CRM data hierarchy of needs

## What is the CRM Data Foundation?

**DEFINING THE CRM DATA FOUNDATION**

As organizations move toward greater reliance on automation to fuel their growth, data quality is increasingly important. To implement AI-enabled processes in their CRM, companies must first build a solid CRM data foundation. The data foundation must include a base of high-quality company data and a management framework for ensuring ongoing maintenance of that level of data quality.

- **Quality underlying data:** Internal company data and external data provided by third-party vendors.
- **Comprehensive data management:** Application of a traditional master data management (MDM) framework to maintain a high quality CRM data foundation.

**A. Gather Quality Data**      **C. Master Management**

**Figure 3.** The three steps overall steps to creating a high-quality CRM data foundation are data gathering, fundamental management, and master management.

### The CRM Data Foundation

A solid data foundation in CRM has two key components:

- Quality underlying data
- A comprehensive system for ongoing management of that company data.

## Managing the CRM Data Foundation

Apply well-developed data management practices and applications to CRM data management.

Data management is well-developed at enterprise companies, where data management is a mature practice. Oracle defines MDM as a combination of applications and technologies that “consolidates, cleans, and augments corporate master data, and synchronizes it with all applications, business processes, and analytical tools,” with the goal of achieving massive improvements in “operational efficiency, reporting, and fact based decision-making.” Ultimately, the goal of applying MDM principles is to bring order to the chaos that plagues operationally critical data.

SMB organizations have the same goals. Marketing and sales teams at SMB orgs stand to gain a lot by adopting data management tactics inspired by traditional methods. With the objective of creating a single source of truth across various data inputs, MDM represents a powerful model.

In CRM data management, application of MDM processes offers a compatible solution because it solves the same essential root problem—siloes data. In the enterprise, data was siloed in different orgs and across various applications such as enterprise resource planning (ERP), supply chain management (SCM) and CRM.

In CRM, data is disparate. While CRM software is centralized in the cloud, the data that feeds it is not. The essential structure of MDM offers an excellent framework for amending the problems created by siloed company data.

## GATHERING QUALITY CRM DATA

Building a base of high-quality company data

### Leveraging Big Data for CRM

How is the evolving datasphere shaping the way organizations are amassing customer data?

At the core of any CRM system is trusted data. To grapple with the overwhelming quantity of company data in the system, it's important to understand the four Vs of big data: velocity, veracity, volume, and variety. When applied to CRM, these four Vs can help inform selection of a data vendor and set expectations for incorporation of customer data. For advanced analysis and modeling, it's necessary to combine big data from external sources with existing CRM data.

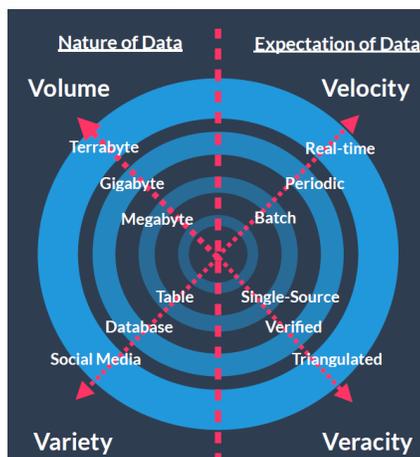


Figure 4. Volume, velocity, veracity, and variety are the four Vs of big data in CRM.

### A Brief History of MDM

As organizations began to implement a variety of applications ranging from ERP, SCM, and data warehousing, data became increasingly siloed, and lacking a single source of truth. There was a need to define *master data* across the silos.

Out of this, the field of master data management (MDM) emerged as an approach to reaching a single point of truth from large datasets. MDM provides a reliable foundation of data by implementing methods and rules of governance that ensure consistent data quality across multiple applications.

Trusted data is at the core of any CRM system. As the datasphere grows, the nature and expectations of company data evolve with it.

