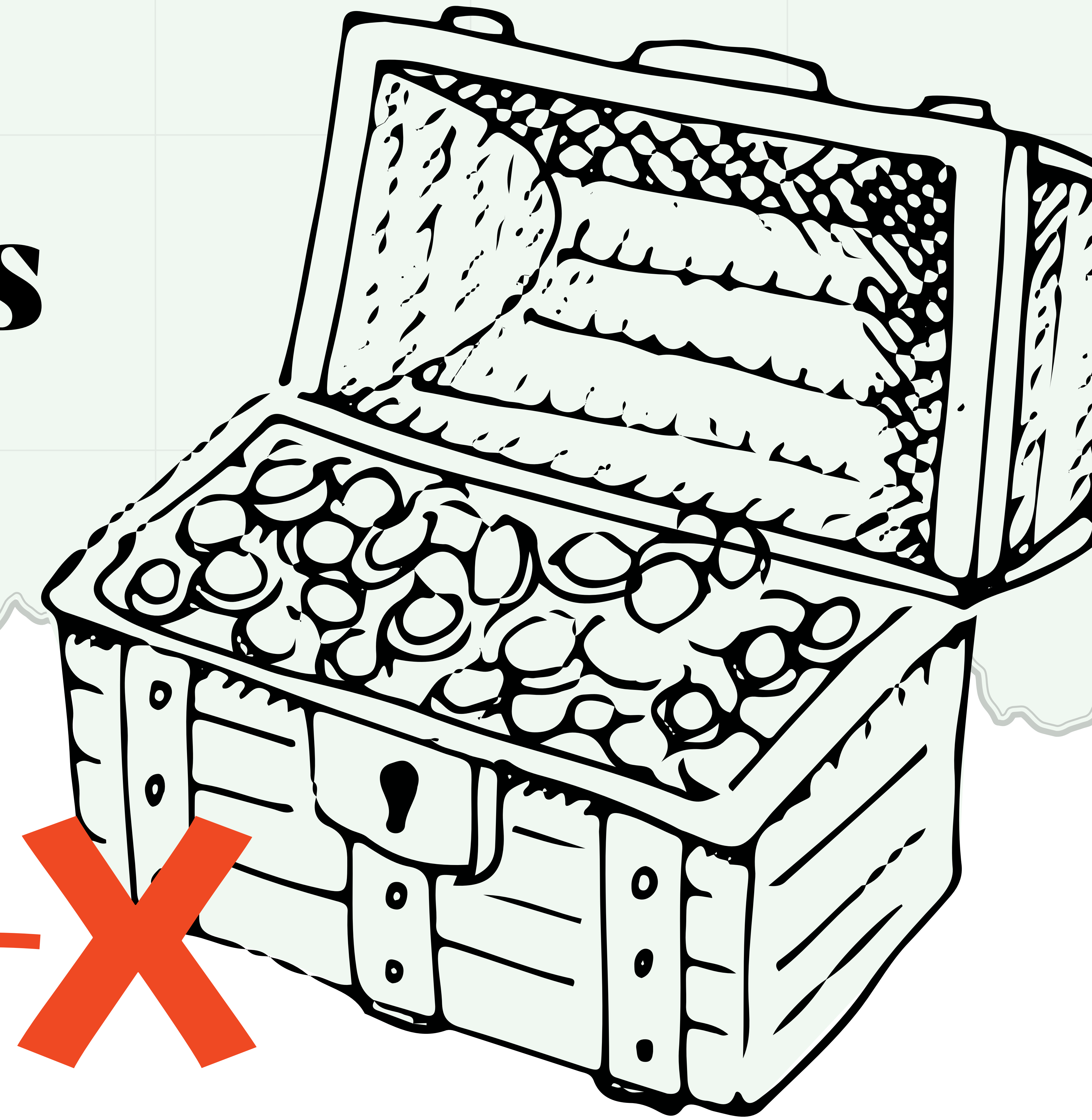
7 Ways CRM Data Sabotages Sales and Marketing Teams

