



2023 STATE OF DATABASE QUALITY & ACCURACY

Tech Landscape, AI Positioning B2B Orgs
For Stronger Data Assurance



INTRODUCTION

Although the effectiveness of B2B marketing heavily relies on the quality and accuracy of the underlying databases used for targeting and outreach, just **29% of marketers** are confident in the quality of their databases. According to the “2023 Database Quality & Accuracy Benchmark Survey,” the **top reasons** for that lack of confidence include working with old/outdated data, lack of time and resources to implement an effective cleansing process and issues/limitations with legacy technology.

However, with **69% of practitioners** planning to increase their database investments, they’re continuing to prioritize collecting key information, adding new contacts, targeting specific segments and accumulating prospective buyer behavior data. With a clear focus on balancing retention and acquisition efforts, practitioners are also leveraging third-party integrations and enrichment solutions to enhance their databases in real-time.

“The world has been progressively transitioned into the digital realm and is becoming increasingly automated,” said Jaime Punishill, CMO of **nCino, Inc.**, a provider of cloud banking. “With this transition comes an exponential growth of data. Consequently, the importance of data quality and effectiveness has become paramount, particularly as the emergence of AI captivates the attention of many. Ultimately, the success of the entire endeavor hinges upon the quality and efficacy of your data.”

This special report will provide an overview of the state of database quality and accuracy in B2B marketing, highlighting key trends, challenges and strategies. Specific topics of discussion will include:

- The steps needed to knock down data silos and bring all information into a centrally housed system;
- How frequently successful practitioners cleanse and enrich their data, with a focus on the third-party partners they’re leveraging;
- The tools and resources needed to evaluate legacy technologies; and
- How the rapid growth of AI and automation solutions — such as predictive analytics and machine learning — are playing a crucial role in maintaining database quality.

A photograph showing two business professionals in a meeting. One person is holding a tablet displaying a chart, while the other is pointing at it with a pen. A laptop and a document with a bar chart are also visible on the desk. The background is a bright, out-of-focus office environment.

UNDERSTANDING THE DATA QUALITY SPECTRUM

The importance of having high-quality, accurate data cannot be overstated. Without it, companies cannot effectively target and engage with their ideal customers, wasting time and resources. Gartner research found that **40% of business initiatives fail** due to poor data quality, leading to missed revenue opportunities and a damaging impact on the overall success of a company. With that in mind, data quality exists on a spectrum, ranging from minimal needs to more advanced challenges.

"Organizations at different stages of marketing maturity have different priorities regarding database management," said Danny McKeever, Sr. Director of Marketing Operations and Technology at precision demand marketing platform **Integrate**. "While some focus on basic data cleanliness for running emails and targeted ads, others shift toward reporting, activating buyer journeys and understanding buying group dynamics."

The goal is to optimize customer experiences and drive business growth through targeted and well-informed decision-making. By leveraging data effectively, companies can stay ahead of the competition, adapt to changing market dynamics and deliver exceptional customer value.

"It doesn't matter if you're big or small: Having a plan and clear outcomes matters," said Punishill. "Like in marketing, random acts or collecting everything without purpose won't be effective. Instead, focus on collecting the right data and using it effectively. Start by building a rich contact record database and ensuring accurate contact information. Then, enhance it with firmographic or psychographic data and basic web traffic details. Remember, quality over quantity when it comes to data."



THE CRUCIAL ROLE OF DATABASE QUALITY & ACCURACY IN B2B MARKETING

By Danny McKeever, Integrate

In today's digital-first world, marketing success hinges on the accuracy and quality of your database. It's not just about gathering data; it's about ensuring that your data is accurate, compliant and governed effectively.

Many companies grapple with database quality issues, often stemming from various scenarios. Mergers and acquisitions can lead to disparate, siloed data systems that are challenging to consolidate. In some enterprises, data is scattered across multiple locations, with little control over who inputs data. Often, databases are not given priority within organizations, hindering marketing progress.

To address these challenges, some companies are implementing centralized processes to enforce data rigor from the outset. Scrutinizing every lead that enters the system and using technology to combat data quality issues is becoming essential.

The Importance Of Up-To-Date Databases

Today's B2B buyers behave more like B2C consumers: They expect to be heard, known and understood across multiple channels, from social media to virtual events.

In marketing, data quality is paramount. Without accurate customer information, reaching your target audience becomes nearly impossible. Incorrect emails, outdated information or not knowing that a prospect has moved to another company can result in missed opportunities. Misaligned data on service level agreements (SLAs) can lead to disjointed outreach efforts. And clean, compliant data is crucial for measuring marketing performance and refining processes.



Moreover, **150 of 194 countries** have enacted data protection and privacy laws, 35 out of 50 states in the U.S. have considered data privacy regulation and 13 states have passed new data privacy legislation, making data governance and compliance more important than ever to avoid hefty fines.

Challenges To Data Accuracy & Solutions

Several factors can undermine data accuracy, including siloed data and inadequate data entry processes. Siloed data occurs when information resides in disparate systems like CRM and marketing automation platforms. Implementing technologies that streamline data handling and governance can help alleviate this issue.

To prevent dirty data from entering your systems, establish robust data entry processes. Address incomplete or erroneous data before it enters your marketing automation system. Inconsistent data logging practices within your organization can also result in inaccuracies. Implement internal processes or agreements to prevent bad data from entering the system.