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NATURE OF DATA	
Volume	Data grows at a nearly exponential rate because it is produced and captured more frequently.
Variety	The sources of CRM data are diversifying all the time. CRMs started by indexing basic information such as company name and location, but now CRM data can include social media engagement or buying signals such as an executive hire or expansion to a new location.
EXPECTATIONS OF DATA	
Veracity	With advances in natural language processing and human analysis, company data is more accurate than ever. CRMs can reflect changes in account information from multiple sources to stay up-to-date.
Velocity	Data can now be delivered into sales and marketing team workflows in real-time, and with regular, automatic updates.

### Essential Data for CRM Is Both Internal and External

In its most rudimentary form, the foundation of company data is simply a compilation of two types of data: internal and external.

**Internal customer data** is gathered internally from your CRM, marketing automation, and user analytics platforms. This covers a customer’s digital behavior—including downloading content, filling out a form, or using a new feature—as well as interactions with your sales and customer success teams.

The foundation of customer data is simply a compilation of internal and external data.

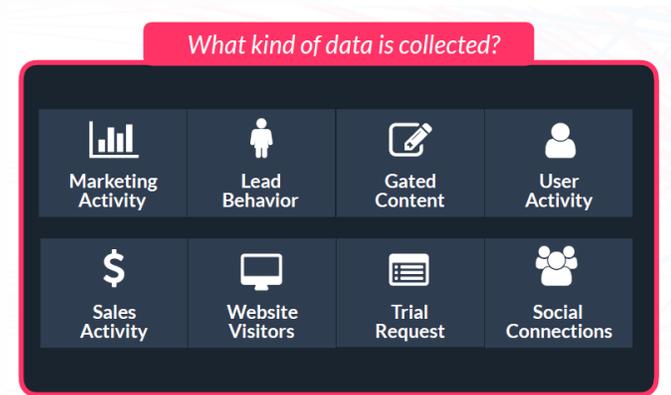


Figure 5. Internal customer data includes marketing behavior, lead behavior, user activity, and more.

**External company data** is acquired from third-party sources, either from subscriptions or list purchases. External data typically covers firmographic information such as location, headcount, industry, and revenue. External data can also cover growth signals such as raising a round of funding, hiring a key executive, and new partnerships.

What kind of data is collected?

Technographics	Firmographics		Signals
 CRM	 Name	 Revenue	 Conference Attendance
 Marketing Automation	 Location	 Headcount	 Executive Hire
 Email Cadence Tool	 Industry	 Exit Status	 Funding Round

**Figure 6.** External company data from third-party sources can include information on companies' technology, firm characteristics, or growth signals.

### Methods for Sourcing Data

How do third-party data providers source their data?

Data providers employ various methods to assemble their data sets. The way third-party data vendors source the data can be split into two primary methods: creation and curation.

- **Data creation** involves methods ranging from machine learning—to find data and extract insights on the web—to manual wide-scale data mining methods such as offshore analysts who call and verify information. These data points come unstructured from a wide variety of sources, such as websites, social media, blog posts, or job listings, and are compiled into a proprietary, structured dataset.
- **Data curation** is the process of acquiring data that has already been compiled via integrations, partnerships, or purchases. Scrapers that purely repackage existing data qualify, as well.

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### External Data Providers Overview

What are the different types of data providers?

Data providers fall into three main types: traditional publishers, user-generated content (UGC) providers, and intelligent providers. While some providers use legacy systems and a team of analysts to repackage aggregated company information, others take advantage of emerging technologies to create intelligent data sets that improve over time. Traditional publishers and UGC providers outsource their data sourcing, whereas the intelligent providers build tools to internally source their data.

- **Traditional publishers**, such as Dun & Bradstreet and Hoovers, rely heavily on manual data collection and have teams dedicated to researching and updating company information.
- **UGC providers** rely on their users, rather than employees, to create their dataset. This approach requires trusting—or regulating—users to maintain data quality. For example, Jigsaw—acquired by Salesforce and rebranded as Data.com—was a crowd sourced online business directory with more than 30 million contacts. To retrieve a contact, users would have to provide one of their own, leading to a large database with substantial quality issues. Data providers reliant on UGC will typically have more fixed data points that cover top-level firmographics such as industry or headcount.