Your Guide to Finding Lost CRM Treasure



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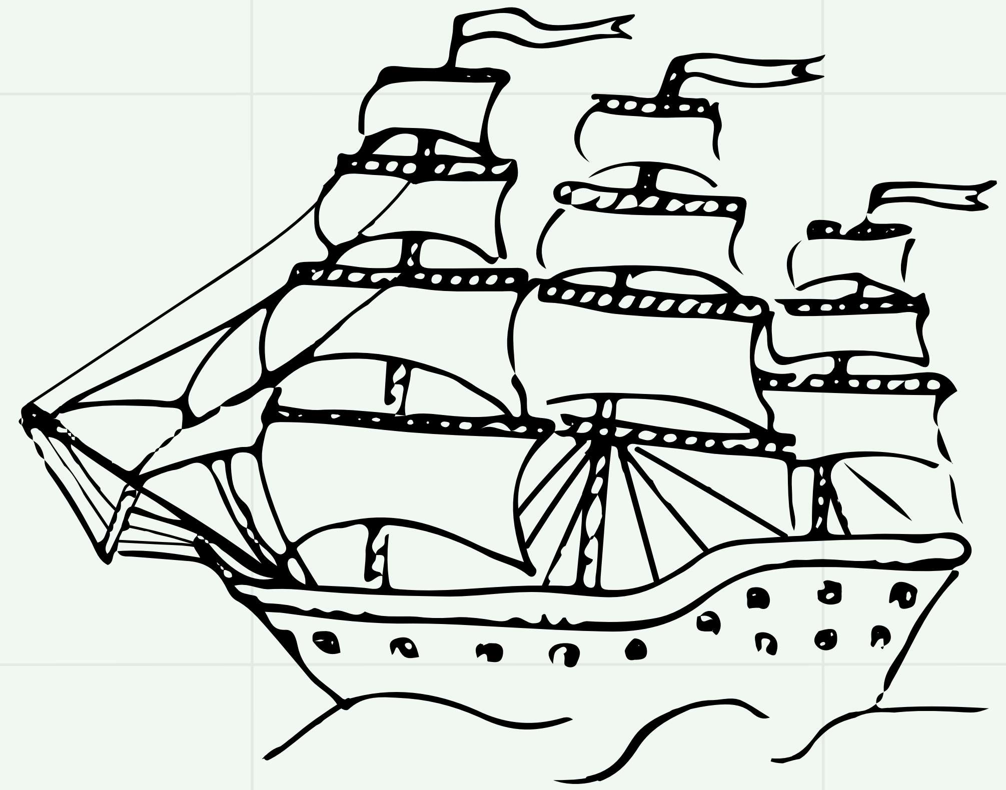
Treasure Map



Ahoy!

Treasure. It's what keeps businesses—including every well-managed pirate enterprise—afloat.

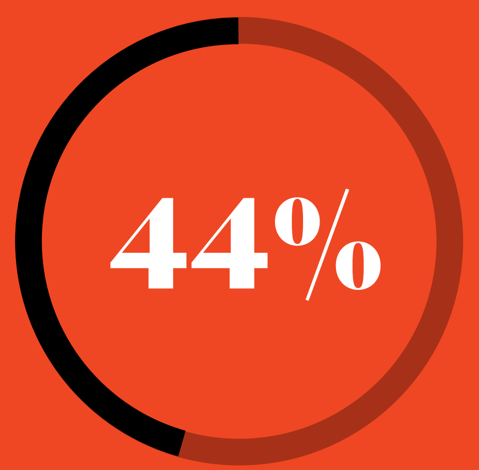
For sales and marketing teams, this treasure isn't golden goblets or pearls. It's the data sitting in their customer relationship management (CRM) system.

While a little less shiny, CRM data is invaluable for its ability to guide smart, revenue-driving business decisions.

There's just one problem: Too many organizations turn a blind eye (or a blind eyepatch) to data quality issues that make this resource less valuable.

