Celebrating **30** Years

Melissa Data
Magazine

⚠ WARNING:

Dirty Data Is Killing Your Sales & Marketing Efforts

A 4-Step Checklist to Clean Up Your Data

Direct Mail: The Walking Dead?
Don't count direct mail out - make it part of your marketing mix

MELISSA DATA Magazine

Cover Story

04

WARNING: Dirty Data Is Killing Your Sales & Marketing Efforts

A 4-Step Checklist to Clean Up Your Data

by Abby Telleria

Direct Marketers ♡ Heart Melissa.

At 30, Melissa is still turning heads. Why do direct marketers find Melissa so alluring? Because no one does clean data like Melissa.

Melissa offers powerful data quality tools to help organizations clean customer and prospect information to improve and maintain communications, achieve higher response rates, and ensure timely deliveries – all while reducing costs. Melissa knows that without accurate contact data, it's a challenge to target and communicate with the right audience.

Melissa is Melissa Data – a global organization of over 120 dedicated employees lead by a senior management team with over 100 years of combined experience in contact data quality. We understand that the issue of poor data quality knows no geographic boundaries. That's why we provide support through our local offices in the U.S., Germany, the U.K., India, and Australia.

And, we strive to always meet or exceed your expectations:

- **We offer unlimited technical support**
- **A 120-day return on investment (ROI) guarantee, or your money back**
- **The most flexible, affordable set of smart, sharp contact data tools**
- **A consultative approach to data quality problems big and small**

We've seen the heyday of direct mail, the rise of omnichannel marketing, the explosion of big data, and the ascent of social media. No matter where or when the next data-driven evolution happens, we'll always be committed to helping companies – domestically and internationally – clean and maintain the highest quality data.

WARNING:
Dirty Data Is Killing Your Sales & Marketing Efforts

A 4-Step Checklist to Clean Up Your Data

By Abby Telleria, *Senior Writer*

Response rates are low. Leads aren't pouring in. Sales are down. Phones aren't ringing. On top of it, you've got returned mail. Does this sound familiar?

Dirty data could be killing your sales and marketing efforts. It's critical to get a jump-start on cleaning it up, before it wreaks havoc in your database.

Dirty data comes in many forms: inaccurate, outdated addresses; a letter or punctuation mark omitted from an email address; phone numbers missing an area code;

duplicate records; etc. What might seem a minor detail can really tarnish your organization down the line. Bad data can lead to undeliverable mail, increased operational costs, low customer retention, poor decisions … the list goes on. In fact, poor data quality costs businesses more than $600 billion each year, according to The Data Warehousing Institute (TDWI).

There's no better time than right now to start cleaning your data – before your next initiatives and campaigns are underway – and keep it going.

By correcting and removing dirty contact data, you will achieve better response rates, enhance your ability to nurture and maintain customer relationships, save money on direct mail and shipping costs, and speed up postal processing and deliveries.

Here is an easy, 4-step checklist to clear out the clutter and put an end to dirty data:

Cleaning Tip:
Clean Contacts

Employ Melissa Data's Listware to verify, correct, and standardize name, address, phone, and email information – all in one powerful, easy-to-use application. Listware can be used in Microsoft Excel®, Salesforce, and in the Cloud.

Step 1 >> Scrub and Sanitize Bad Data

The first step to cleaning your database is to get your contact data in tip top shape: name, address, phone, and email information. It's the single best way to improve your communication and engagement efforts across all customer touchpoints.

Address

Invalid and out-of-date addresses are lurking in your system – caused by data entry errors including typos and misspellings, or forgetting to include the correct ZIP Code™ or suite number, as well as data decay. Your data degrades over time as individuals move, get married, buy their first house, change jobs, retire, or get divorced. This stale and out-of-date data affects the accuracy and usefulness of data used for communications, analytics, and compliance.

By verifying and standardizing your contact's address information (in real-time at point of entry, and then periodically in batch), you can protect your organization against fraud, waste, and excess mailing costs.

The
DIRTY Little Secret of
BAD DATA

Bad data is costing you more than you think. Consider the 💵 "1-10-100 Rule" 💵 that states it takes $1 to verify the accuracy of a customer record at point-of-entry, $10 to clean it in batch form, and $100 per record if nothing is done at all, including the costs associated with **undeliverable shipments**, **poor customer satisfaction**, and **unsuccessful direct marketing initiatives**. Bottom line – it'll cost you more *not* to have a solution in place.