Data providers fall into three main types: traditional publishers, user-generated content (UGC) providers, and intelligent providers.

- **Intelligent providers** use advances in AI technology to produce data sets that automatically grow, improve, and refresh over time. These providers collect and present data primarily through the use of machine learning technology. Intelligent providers often employ a hybrid of both curation and creation, and are able to provide dynamic data at scale through their machine learning techniques. Some may specialize in one unique data point, without aggregating others.

Technologies now exist to fill your CRM with triangulated terabytes of real-time data from dozens of sources, but you need a robust data management system to make that happen.

### Data Quality Deep Dive

Twilio followed three different, incorrect data points to measure the companywide impact of poor data quality.

	INCORRECT HEADCOUNT	INCORRECT LOCATION	INCORRECT ANNUAL REVENUE
CHALLENGE	<p>Twilio categorized deals by company size.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High-velocity deals focused on getting new, small customers in the door quickly.</li> <li>• Strategic deals were more complex and came with a larger deal size.</li> </ul> <p>Miscategorizing strategic deals as high velocity directly impacted Twilio's annual recurring revenue.</p>	<p>Incorrect location data for companies meant that accounts were routed to the wrong reps.</p>	<p>Twilio required early-stage companies to submit to credit checks. Incorrect data resulted in unnecessary credit checks on well-qualified companies.</p>
IMPACT	<p><b>Missed revenue</b> Sales reps treat highly-complex, strategic enterprise deals as a high-velocity SMB deal, leaving large amounts of revenue on the table.</p>	<p><b>Poor customer experience</b> Sales reps were angry because they felt their opportunity was stolen—causing friction within the sales organization. Meanwhile, customers had a poor experience because their primary contact would change within 30 days of closing a deal.</p>	<p><b>Wasted internal resources</b> Unnecessary credit checks were a drain on internal departments and a poor experience for customers.</p>

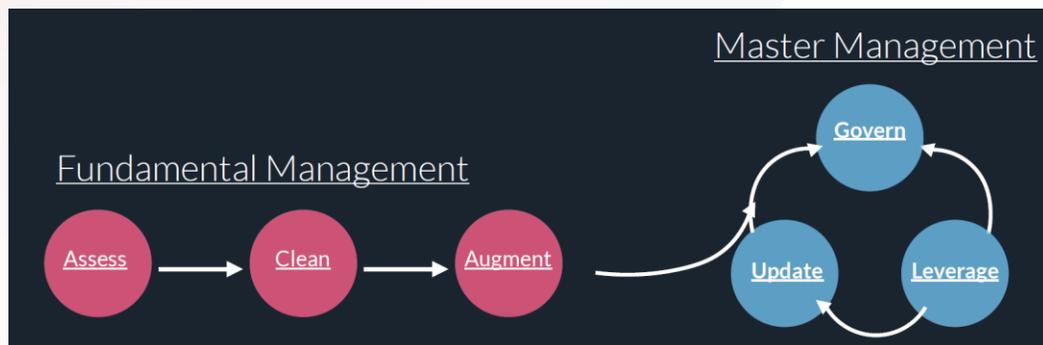
Technologies now exist to fill your CRM with triangulated terabytes of real-time data from dozens of sources, but you need a robust data management system to make that happen.

“Bad data has a direct correlation with revenue of the company. You can have the best sales people and the best comp plans, but if you don't have good data underlying your processes, it erodes trust in your organization.”

**Jairaj Sounderrajan**  
Head of Global Sales Operations  
Twilio  
Speaking at Ops Stars 2017

## IMPLEMENTING A CRM DATA MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The traditional MDM framework has many variations, but it boils down to six key actions: assess, cleanse, augment, govern, update and leverage. The basic framework of MDM systems can serve as a powerful framework for SMB organizations to build out their CRM data management processes.