When low-quality data seeps into the CRM, forecasts are off, quotas aren't met, departments blame each other, and nobody wins—least of all the organization. Overnight, these data issues become a hole in the boat that most teams don't see until their business starts taking on water.

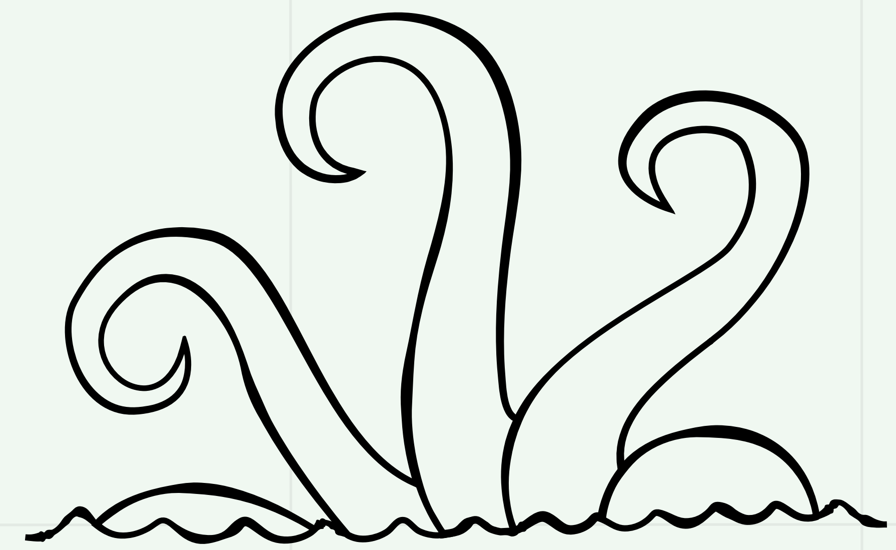
Ignoring these problems will cost you more than just a few doubloons: **According to Validity research, 44 percent of businesses say low-quality CRM data costs them over 10 percent of annual revenue.**



How can sales and marketing professionals recover this lost CRM treasure?

Consider this guide your treasure map. Hoist anchor and raise the black sails: We're setting off to explore the types of CRM data issues that have the most impact on sales and marketing teams, and the quickest ways to resolve them.

1 Duplicates



Duplicates: For CRM users, they're the most fearsome foe across all seven seas.

When duplicate records lurk in the database, they can lead to resource inefficiencies and customer experiences that stink like day-old fish.

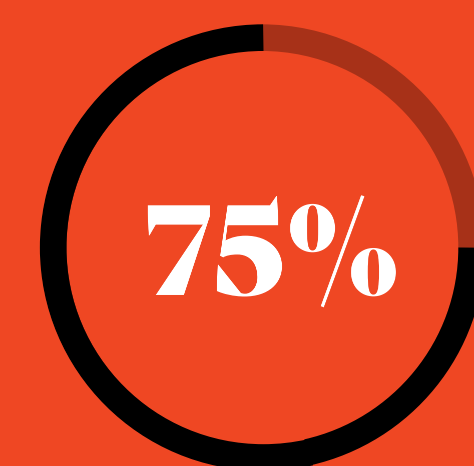
Here are just a few ways duplicates sink sales and marketing performance:

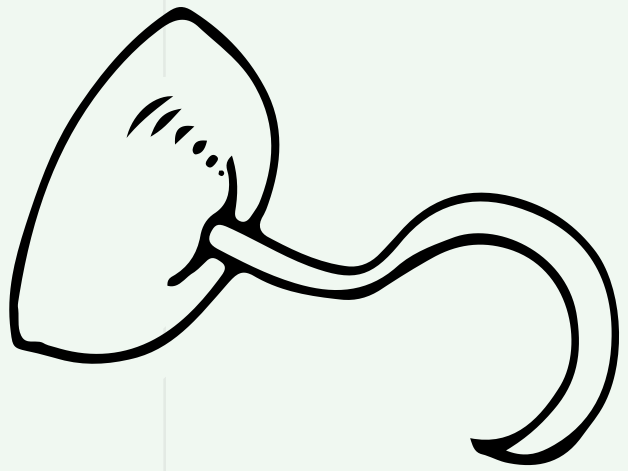
+ Customers and prospects are contacted by multiple sales representatives from your company
+ Forecasts are off because they aren't based on accurate totals
+ Customers and prospects receive the same campaign emails twice
+ Sales reps waste time and money pursuing the same leads

Shiver me timbers is right.

