

Contact data deduplication

Helping to deliver a single view of your customers and prevent duplicates at the point of data collection

Make the most of your contact database, detect multiple contact records and prevent future duplication with contact data deduplication

Improve business processes

Does your database contain duplicate records?

Ensuring that your database is free from duplicate contact records is an essential part of effective contact data management. To provide you with a single view of your customers, your organisation must aim to regularly remove duplicates in your existing database(s), and ensure that duplicate records are unable to enter your database from the outset.

Duplicate records present potential problems for both your organisation and those contacts held within your database. Your organisation may:

- Lose competitive advantage as business decisions are based on unreliable and inaccurate contact data
- Operate inefficiently by wasting revenue due to poor allocation of resources and lost productivity
- Have difficulty maintaining a single customer view (SCV)
- Not be compliant with industry regulations
- Receive reduced conversion on marketing campaign activity

Your customers and prospects may:

- Complain about receiving multiple mailings and ask to be removed from your database
- Develop a negative perception of your organisation and consider switching to a competitor

In order to make the most of your contact database, high levels of contact data accuracy and a single view of customers is essential

The benefits of detecting multiple contact records and preventing future duplication

Smoother business processes

Research shows, 56% of organisations said their main motivation for accurate data is to increase efficiency.¹ In recent research, 51% of all organisations cited duplicate data as the most common data error within businesses. This was cited as costing businesses upto 23% of revenue each year.² When repeated over time, this can become costly whilst also creating a security risk as sensitive data is sent off-site.

Managing your data in-house allows your organisation to retain control, whilst removing the need for you to send information off-site.

Better financial expenditure

Organisations waste an average of 19% revenue as a result of poor data.³ Removing duplicate contacts from your existing database, and preventing them from being added in the future, reduces wasted resource and helps maintain a competitive advantage over organisations without deduplication software.

Accurate decision-making

Intelligent business decisions can only be made if your organisation can work towards achieving a single view of existing or prospective customers. A clean and duplicate-free database will ensure confidence can be applied to a business decision based on the contact data held by your organisation.

Positive brand perception

Increased attention is being given to the impact of poor data on the environment, especially amongst the direct marketing community. Existing and prospective customers are now giving more consideration to how organisations manage the environmental implications of their operations.

Improved data quality

As part of any thorough contact data management strategy, deduplication techniques play a vital role in improving the overall quality levels of your contact data.

Methods of contact data deduplication

Varying deduplication techniques are available to organisations, principally in two streams; retrospective deduplication of existing database records, or prevention of duplicates at point of data collection. Both methods are equally important and can compliment each other if used simultaneously. The benefits of each are varied. Deduping at point of capture, for example, is valuable to organisations trying to reduce user time and duplication when collecting contact details. Technology to remove duplicates from existing data, on the other hand, will help during a data migration project or when comparing a bought in list to a current database.

Experian Data Quality software

Experian Data Quality provides an in-house software solution to assist with the management of duplicate contact records. The tool can work in real time at point of data collection to prevent duplicate contact records from entering your organisation's database from the outset. See (a) for a detailed explanation below.

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The tool can also help to remove existing duplicates from your database retrospectively by identifying and merging large volumes of records. See (b) for a detailed explanation below. These real-time and bulk modes of operation can be used together or independently of one another.

a) Preventing duplicates at the point of data collection

The product offers real-time duplication prevention at the point a person's contact details are entered into your database. This works by searching for a specified contact against your database. If an exact or similar record is found, the solution will return these records. This offers the option of selecting an existing contact record from within your database for editing, rather than risking a duplicate record being added.

How does real-time duplicate prevention work?

Step 1: A contact's details are searched for against your existing contact database.

Step 2: Deduplication will return the record that provides an exact match, or those that are a potential match. Matching rules can be tailored to prioritise certain fields of your choice within your database. For example, priority can be placed on a contact's name and postcode rather than the first line of their address or the town where they live.

Step 3: From the list returned, the user can confirm whether any of the records are a suitable match. Should a contact's records not be returned, or there are no matches from the list provided, a new record can be confidently added to the database.

b) Ongoing maintenance

Deduplication also allows customers to identify and merge duplicate contact records in bulk from their database on a regular basis. This can be done by deduping a single file or database, or by comparing two files or databases for similar or identical records.

How does bulk matching and merging work?