**Figure 7.** There are two steps to implementing a CRM data management strategy. First, you must fundamentally manage your data by assessing, cleaning, and augmenting it. Second, you must create a structure for automatic management that updates, governs, and leverages the data.

Fundamental CRM data management is the initial management of internal and external company data in the CRM.

- **Assess:** Examine and evaluate the scale of data problems.
- **Clean:** Merge duplicate profiles, remove dirty accounts that cannot be rectified, and enrich empty fields with external account data.
- **Augment:** Enrich accounts with missing information from a third-party data vendor.

Master CRM data management implements a structure for ongoing automatic maintenance of CRM data.

- **Update:** Implement a data vendor that can continuously enrich and maintain data in real time.
- **Govern:** Control access, audit standards, and change management rules.
- **Leverage:** Execute on business processes using the cleaned and augmented company data.

### Assess the Health of your CRM

Do you know where the data anomalies are in your CRM?

Data decays at an astonishing rate. Companies relocate, hire and fire, and change constantly; a data point verified last week is likely already out of date. Most CRM data issues are profound, so organizations should assess the scale of their data quality problems before building out ongoing management practices.

This assessment can be done internally, or performed by a data partner that offers a diagnostic solution. While the type and rate of decay varies from organization to organization, the most common data integrity issues that plague organizations usually fall into one of three categories: duplicate, dirty, or missing data.

### Data Integrity Categories

The most common data integrity issues that plague organizations usually fall into one of three categories:

- Duplicate data
- Dirty data
- Missing data

A comprehensive diagnosis will pinpoint where data quality is breaking down. Before you can choose a provider to maintain data quality on an ongoing basis, it's important to assess the baseline of data quality in your CRM. This is important for two primary reasons:

1. Understanding your CRM's data anomalies is the best first step to solving them for good. A CRM swimming in duplicates might require more advanced duplicate identification rules, while inconsistent data formatting could point to a need for standardizing data entry.
2. Dirty data will never match well to an external data set. If your CRM is overrun with dirty data, any evaluation of data vendors will return poor matching results; even the best algorithms cannot match to dirty records.

### Types of Data Anomalies

DIRTY DATA	DUPLICATE DATA	MISSING DATA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key identifiers are in conflict. For example, Uber's account URL is listed as www.lyft.com.</li> <li>• Key data is outdated. For example, Gusto's account is still named ZenPayroll.</li> <li>• Data points for the same field are not standardized across records. For example, an email address is in a URL field.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple records exist for the same account.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A substantial portion of records have null values for one or more important fields.</li> </ul>

A CRM system overrun with duplicate and outdated account information can have major implications—from wasted prospecting time on duplicative efforts to countless missed opportunities. With a clean CRM system, however, organizations can set realistic expectations for the match rate returned by a data provider.

### Amend Data Decay in Your CRM System

How to clean dirty and duplicate accounts.

A CRM system overrun with duplicate and outdated account information can have major impacts—from wasted prospecting time on duplicative efforts to countless missed opportunities. There are an infinite number of ways CRM data can decay—for example, naming conventions vary between data providers, errors in data entry pile up, company information becomes outdated, and more. Over time, this results in a CRM overrun with multiple records of the same account, empty fields on accounts, or irreconcilable information within the accounts.

For each type of decay, the solution can vary. Typically, organizations merge duplicate profiles, remove dirty accounts that cannot be rectified, and enrich empty fields with account data from an external provider.

- **Dirty data:** The clean-up process for dirty accounts must be performed manually, because dirty data cannot be amended by a provider. Amending dirty accounts requires input from the account owner to determine whether an account named “Uber” with a URL of “jane@lyft.com” should be deleted or cleaned up.
- **Duplicate data:** After identifying duplicate profiles in the diagnosis, the profiles must be merged into one.

If you elected to work with a provider for the assessment, then matching is typically phase one of the deduplication process. Powerful matching can amend account information despite inconsistent conventions—ensuring that a high percentage of duplicate accounts are captured, rather than lumped in with dirty profiles.