Email

With the advent of email marketing, many direct marketers saw it as a bonanza – cheap and easy. But sending email campaigns is not "costless" and there are risks. Take for example invalid or out-of-date email addresses. Send to a list that has too many of these, it can land your email in spam folders, get your domain blacklisted by email providers, and harm your sender reputation.

You can avoid blacklists by utilizing an email address verification solution that will validate and standardize email addresses to improve the reliability of your contact information. Using an email change-of-address solution will also help you identify and update email addresses that are inactive or have bounced back. By utilizing these two email solutions, you can reconnect with lost customers and reduce costs associated with invalid or inactive emails.

Phone

Area code splits and overlays – as well as valid-looking phone numbers that aren't callable – can be troublesome and lead to inefficiencies in telemarketing. Use a phone verification solution that will verify phone numbers, update area codes, and identify numbers as business, residential, landline, VOIP, and cell phone. By getting more information on each number, you will know when and how to call your prospects – significantly improving your telemarketing efforts.

Name

By verifying and standardizing your contact names – for instance, correcting misspelled names like "Jonh" to "John" – you can better identify the gender makeup of your database and make a better first impression.

Knowing who and what gender your customers are greatly aids in analytics, ad targeting, and user segmentation, and in turn, improves response and customer satisfaction. The more you know about them, the easier it is to target your customers with appropriate offers.

A list of standardized names will also help with your deduplication efforts, as it puts the names in a consistent format, allowing you to more easily identify duplicate records.

Poor data quality is the main reason for 40 percent of all failed business initiatives, according to a Gartner, Inc. study.

Cleaning Tip:
Dedupe Records

Melissa Data's MatchUp® wipes out duplicates using deep domain-specific knowledge and fuzzy matching logic.

MatchUp in SQL Server can merge multiple records into one "Golden Record." A Golden Record is the best and most accurate record in a group of duplicates.

Undeliverable-as-addressed (UAA) mail costs direct mailers over $6 billion per year. –DM News

Cleaning Tip:
Move Update

Implementing change-of-address processing to regularly update your contact data will reduce and prevent undeliverable mail. Use Listware to update your database with current addresses of families and businesses that have moved, to qualify for postal discounts and reduce waste associated with undeliverable mail.

Step 2 >> Wipe Out The Duplicate Grime

It's important to pay extra attention to cleaning those trouble spots – namely, duplicate records.

Duplicates cost you money. An estimated 10 percent of names and addresses in an average database are duplicate records. That means that if your list contains 10,000 records, with production and postage costs averaging 83 cents per piece – your total mailing costs would be $8,300. So if 10 percent of your list is made up of duplicates, you are wasting $830 every time you mail – a huge blow to your bottom line.

And, duplicates prevent you from getting a single view of your customer which is necessary for accurate analytics, segmentation, and targeted marketing.

Consolidating duplicate records into one master or "golden" record – a process known as survivorship – will help you truly understand your customers and base your marketing efforts on accurate information.
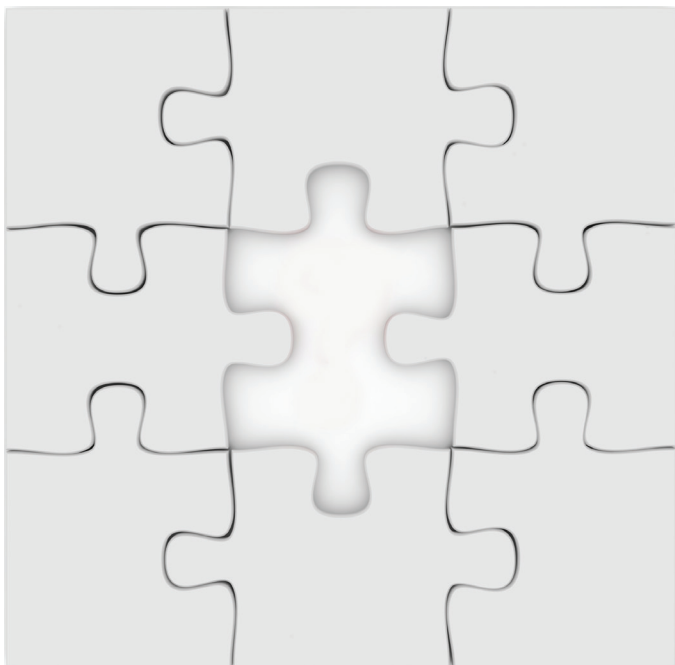
STEP 3>> Refresh Addresses With The Most Up-To-Date Info

Undeliverable mail would make any direct marketer cringe. It means that your message failed to reach your intended recipient. The downsides – lost time and money, and wasted materials such as printing, postage, and labor.