Customers and prospects want to feel understood and appreciated by your company. And employees want to feel like their time is valued—or they might just jump ship. According to a study from Validity, a mutinous 64 percent of CRM users would consider leaving their current roles if leadership doesn't invest in a data quality plan.

According to a study from Validity, 75% of CRM users said duplicate and/or inadequate outreach driven by low-quality data loses their company customers.





2 Malformed content

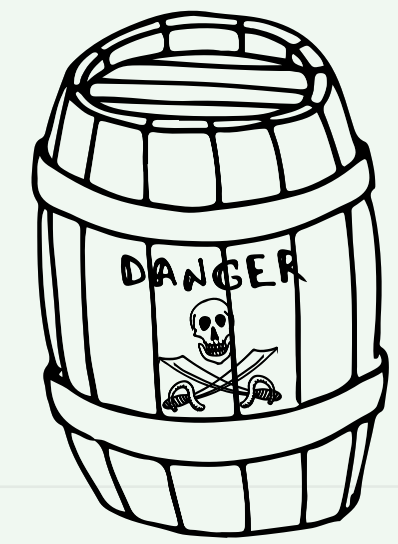
Trying to engage a prospect armed with malformed content is like sword fighting with a hook for a hand—it just won't end well.

Malformed content includes data values that are unusable or corrupt, like phone numbers with one too many numbers or errors that prevent certain records from populating in a search.

Malformed content in a contact field can prevent sales reps from following up on hot leads in a timely manner—or at all. Before you know it, promising deals go straight to Davy Jones' Locker.

Say a whale of a client's subscription-based services are about to expire. Simple data entry mistakes can prevent that client from appearing in a search that identifies who should receive renewal reminders that month. So, you're slow to start the renewal conversation—and inadvertently leave the door open for other pirates to stake their claim.

3 Invalid, risky, and undeliverable emails



Sales and marketing teams who blindly trust the email addresses in their CRM can quickly end up on stormy seas.

It's easy for invalid addresses to sneak into your database due to simple typos—like if a customer enters "gmal.com" instead of "gmail.com" on a web form.

This data quality issue also includes the following types of email addresses:

+ **Latent:** Email accounts that belong to real pirates but haven't been used for a long time.
+ **Spam traps:** The Kraken of the email world. Spam traps are email addresses purposely created to identify senders who don't follow list hygiene and permission best practices. While their intent is to stop spammers, a legitimate organization may inadvertently add spam traps to their database by purchasing lists or merging databases with partners.
+ **Catch-all:** Also known as an "accept all" alias email. Typically created by organizations to capture emails sent to any invalid address on their domain.
+ **Role-based addresses:** Usually set up to manage an organization's generic inquiries, like addresses that start with marketing@ or info@. These emails may be distributed to various individuals across different departments. Sending emails to these addresses can be problematic, as they'll generally result in high complaint rates and unsubscribes.
+ **Temporary or disposable addresses:** Users who don't want to share their primary emails may create temporary or disposable addresses to share with companies or use as a go-to address to request content. While temporary addresses may be valid for a brief period of time, they typically become invalid quickly.

Sales and marketing teams rely heavily on the email channel—so it's important to confirm every email address in your database is valid and deliverable. Emails that don't reach their intended audience won't just waste your team's time: They'll also lead to high bounce rates, increased spam folder placement, and damage to your sender reputation. (For pirates, a bad reputation is a total career boost. For email senders, not so much.)