With a clean CRM, organizations can set realistic expectations for the match rate returned by a data provider.

### Determine Augmentation Potential

Determine how well a provider's database fits your CRM with account matching to an external dataset.

In order to augment internal CRM data with robust information offered by an external data vendor, you must first determine how much of your CRM is eligible for data enrichment and updating. This is called the **match rate**.

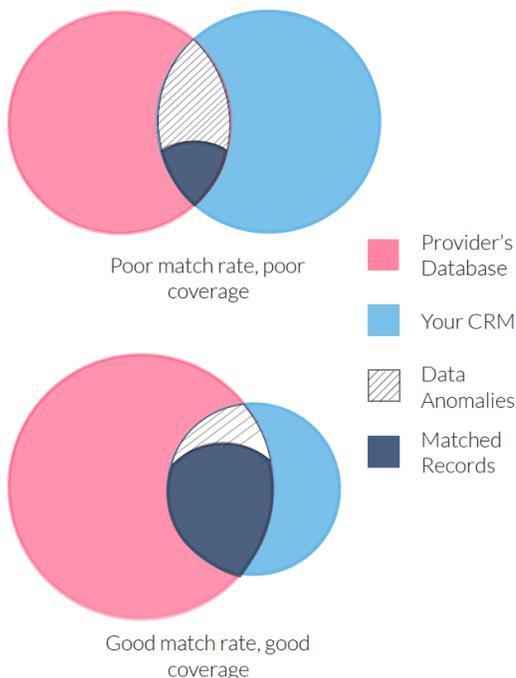
The matching process cross-references the data provider's dataset with internal CRM data to identify corresponding records. The match rate is the resulting intersection of corresponding records. Match rates are affected by the veracity and quality of both the third-party external data and the internal company data.

A clean CRM system is a prerequisite for augmenting data via an external provider. Even if records exist in both databases, dirty data makes it difficult to match them. A poor match rate can be caused by either dirty CRM data, bad coverage (mismatched data profiles), or bad matching logic.

A data provider should return a high match rate if their database aligns with a high portion of your CRM. This idea is called **coverage**. If the vendor covers the industries you care about, they're likely a good fit; if they don't, they won't be able to match (and thus enrich) many of your records.

With dirty internal CRM data, it can be tough to know whether a poor match rate is caused by the CRM or bad coverage by the external data provider.

To augment internal CRM data with robust information offered by an external data vendor, you must first determine how much of your CRM is eligible for data enrichment and updating.



**Figure 8.** The match rate is the amount of data that is eligible for enrichment and updating. If a data provider's database aligns with a high portion of your CRM data then you have a high match rate and good coverage.

## Augment Account Data

Enrich accounts with missing information from a third-party.

The next phase is to augment the matched and deduplicated accounts by pushing data to new fields or updating fields that already exist. Determine what additional data points in each record will help your users do more with the data and give them a better insight on each account.

There are two ways to think about augmentation: examining the depth of data the provider augmented for a field (fill rate on fields) or examining the breadth of accounts a provider augmented, regardless of field (fill rate on records).

- **Fill rate on accounts:** How many accounts had data (on any field) augmented from the external data provider?
- **Fill rate on fields:** For any given field, how many records was the data provider able to fill?

While the provider may have enriched 80 percent of your records, some may have only had one field enriched, whereas others may have had more than 30 fields enriched.

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## Sample Fill Rate Report

NAME	FILL RATE
Description	98%
Keywords	92%
Funding status	99%
Revenue estimate	71%
Technographics	98%
Location	98%
Head count	93%
LinkedIn link	77%

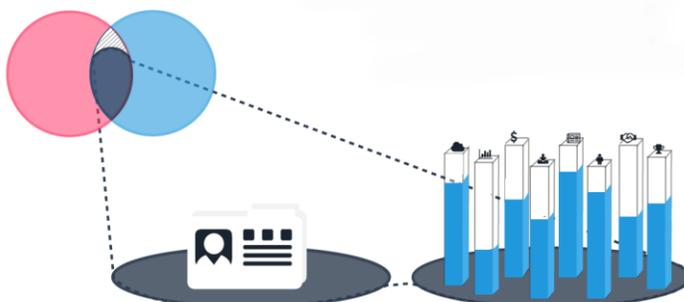


Figure 9. Providers should deliver a high fill rate on fields, not just on accounts.