The direct costs of UAA mail are the costs associated with producing and mailing the ultimately wasted mail piece. A First-Class™ mail piece (one ounce letter) costs $0.38 at the 5-digit presort rate category. If you mail 25,000 pieces and 7,000 are undeliverable as addressed – your business wasted $2,660 in postage alone.

Add to that the costs to create and print the mail piece – the picture is more grim. For instance, if it cost $1.10 to design and print the letter, and 7,000 pieces never get to the right people – that's an additional loss of $5,500 in marketing costs above and beyond the wasted postage, for a total loss of about $8,160.

There is a solution – move updating your data. This process allows you to update your contact records with the most current address for a person or business, and reduce wasted printing and postage associated with undeliverable mail.

Cleaning Tip:
Complete Contacts

Listware adds valuable demographic and property information to your data. Get access to comprehensive property and mortgage data culled from over 140 million records.

STEP 4>> Recharge Your Data With Missing Information

Marketers can go a step beyond data cleansing and enrich the value of their database by adding critical pieces of information, such as email addresses, phone numbers, plus demographic, lifestyle, and geographic data (latitude and longitude coordinates).

Adding vital demographic information helps you gain deeper insight into customers to help understand who they are, where they live, their likes and dislikes – in order to have a successful targeted marketing campaign. Demographics help narrow down the field by selecting such specifics as marital status, household income, occupation, and more.

Now's a better time than ever to get a jump-start on cleaning your data. With contact data that is clean, updated, and enriched – marketers can better optimize their campaigns, increase deliverability, improve communications and response rates, and ultimately position their company for continued growth.

Clean Data Helps Nonprofit Flourish

About Altapass

The mission of the Altapass Foundation, Inc. is to preserve the history, heritage and culture of the Blue Ridge Mountains; protect the underlying orchard land with its apples, wetlands, butterflies, and other natural features; and educate the public about the Appalachian experience.

The ORCHARD at ALTAPASS
Saving the Good Stuff
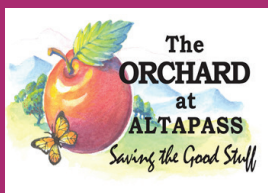
• **Company**

Altapass Foundation, Inc., a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit

• **Challenge**

The Altapass Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation of the land, history, and culture of the southern Blue Ridge Mountains. Located in western North Carolina, the Altapass Foundation operates the Historic Orchard at Altapass. The foundation hosts many public activities, and has a large contact database that dates back more than 10 years. This was one of the foundation's biggest issues – outdated contact data.

Another challenge – many of its members do not have email, so the foundation relied heavily on sending traditional mail to reach them.

"Every mailing resulted in a significant number of returned mail items," said Michele Williams, executive director of Altapass. In order to successfully reach its members, the foundation needed to update its database.

In the past, the foundation searched for an affordable address verification and correction solution that fits their budget, but would always turn up short. "Every so often, I looked for products to help us keep our database up to date, but until now, I was unable to find software that was affordable for a small nonprofit," Williams explained.

The foundation also needed a solution that would work seamlessly in Excel, as most of its contact information was stored in Microsoft® Excel. "I had already exported our database to Excel, so for us, it was a no-brainer," Williams noted.

• Solution

Williams discovered Melissa Data's Listware for Excel add-in, a data enrichment tool that integrates directly into Excel.

What drew her to Listware was its affordability. "With Listware for Excel, the cost is based on the amount of data, and the rates are very affordable. For about $100, I was able to process over 10,000 names, addresses, and phone numbers," she said.

With information from a large multisourced database, Listware for Excel allows users to verify, correct, and update their contact data. Listware returns the current addresses of individuals or businesses that have moved, and can even process records that date back more than 10 years – a critical function Altapass needed.

Listware also goes beyond simple data validation by cross-referencing if a name corresponds to an address, email, and phone data. This gives an organization the confidence knowing that all data touch points are associated with a contact.