The Role Of A Clean & Accurate Database In Predictable Pipeline Generation

Predictable pipeline generation depends on consistent demand funnel performance and alignment with sales. It is about meeting the buyer where they are in the channels they want to be met in. It is about helping to move marketing to a more mature state, evolving away from the one-off email marketing programs to a more orchestrated cross-channel experience that your buyers prefer. Due to the complexity of a B2B sales cycle, which can be upwards of 24 months, it's more important than ever to understand your buying group and where they are in their buying journey.

Having a clean and accurate database enables you to react quickly to market forces, create tailored messages and identify in-market accounts. It's not just about having the right email or contact information – your database needs to have data on where your buyer is in their buying journey and how they consume information. You need to build a smarter catcher's mitt that catches the buyers who are most likely to buy. It's no longer about just providing an engaged MQL, but about knowing where your account is in the buying cycle. After all, if you're targeting a buyer that is not in-market for your product or service, you're wasting your efforts.



Looking To The Future

Building and maintaining a high-quality database isn't just about generating pipeline today; it's about future-proofing your marketing efforts. Consider whether your database can capture engagements, react to market changes and deliver the right message at the right time.

A high-quality database is a team sport – everyone from sales, RevOps, sales ops, SDRs and marketing needs to play a role. To maintain a high-quality database, you need the right people, processes and technologies in place. Marketing and sales must partner throughout the buyer's journey. It's not just about collecting data; it's about ensuring that your data is reliable, up to date, compliant and actionable.

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DANNY MCKEEVER, INTEGRATE





INCREASING INVESTMENTS IN DATABASE QUALITY TECHNOLOGY

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Industry leaders constantly evolve their data quality practices to stay ahead of the curve. Companies prioritizing data quality and accuracy have invested in CRM systems, data cleansing tools and data enrichment platforms.

"By providing value to sales teams through qualified opportunities based on comprehensive engagement data, marketing can drive more impactful results," said McKeever. "This evolution of databases from basic information to opportunity creation relies on continuous improvement in data quality and is a journey for organizations to undertake."

With **82% of C-level data executives** identifying data quality concerns as a formidable obstacle to their data integration initiatives and 80% expressing the challenge of consistently enriching data with proper context at scale, it's clear that data is crucial for making well-informed business decisions. Investing in tech that ensures high data quality has become table stakes.

"A high-quality database is a collaborative effort," said McKeever. "It's not just the responsibility of one person in marketing operations to clean up the data. It requires alignment from everyone interacting with the data, including sales, operations, SDRs and marketing."

By prioritizing data quality from the onset, marketers can lay a strong foundation that enables seamless exploration and analysis across various datasets. This proactive approach ensures accuracy and reliability, facilitates confident decision-making and unlocks valuable insights for future endeavors.



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UNDERSTANDING AI'S IMPACT ON THE DATA LANDSCAPE

As technology continues to advance at a rapid pace, the importance of maintaining high-quality and accurate databases becomes increasingly crucial. To achieve this, marketers must invest in robust data cleansing and enrichment solutions to ensure their data is accurate, up-to-date and relevant so they can make informed decisions and execute precise targeting strategies.

Additionally, staying updated on the latest technologies and best practices in data management is essential to adapt to the evolving landscape and maximize the potential of the available data.

"AI is still in its early stages of data analysis," said McKeever. "While there are AI solutions that focus on specific aspects of the problem, there is yet to be a comprehensive AI solution that tackles the entire picture."

Still, AI and machine learning are making their way into the marketing realm. These innovative tools are expected to play a significant role in maintaining database quality. With their ability to analyze immense volumes of data, AI and machine learning algorithms can identify intricate patterns and consumer behaviors, providing valuable insights for enhanced targeting and engagement.

“Many people jump on the AI hype without a clear strategy or purpose,” said Punishill. “Focusing on outcomes is more important rather than just using the latest technology. We’re still learning how AI can help us, so it’s a test-and-learn process.”

By leveraging the power of AI and machine learning, marketers can uncover hidden opportunities, personalize their messaging and deliver highly relevant content to their target audience. This improves overall engagement and enhances the customer experience, increasing satisfaction and loyalty.

“Remember, AI relies on data,” said Punishill. “If your data is messy, it doesn’t matter how good the AI tool is. Like an athlete, AI needs proper training and setup to perform well.”

“Focusing on outcomes is more important rather than just using the latest technology.”

JAMIE PUNISHILL, NCINO, INC.



CONCLUSION

Data quality management is no longer a luxury but a necessity in the modern business world. As organizations continue to generate data at an unprecedented rate, the role of technologies like AI, machine learning and robust data management tools will only grow in importance.

"Over the years, the database requirements have become more intricate, extending beyond job functions and contact information to include account positioning and understanding a buyer's discovery process," said McKeever. "High-quality data is crucial for delivering better digital experiences and engaging customers across various channels. It allows organizations to identify accounts in the market, tailor messaging and build engaged buying groups."



Integrate is the leader in Precision Demand Marketing, an emerging category to empower B2B marketers to drive omnichannel demand strategies, convert leads to revenue, and prove marketing return on investment. Integrate works with high-growth and enterprise organizations like Salesforce, Microsoft, Akamai, and Pluralsight to power their Precision Demand Marketing strategies.

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Demand Gen Report is a targeted online publication that uncovers the strategies and solutions that help companies better align their sales and marketing organizations, and ultimately, drive growth. A key component of the publication's editorial coverage focuses on the sales and marketing automation tools that enable companies to better measure and manage their multichannel demand generation efforts.

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