## Enable Ongoing Updates

Facilitate ongoing, high-quality data by partnering with a data provider that can automatically enrich and update CRM data.

Once you have assessed, cleaned, and augmented your data—the three steps for fundamental CRM data management—you are ready to master CRM data management by implementing a structure for ongoing data maintenance.

Achieving perfect data quality is an impossibility. However, a new wave of providers are taking advantage of new technologies, combining the precision of human analysts with the scalability of machine learning—coming closer than ever to achieving and maintaining high-quality CRM data.

At this point, your CRM will be the cleanest and most robust it's ever been. In order to maintain this level of quality, the next step is to implement a vendor to automatically refresh CRM data on an ongoing basis.

A new wave of providers are taking advantage of new technologies, combining the precision of human analysts with the scalability of machine learning—coming closer than ever to achieving and maintaining high-quality CRM data.

Ongoing, real-time maintenance of CRM data is a requirement for organizations that want to implement tools for automatic prioritization in their workflow—this cannot be achieved manually at scale. For this step, choose a data partner that can enrich and automatically refresh CRM data on an ongoing basis.

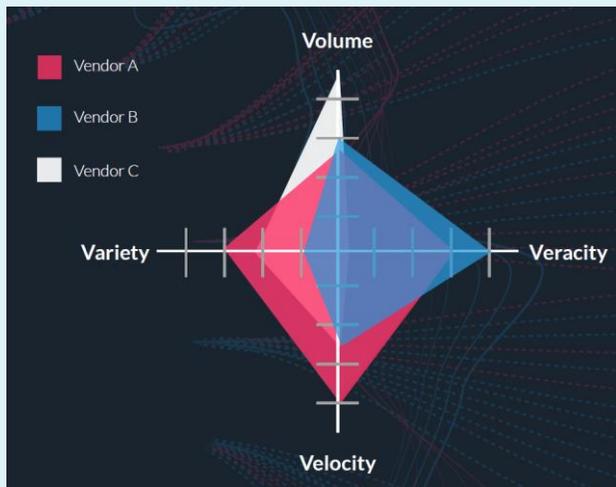
## How to Evaluate Data Providers

### FIND THE BEST FIT FOR YOUR CRM DATA FOUNDATION NEEDS USING THE FOUR V'S

Knowing that a provider offers a 10 million-company database or real-time data isn't enough. To get a full picture of the data providers, use the four Vs of big data to inform what type of provider will suit your needs.

- **Velocity:** How often do they update the data? What does that process look like and how are updates delivered to your CRM?
- **Veracity:** How do they verify the data points and how accurate is the data?
- **Variety:** What types of data are offered? How do they source it?
- **Volume:** How many companies/people are in the dataset? Do they add to it over time?

Use the match rate and fill rate assessments to help you evaluate how effectively data vendors can effectively fill in the gaps in your data foundation. This can be data that matches your gaps in coverage, or a management solution that ensures ongoing maintenance of your CRM data. Modern orgs should prioritize best-in-class data and effective tools for ongoing management.



**Figure 10.** Use the match rate and fill rate assessments to help you evaluate how effectively data vendors can fill in the gaps in your data foundation.

## Maintain Quality with Governance and Stewardship

How to keep your CRM clean, consistent, and up to date.

Most CRM systems are accessed by several end users across the organization, limiting the CRM administrator's ability to actually monitor what data is entered and how it is updated. Even with a tool for automatically enriching and updating CRM data, governance rules are still important to ensure your CRM doesn't get overrun with dirty, irreconcilable accounts that will render both human analysts and algorithms useless.