• Results

What Williams liked the most about Listware was not just its affordability, but its ease of use. Listware for Excel allows you to simply select a table or range of records in a worksheet to clean your data.

"I gave [Listware] a try, testing it on known cases. It is very easy to use and it worked perfectly," Williams said. "[I was able to] process all of our database entries. I now have the data I need to ensure that our database is accurate."

After using Listware, the foundation saw a dramatic drop in returned mail.

Williams said, "After running our database through Listware, I mailed postcards to over 400 people with whom we had not had contact for four to eight years. Only one postcard was returned!"

DIRECT MAIL: THE WALKING DEAD

Like a Zombie, it Keeps Coming Back – and Still Delivers

If I told you that 65 percent of consumers made a purchase as a direct result of this marketing medium – what would you think? What if I told you that this platform is direct mail? That's right, direct mail. The one thing you're probably not doing.

In the days of mad tweeting, blogging, Facebooking – it's hard to believe that what's still considered a "dinosaur" in the marketing world by some – is basically gold sitting in your customer's mailbox.

According to a survey conducted by Target Marketing Magazine, direct mail is the one channel that delivered the strongest ROI for customer acquisition for B2C marketers, and scored the highest for customer contact and retention.

In fact, J.C. Penney recently announced it would bring back its print catalog after being dormant for five years. According to a recent article on NPR, a spokesperson for the retail giant says the catalog is making a comeback because of its popularity with customers, and its ability to drive traffic to its online site and its stores.

So why not add direct mail to your online engagement strategy? With email inboxes full, and traditional mail volumes down, you have an even greater chance of getting your message noticed by your prospects and customers.

According to a report from the Direct Marketing Association (DMA), response rates for direct mail to an existing customer average 3.4 percent, stating that while direct mail costs are higher, the cost per lead and cost per sale across direct mail, email, and paid search are about equal.

Simply put – people still genuinely like to receive and read mail.

By integrating direct mail into your omnichannel efforts, you can get more eyes on your company's brand, and then drive home your message with a follow-up email campaign. It's a one-two-punch.

According to the study by the Harvard Business Review, when both channels are used together, the response rate is 25 percent, an uptick of 1 percent had it been a solo direct mail project.

And the same goes on an international scale. A recent study by Royal Mail's research agency, Quadrangle, reports larger increases in customer engagement through the use of both mediums together. The report states a 13 percent uplift on driving consumers to a website; a 22 percent uplift on a purchase; and a 34 percent uplift on using a coupon.

Without a doubt, while both mediums are effective on their own, using them together as part of an overall integrated campaign can significantly boost customer loyalty and ultimately, drive more sales.

The Future of Direct Mail

According to consulting firm, Winterberry Group, direct mail spending is said to have surpassed $44 billion in 2014. And it stands to grow even more this year, especially with the rise of new and innovative technologies.

These up-and-coming technologies allow marketers to add more of the wow factor to their direct mail campaigns, and actually extend its shelf life. For example, most marketers combine their direct mail efforts with mobile phone technology such as QR codes or SnapTag (a barcode similar to QR codes) to direct consumers to landing pages with relevant information.

Some take it a step further with the use of augmented reality (AR), which allows marketers to tie in a direct mail piece with video or computer-generated 3D graphics to improve engagement through a more personalized and compelling digital experience – think virtual shopping trip or game.

Another technology – near field communication (NFC), the wireless touch-to-transfer technology – will help direct mail remain a relevant marketing vehicle in the years to come.

It would enable marketers to deliver content through an NFC chip, so when a user touches a smartphone to marketing collateral – there's an instant connection.

Direct mail will continue to be a workhorse for generating leads, traffic, and sales, while your other media will help drive interest and awareness.

Getting Started

So, whether you currently use direct mail (or are considering it), contact us to learn how our tools can help you get the most out of your campaigns. A successful direct mail effort starts with a clean and up-to-date mailing list, personalizing your mail, and knowing exactly who to target with valuable demographic information.