Take heed, me hearties:

Email lists naturally decay by about 20-30% every year, making ongoing data quality monitoring a must.

4 Missing engagement points

Teams need a complete, crow's-nest view of engagement points like names, phone numbers, email addresses, and billing addresses to engage with customers and prospects effectively.

When records lack key engagement points, even the best sales and marketing mateys miss opportunities to communicate effectively with clients, nurture leads, increase demand, and prevent customer churn. For example, some contacts may be unresponsive to phone calls and prefer to do business over email, or vice versa. Some may prefer a good old-fashioned message in a bottle. Failure to collect multiple contact options severely hurts your chances of closing the deal.

A booming 56% of Validity survey respondents said missing or incomplete data "severely impacts" their ability to fully leverage the CRM.

5 Missing business segmentation data

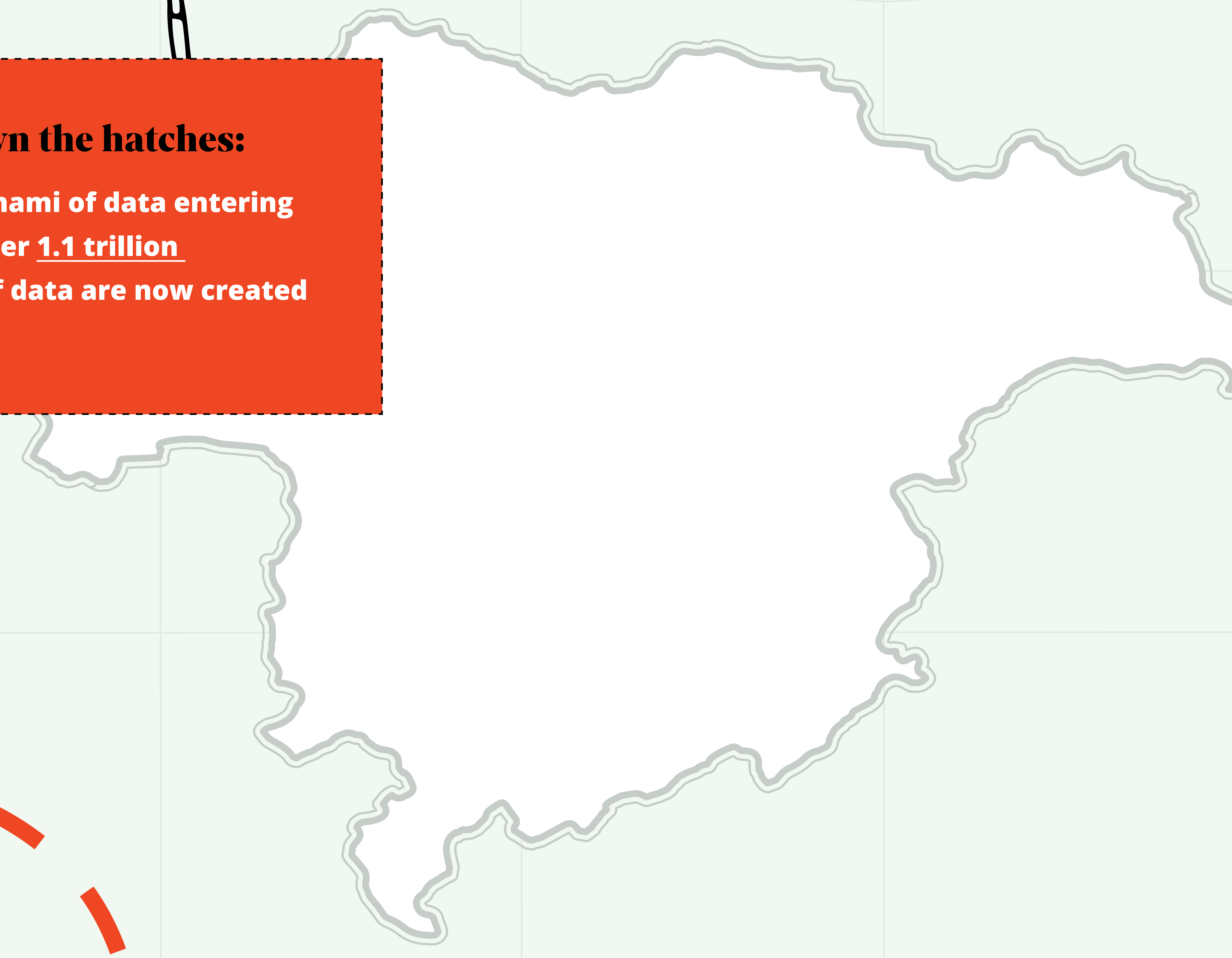
Got your sea legs yet? We're halfway there.

