



# 5 Things We Learned from Evaluating 264 Billion CRM Records

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CHEAT SHEET

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CRM data impacts every corner of most business operations. But the quality of that data is difficult to maintain—and in today's business climate, a task that was already challenging can feel impossible.

With factors like workforce displacement, technological advancements, and consumer privacy regulation accelerating data decay, the pressures on CRM admins are at all-time highs.

To get to the root of today's most pressing data management challenges (and how admins should respond), we assessed 264 billion records from over ten thousand CRM orgs using Validity DemandTools.

Here's what we learned.

## 81 percent of records assessed require improvement.

Admins who assume their data is “good enough” might want to take a second look.

We assessed records across Accounts, Contacts, Leads, and Opportunities to identify those that failed a basic quality check—i.e., duplicates, records with information missing from critical fields, and invalid data.

Across over 35 million CRM records of organizations yet to invest in a data management solution (like DemandTools), a staggering 81 percent of records required improvement.

**DemandTools By The Minute**  
Every 60 seconds, DemandTools...

- ACTIONS 5,222 RECORDS
- STANDARDIZES 1,534 RECORDS
- IMPORTS 1,521 RECORDS
- DEDUPES 731 RECORDS

What could you do with DemandTools on your side?



How does this happen? Businesses often neglect CRM data quality for several reasons, including:

- Overwhelming volume: The sheer amount of data flowing into the organization can be daunting to manage, especially for growing businesses.
- No clear ownership: When it's unclear who's responsible for data quality, it tends to fall through the cracks.
- Focus on short-term goals: Immediate business needs, like closing deals or meeting monthly KPIs, may take precedence over long-term data hygiene.

Others simply don't realize how poor data quality can impact bottom-line revenue and decision-making. This is a troubling oversight—separate Validity research reveals that poor data quality costs the average company at least [20 percent of its annual revenue](#).

### Pro Tip

The first step towards fixing your data is understanding how widespread your issues are. Understand your status quo by using out-of-the-box Salesforce Data Quality Reports and Dashboards or [take a free data quality assessment](#) in DemandTools.

## “Missing engagement data” is the most common data quality issue.

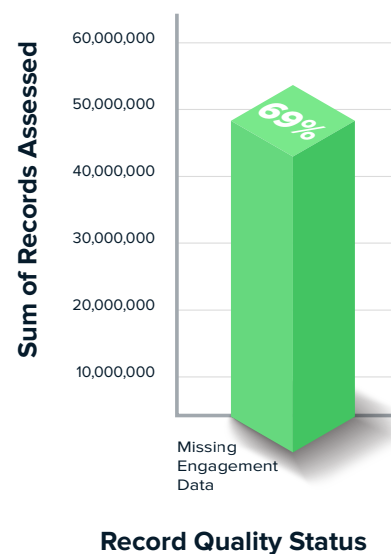
Okay, so we've determined most CRM records need a major clean-up. But where exactly do the problems lie?

Unsurprisingly, the Lead object contained the largest data quality issue. On average, only 31 percent of Lead records surveyed had complete engagement data.

Account and Contact records weren't far behind with over 50 percent missing critical customer data.

Why is this such bad news?

Most CRM software offers exactly what's advertised on the box: It's a place for organizations to build and manage relationships with existing and prospective customers.



However, it's only possible to realize these benefits if your organization has robust engagement data, such as populated Phone, Address, and Email fields on Account, Contact, and Lead Objects. To state the obvious, your sales and customer support reps need a way (and preferably, multiple ways) to nurture incoming leads!

Organizations attempting to manage customer relationships and identify new leads will need to fill in these missing engagement points—and fast.

### Pro Tip

Identify common critical missing data points and surface these to end users. To go a step further, prevent users from entering incomplete data at the point of entry using native functionality within Salesforce, like Validation Rules, Dynamic Forms, and Screen Flows.