To get a jump-start on your direct mail efforts, call our data quality experts at 1-800-MELISSA (635-4772).
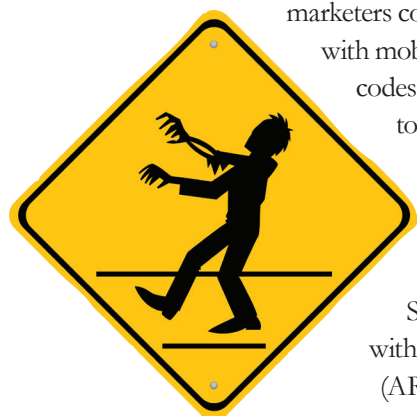
Solutions Spotlight

Data Quality Solutions

Listware® - All-in-One Global Data Cleansing Software

Listware is the all-in-one data cleansing tool that cleans and enriches the global and domestic contact information in your list. It checks, verifies, and updates names, addresses, phone numbers, and emails. Listware also:

- **Adds missing names, addresses, phones, and emails to your records**
- **Appends valuable demographic and property info, lat/long coordinates**
- **Returns the current address of residents and businesses that have moved**
- **Auto-completes and verifies U.S. and global addresses**

Listware can be used in **Microsoft® Excel®**, **Salesforce®**, and **in the Cloud**. Improve customer communications and complete your database for better omnichannel marketing.

### MAILERS+4® - Postal Automation Software

MAILERS+4 is an affordable, easy-to-use postal automation software program that verifies and standardizes addresses to increase mail deliverability at the lowest postal rates.

- **Verifies and corrects delivery address elements with CASS Certified™ engine**
- **Standardizes addresses to USPS® specs**
- **Adds missing postal data like ZIP+4® codes, carrier route numbers, delivery points**
- **Presorts your mailings for automation and nonautomation rate discounts**
- **Performs real-time USPS® NCOA^Link® Move-Update processing**
- **Eliminates duplicate records**
- **Appends residential suite and apt numbers**
- **Access to email and phone append services and targeted mailing lists**

MatchUp® - Record Matching & Deduplication Software

MatchUp is a powerful advanced matching tool to help identify the most difficult-to-detect duplicate records – giving your organization the most accurate, unified view of your customers. A critical feature for direct marketers is MatchUp's householding functionality that allows you to group all members of a household as one. This will prevent duplicate mailings to the same household and save on costs and your reputation.
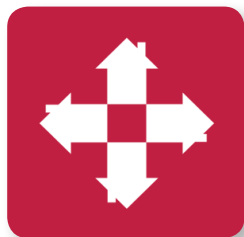
SmartMover® - Change of Address

Use Melissa Data's SmartMover service to get the new addresses of your customers and reduce wasted materials and postage associated with undeliverable mail. Our service:

- **Compares your mailing list records to more than 160 million address changes in the USPS NCOA^{Link} database filed over the last 48 months**

Melissa Data also offers Canadian National Change of Address processing for the most accurate information on changes of address filed by Canadian households and businesses over the previous 72 months. Available in **Listware**, in the Cloud, or as a Service Bureau.

Data Enhancement Services

Email, Phone, & Demographic Append

Add valid consumer and business email addresses and phone numbers, plus demographics to your database to increase the effectiveness of your omnichannel marketing efforts. Available in **Listware** or as a Service Bureau.

Mailing Lists

Mailing Lists

We offer mailing lists and sales leads for your targeted marketing efforts. Choose from our popular lists like:

- **Saturation – Select from more than 142 million U.S. addresses**
- **New Mover – Over 100,000 records added weekly**
- **Consumer – Nearly 200 million households nationwide**
- **Property Owner – Choose from absentee owners; property value; mortgage amount; and more**
- **Business – Over 14 million businesses to choose from**

We also offer specialty mailing lists including:

- **Bankruptcy – Over 120 million records**
- **Auto Owner – Compiled using multiple sources**
- **Pre-Mover – Over 500,000 records, biweekly updates**

Our mailing lists come with a low price and deliverability guarantee. We'll beat any competitor's price on any online list (specialty lists excluded.)

Are you a high volume list buyer or broker?

You might want to try our LeadGen Xpress, our collection of cloud-based and APIs that can be integrated into your custom applications and used to get counts and pull lists for internal or retail use.

Consulting Services

We'll help you evaluate the quality of your data and develop customized solutions to boost marketing performance. We'll work with you to put the right services in place to maximize postal discounts and eliminate waste and undeliverable mail. Find out how our experts can help ensure you have data you can trust for every need – every time.

Clean Your Data Before It Kills Your Campaigns!

Take the first step — test your data now

The initial step to get your database in order is to first know how good or bad your data is. **Let us analyze a sample of your contact data for free**.

Get Started Now!
Call 1-800-MELISSA (635-4772)

We'll give you a detailed analysis of how your data looks right now!