

Data is the new oil.
Without it, your sales engine stops running.

Like oil, data needs to be refined.
Or else, it won't fuel your sales machine.

The problem is that B2B data has a very short shelf life.

- **24% to 36% of your CRM data decays each year** [Tweet this!](#)
- **25% of sales contacts are invalid at any given time**

Poor data causes reps to waste 27.3% of their time,
and ends up costing you 12% of revenues.

The good news is that,
by following a few simple data hygiene best practices,
richer data-driven sales conversations are always within your reach...

#1 Find out what's wrong

- Start with a thorough audit of your CRM
- Interview key data handlers and users
- Identify what types of errors and potential issues you encounter

#2 Fix what's broken

- Validate data entry errors and typos first

- Research and update inaccuracies like phone numbers, email addresses, etc.
- Define rules for merging and removing duplicate records

Related: [How Many Times Should You Have Your Business Database Cleanse?](#)

#3 Fill missing values

- Use the main company phone number as a placeholder until you obtain a direct line
- Infer email addresses from common company-specific email patterns
- Populate empty fields with data from publicly-available sources and third-party providers

Related: [Eliminate Unwanted Business Data with Data Profiling Tools](#)

#4 Fit data together

- Follow standard naming conventions for contacts and businesses
- Make sure to use consistent abbreviations and punctuations throughout a column
- Create formatting rules for categorical fields (e.g., job titles, industries, etc.)

#5 Feed into a data management process

- Plan for each stage of the data lifecycle (from collection to removal)
- Automate as much as you can, but keep humans in the loop
- Farm out a specific task when you don't have the resources to do it in-house

Related: [A B2B Marketer's Guide to a Fresh Marketing List](#)

Keep in mind that data hygiene is a continuous process, not a one-time thing.
Always go back to the 5 F's:

- **Find**
- **Fix**
- **Fill**
- **Fit**
- **Feed**

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Grab a copy of our FREE EBOOK, [Targeted B2B Marketing: Guide, Checklists, and Worksheets](#)! A comprehensive guide to targeted marketing to help organizations get in front of the **right people** at the **right time** through the **right channels** with the **right message** to influence a purchase.



[The 5 F's of Data Hygiene for Deeper Sales Conversations \[VIDEO\]](#)

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