## 47 percent of email addresses analyzed were either invalid or risky.

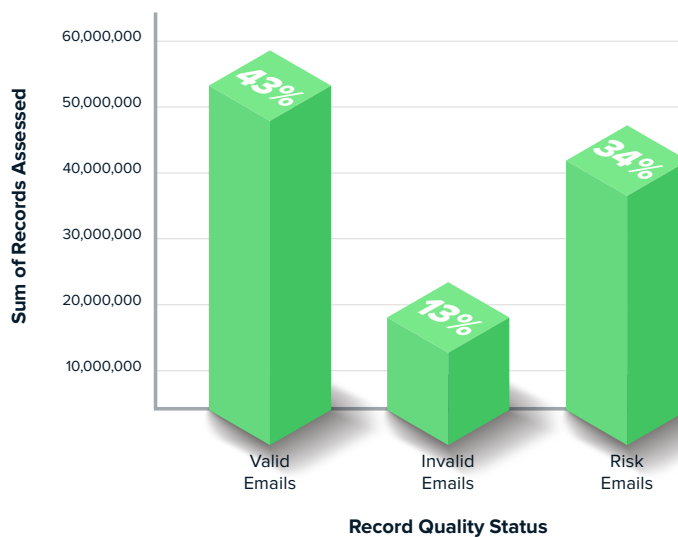
Email is still one of the primary channels used to build relationships with customers and prospects—whether your team is mass mailing with email addresses stored within Salesforce, syncing to external systems, or enabling end users to email their contacts directly.

But email addresses change—people find new jobs, change names, or simply abandon old email addresses for new ones. Chances are, they don't take time to let the companies they communicate with know about the shift.

Our data clearly reflected this. Troublingly, nearly half (47 percent) of the lead and contact emails we surveyed were invalid or risky.

### Here's a breakdown:

- 13 percent invalid emails—Invalid email addresses no longer exist and will bounce on the next send. Best practice is to remove these contacts from your list immediately to avoid sender reputation issues.



- 34 percent risky emails—Risky emails can't be completely verified. This group might contain accept-all email addresses, which are common in the B2B space. Engagement from these contacts should be systematically monitored to ensure there's a human on the other end.

### Pro Tip

Determine if the email addresses in your CRM are reachable and valid before your team wastes time trying to contact them. Run a free DemandTools Assessment with Email Verification to find out what percentage of emails in your Salesforce org are invalid and risky.

## Mass-modification abilities are the average admin's most pressing need.

**Arguably the largest day-to-day challenge for data admins is keeping up with the scale of records being inserted and updated by users, systems, and other sources.**

With this in mind, we weren't surprised to learn the users we surveyed executed a DemandTools modification at least every other day (making it the most-used DemandTools module), with records actioned translating to one per org, per minute.

Their most common modification actions ranged from implementing proper casing of contact names to drive higher quality communications to standardizing phone numbers to include country dialing codes.

### Pro Tip

Start simple. Consider fields in customer communications which are prone to data entry inconsistencies. Such inconsistencies can directly influence the quality of the message.

For example, implement proper casing on Name fields to ensure mailings don't start with "Hi, JANE DOE."

# Frequent data loading leads to higher levels of duplicates.

For Salesforce admins, importing lists is just part of the daily routine: Keeping new leads, contacts, and data flowing seamlessly into the CRM keeps everything up to date.

But are you taking the right precautions to ensure that duplicates aren't entering your system in the process?

We observed a clear correlation between orgs that most frequently inserted new records or updated existing ones (using Import or Lead Conversion) with orgs that used Dedupe functionality.

If you find yourself importing using Data Import Wizard, DataLoader, or similar tools, there's a good chance you're introducing duplicate records by creating new records which already exist (perhaps in other objects, Contact / Lead), or you could be updating existing records with new information—which surfaces previously unknown duplicates.

## Pro Tip

Use Salesforce matching rules to identify duplicate records in your org. Or (for a more proactive approach), use solutions like Validity DupeBlocker (part of DemandTools) to flag dupes before they enter your system in the first place. Check for duplicates both pre- and post-import, across objects.

## What's next?

You don't need to look at billions of records like we did to know that data quality is becoming more and more difficult to maintain—and the problems we uncovered here are just the tip of the iceberg for many orgs.

To achieve cleaner data, it's crucial to know where you're starting from. To learn how strong or weak your data is and know where to focus your clean-up efforts, get a free data quality assessment with Validity DemandTools.

[Book my assessment!](#)