Business segmentation data, like a contact's job title, an organization's size and industry, and the opportunity size and probability, informs sales targeting and segmented marketing campaigns. Failure to collect the data needed to qualify leads delays the sales cycle or halts it altogether while sales operations fixes the data—at which point prospects might just say yo-ho-*no thank you* to continuing a conversation.

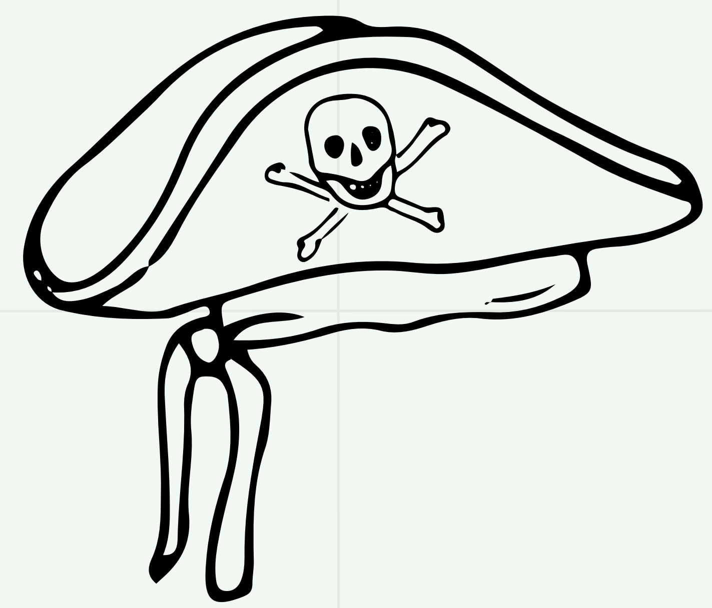
Business segmentation data is also important to help assign account ownership. For example, if accounts are assigned to sales reps based on business size, vertical, or persona, sales leaders need this information to put leads in the right hands.

Batten down the hatches:

There's a tsunami of data entering your CRM. Over 1.1 trillion megabytes of data are now created every *day*.



6 Incomplete decision support data



How do top-performing pirates decide which villages to pillage or enemy ships to attack? They start by collecting solid intel. Successful sales and marketing professionals must do the same by reviewing decision support data before pursuing leads.

Decision support data is classification data that informs how to engage with and manage prospects and customers. For sales, these classification details are used as qualifiers for forecasting and pipeline management. Without this information, it's harder for sales ops and leadership to make decisions, including whether to qualify certain records as leads and what expected value to assign to each opportunity.