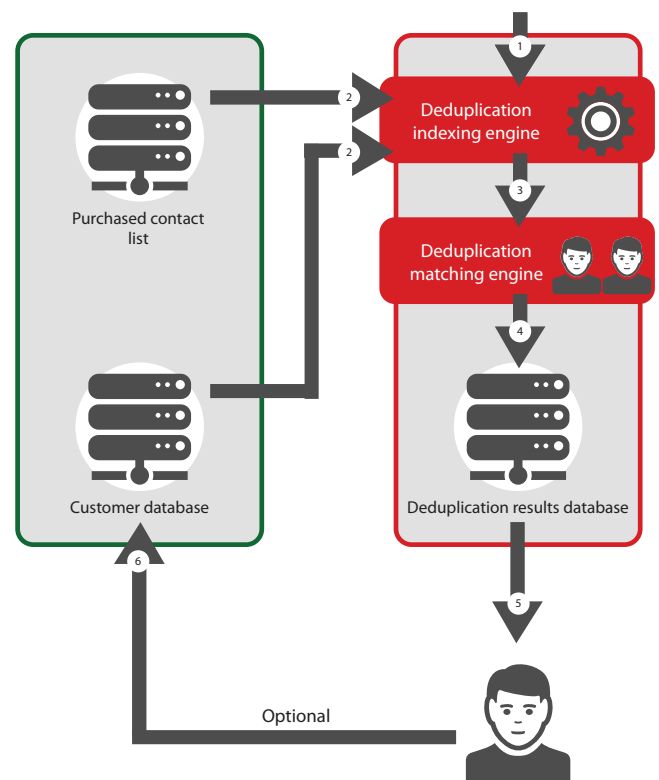
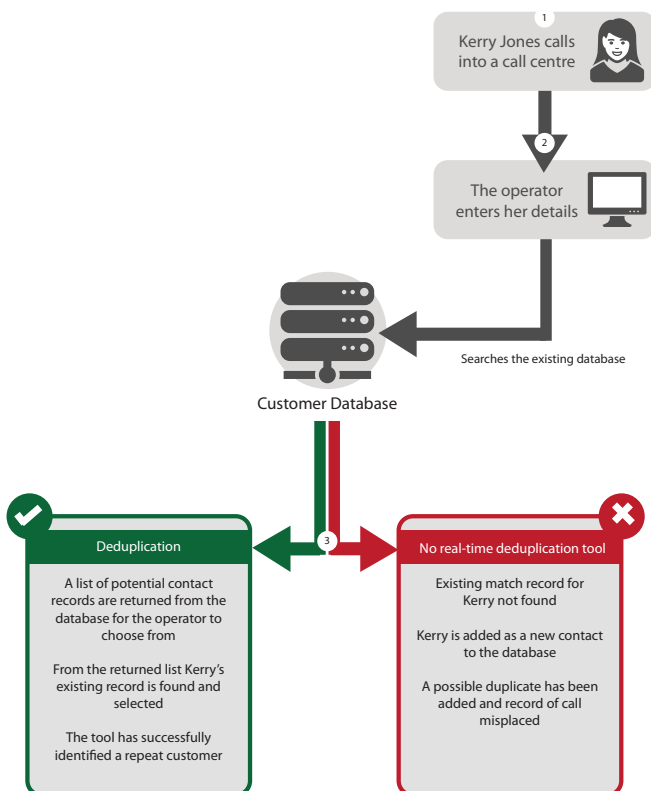
Step 1: Deduplication has its own index engine that takes a copy of the source data, either in an existing customer database or other database or purchased contact list.

Step 2: It then uses a matching engine to identify duplicate records in the source data, based on your desired matching rules. If the user has also specified merging rules, duplicate records are also merged together to form a single, more complete record.

Step 3: The results from the duplicate identification process are then stored in a results database where the user can choose to export either:

- The unique, merged records (to keep)
- The duplicates found (to flag or remove)
- The groups of records identified as duplicates of each other prior to merging
- Records not belonging to a group of duplicates

Step 4: From the list of exported results, the user can choose to keep the records, remove them from the database, or flag them as duplicates.



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Working alongside other Experian Data Quality products and services

The deduplication tool's real-time API can be integrated alongside other Experian Data Quality products such as address data capture software or Gateway. Whether your contact data is sourced from your gazetteer using Gateway, or from Royal Mail's Postcode Address File (PAF) via the address capture, results can be fed straight into the deduplication tool. This ensures contact data is accurate and correctly formatted at point of collection. If you're already using deduplication to prevent multiple entries going into your system, you can reuse the same matching rules or define separate ones to identify duplicates in bulk and ensure the ongoing maintenance of good data quality.

Integration

Deduplication is a flexible software tool that can be installed for users both as a desktop application and integrated into your systems for automation. With the help of Professional Services, integrations can be tailored to your specific requirements. Deduplication is available on a variety of Windows operating platforms. Deduplication can be integrated into existing CRM systems and partner integrations such as Siebel, SAP or Oracle with assistance from the Professional Services team. In addition to helping with the installation and configuration of the deduplication tool, Professional Services can also help you to design and implement a full Single Customer View solution.

Professional Services

The Professional Services team can advise on all data issues and offer solutions to minimise risk and reduce implementation time. They provide invaluable advice and support to ensure you get the most from your investment. Professional Services will work with you to:

- Produce a data quality strategy and associated plan of action for the ongoing improvement of your data
- Provide a free audit of your database(s) to help you understand your data better
- Reduce integration time
- Ensure a high return on investment
- Significantly reduce reliance on external experts for future maintenance and enhancement of your systems