Both governance and stewardship are essential to keeping the data management system working. Governance lays the framework for the overarching, ongoing data management strategy while stewardship enforces the system of rules to ensure the desired level of quality. Defining and disseminating governance rules to anyone entering data into the CRM will help standardize internal data. For example, if one user enters company names with "Inc." as a suffix, or enters websites with "www" as a prefix, and other users omit those same values, there is bound to be discrepancies among accounts that leads to duplicate profiles or irreconcilable accounts proliferating over time.

**Data governance** is the strategic management function, setting the long-term data management roadmap. Data governance tasks range, but generally include:

- **Defining the goals and principles:** Spearhead the data management program, whether building out the entire data foundation, or implementing an overhaul for ongoing data management.
- **Defining the policies and processes:** Establish which members of the team can access the CRM system, and which can input data (and on which fields). Set the communication plan for making sure data entry rules are disseminated to all relevant parties.
- **Defining the roles and responsibilities:** Choose the stakeholders for data governance and stewardship programs and define associated obligations.

**Stewardship** is a tactical function, enforcing internal rules and processes regarding data inputs.

- **Defining the data standards:** Standardize data inputs to ensure ongoing consistency of values on account fields.
- **Tracking and choosing data sources:** Identify a system of truth for particular data points such as HG Data as a trusted source for technographics or LinkedIn as a source for headcount.
- **Setting data quality targets:** Set goals for continued amendment of data issues in specific time frames such as quarterly or monthly. If you are working with a vendor that does not provide automatic enrichment, this should be arranged in conjunction with batch imports. You should do a batch import or update as frequently as the provider offers it.

## Leverage High-Quality CRM for Operations Success

How sales operations can execute on core operational strategies in a data-driven, optimized way.

A primary requisite for revenue generation teams to achieve pipeline and ARR goals is to efficiently and accurately identify target accounts. Increasingly, revenue generation teams must be strategic about their pursuit of accounts. Automatic prioritization is rapidly gaining traction in revenue generating teams, making target account identification less painful and time-consuming.

Once equipped with a completely clean and enriched CRM data foundation, sales and marketing teams can perform business critical tasks such as addressable market expansion and account prioritization that support the needs of all revenue generation activities across an organization.

### Defining Governance and Stewardship

- **Governance:** Lays the framework for the overarching, ongoing data management strategy.
- **Stewardship:** Enforces the system of rules to ensure the desired level of quality.

## Implement Data-Driven Prioritization to Optimize Core Revenue Operations Tasks

ACCOUNT SCORING	ACCOUNT TIERING	HIGH-VALUE ACCOUNT PRIORITIZATION
Proprietary growth signals, such as funding and executive hires, are significant indicators of buyer behavior. Using firmographic, signal, and technographic data from third-party data providers, you can craft an account scoring model. Predetermine which vendor is the source of truth for each data point.	Using the account score, tier incoming accounts that correspond to high-value companies. High-value companies are those that match your ideal customer profile or that provide a reason for your sales or marketing team to reach out.	Allocate rep time on high-value accounts with a high likelihood of conversion by paying attention to buying signals as well as company profile fit.

### CONCLUSION

In the next three to five years, a new wave of AI-enabled technologies promises to empower sales teams with greater prospecting and targeting efficiency and accuracy than ever before. As a result, sales and marketing organizations will have a renewed focus on data quality.

This swell of interest in and widespread adoption of AI-enabled sales and marketing technology will highlight the need for automatic enrichment and continuous updates of the customer data that intelligence is based on. This need will become increasingly acute as more teams shift to account-based strategies and the push for AI-enabled integrations accelerates.

Addressing these changes in the market is Oracle DataFox Cloud Service, an AI-driven company intelligence platform that provides B2B company-level data and signals. Oracle DataFox Cloud Service has a modern data engine that uses AI to automate data collection and maintain data integrity in real time. It uses a combination of natural language processing (NLP), machine learning, and human-in-the-loop verification to scan the web and create trusted B2B company data and signals.

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## Integrated Cloud Applications & Platform Services

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