7

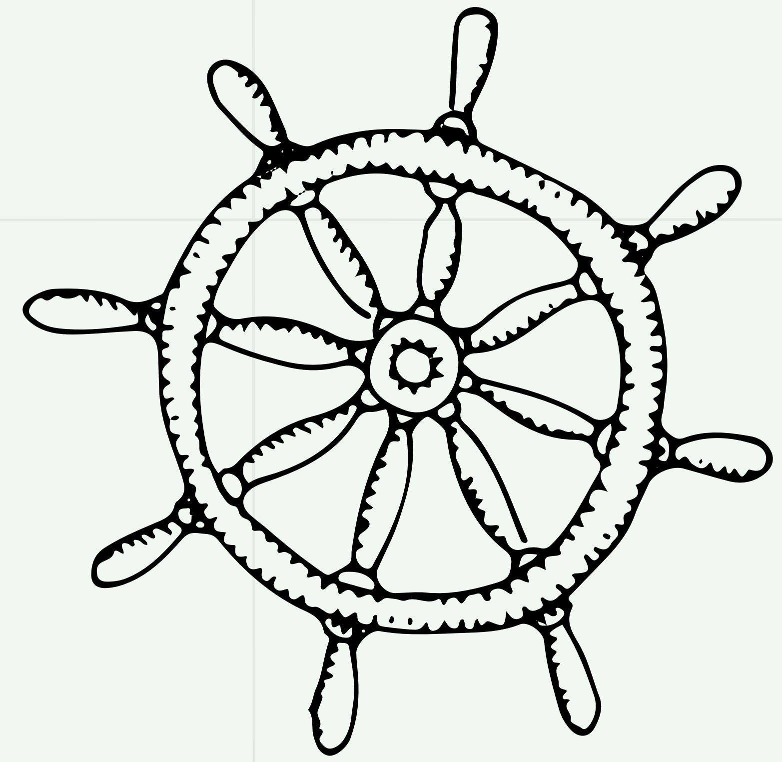
Unnecessary data

A ship can only hold so many crew members, cannons, and of course, bottles of rum.

The same can be said of the CRM. Collecting useless data points will only bog down your CRM and make it harder to navigate. This in mind, sales and marketing professionals should only collect and maintain information they intend to use—particularly as consumers grow more wary of sharing personal information.

For example, most businesses probably don't need a prospect's date of birth—unless they plan on marking the occasion in some way. As a bonus, streamlining long, detailed forms on your site will prevent visitors from getting fed up and entering bogus information that'll further degrade your data quality.

Chart a clearer course to sales and marketing success



Loot. Booty. Plunder. Whatever you call your bottom-line revenue, there will be a lot less of it if your organization doesn't prioritize data quality.

It's essential to regularly assess your CRM to identify errors and data quality issues before they drain your bottom line. But trying to conduct these assessments manually can exhaust internal and external resources, disrupt workflows, and result in even *more* errors.

Organizations are better advised to leverage a technology partner that automates the data assessment process. When vetting your options, look for features including:

A remediation plan built into the reporting
While it's imperative to know the issues plaguing your CRM, a problem without a solution is still a problem. The right data quality assessment solution should include a step-by-step remediation plan that outlines how to implement quick, corrective action.

Assessment without disruption
A secure, on-premises option for receiving a complete data quality assessment without tying up valuable resources or disrupting workflows is key.

The ability to run reports on-demand
With the right software solution, organizations should be able to re-verify data quality on a regular basis and immediately gauge the impact of list loads or lead entry after campaigns.

Historical reporting
When measuring the success of data quality initiatives, historical context is key. Any worthwhile solution should let users access previous assessments to see how their efforts track over time.

