

A 4-Step Guide to Database Maintenance



All databases require extra care and regular maintenance. Thirty percent of data, especially email addresses, decays every month, with This is mainly due to frequent change in job roles, changing of jobs and moving places.

Here are 4 pointers that will help you keep your database updated and squeaky clean at all times.

1. **Include all the core fields** in your database. Database experts identify the following as core fields:

First name | Last name | Company | Position | Address | City | State | Zip | Day phone | Fax number | Email address

2. **Add sub-fields** as well. The sub-fields generally refer to categories that are unique to each record within that database. For example, a company's sales figures will be a sub-field in a B2B database.

3. **Get rid of all the duplicate records** in your database. You can employ software for weeding out the dupes in the databases.

However, all the applications are not 100% accurate every time and a manual check-up might be needed at the final stage. You can sort the information by various fields to find the duplicates. The most common of all the duplicate searches are:

- ✓ Same first name and last name and company name
- ✓ Same last name and company name
- ✓ Same first name and company name

Each of these types of duplicates can be removed from the database and you will be left with just unique records.

Clean your databases once in every 30 days to be free from duplicate records.

4. **Verify** - Verification also plays an important part in updating your databases. Experts opine that marketers should adopt a 2-way strategy to verify their database listings. This refers to verifying listings through email and telephone both.

Once the database is compiled, it should be checked if the contacts fall into the 'Do Not Call' category. If yes, they should be removed immediately from the master database. Here is the two-fold process for verification:

- ✓ Through Email

Send an email asking for the recipients' permission and preferences. The hard-bounces should be taken care of and those contacts be removed from the database within 10 business days.

- ✓ Through Phone

This stage is crucial as it serves as a source of first hand information and also helps to gather a lot of additional information about the prospects.

Once all the prospects are called and their contacts verified, the database is now ready for use.

Maintaining a business database is an ongoing process and Needs to be done throughout the life cycle of your business. A proper maintenance of your business database can:

- ✓ Reduce the number of spam complaints against you and improve your brand's reputation
- ✓ Get you instant analysis of how your database is performing and help you fix those glitches
- ✓ Get you verified opt-in contacts to achieve better response from your campaigns

A regular cleansing process for your database is definitely a must for your business and to turn the sales wheel. If you need help in maintaining your database, we can help.