Right the ship with DemandTools

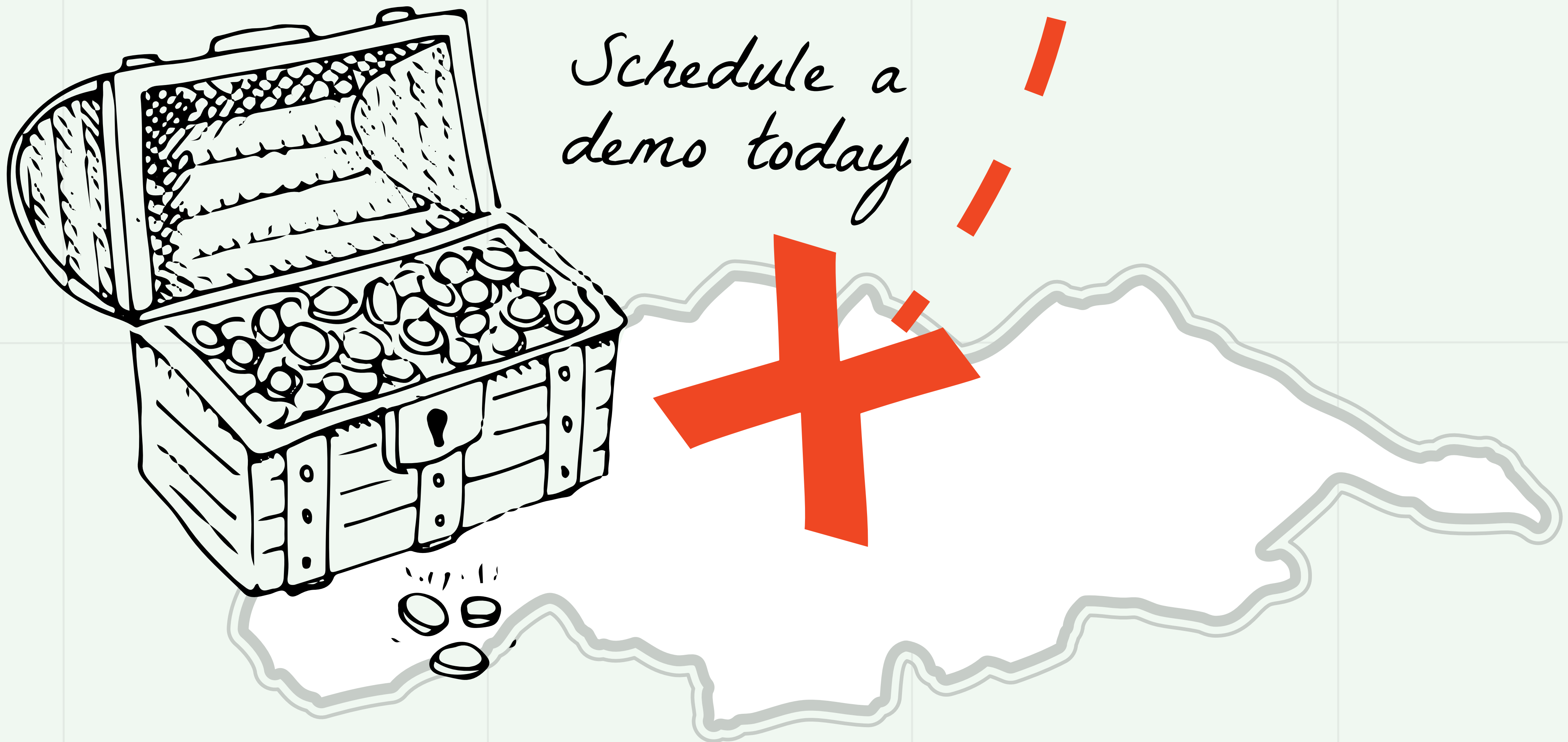
X marks the spot. You've dueled the top seven data quality issues that sabotage sales and marketing teams—and probably battled a sea monster or two along the way.

You're well on your way to recovering lost CRM treasure. But any sales and marketing professional worth their salt knows consumer data is constantly changing and evolving.

A technology platform like DemandTools, from Validity, is the best way to stay on top of these changes and eliminate data quality issues before they sink sales and marketing performance.

The DemandTools Assess module gives crews of all sizes a clear understanding of how strong or weak their data is and where to focus remediation efforts.

To learn more, schedule a demo with our team of data experts.



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Businesses run better and grow faster with trustworthy data. Tens of thousands of organizations rely on Validity solutions – including Everest, DemandTools, BriteVerify, GridBuddy Connect, and MailCharts – to target, contact, engage, and retain customers effectively. Marketing, sales, and customer success teams worldwide trust Validity solutions to help them create smarter campaigns, generate leads, drive response, and increase revenue.

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