



## Well-maintained data secures success

Customer data has developed into an important linking element for all relationship structures of a company with its clientele. Its quality is therefore a decisive factor for commercial success.

### COMPACT

- ▶ Continuous data maintenance increases information quality
- ▶ Elimination of duplicates improves the customer dialogue
- ▶ Integration of all customer data enables a single view

Data is A STRATEGIC COMMODITY in today's information society, but only if the database is correct, redundancy-free, complete and up-to-date. Data quality may therefore not be regarded as an option by users and personnel responsible for IT. Since addresses consist of a variety of individual elements, specific problems frequently arise: this may concern incorrect capitalization, a name, title or title of nobility may sometimes be written out in full, sometimes not, or improperly abbreviated in the next case. Address components are sometimes inserted in the wrong fields or legal requirements are not considered.

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POSTAL VALIDATION SECURES THE QUALITY OF THE DATA. This means that the customer data has to be analyzed, standardized and corrected in an initial step. In this respect, the postal validation of all the relevant databases and all new address information is necessary to achieve the highest quality. Postally defective addresses contain a high inherent negative potential, which has direct effects on all the communication processes and company-wide actions in which address data is referred to or used.

Incorrect, missing or out-of-date postal information is one of the most frequent direct and indirect causes of problems with far-reaching consequences. It gives rise to a high percentage of data defects, particularly in large customer and prospective customer databases.

Furthermore, several data sources often coexist in a company. The information is frequently redundant and also differs with regard to the structure of the data record, structure and address quality. A large number of duplicates can arise undetected here. Duplicates have an extremely negative effect, because, in addition to causing unnecessary costs, multiple instances of addresses mean that customers or prospective customers often receive multiple copies of the same correspondence. The direct dialogue loses credibility and the relationship becomes less stable as a result.

### COMPRESSING DATA SYSTEMS

INTO ONE SOURCE. Customers and prospective customers must also be able to be reliably identified in real time, in order to be able to clearly recognize and evaluate existing relationships at the contact stage, and in order to prevent duplicates arising through multiple creation of sets of customer data. An important condition for the "Single View of Customer" is therefore to compress data contents from a variety of systems into a common data source which is available across the company and can be consistently maintained. The consolidated information is a prerequisite for consistent business processes. ▶

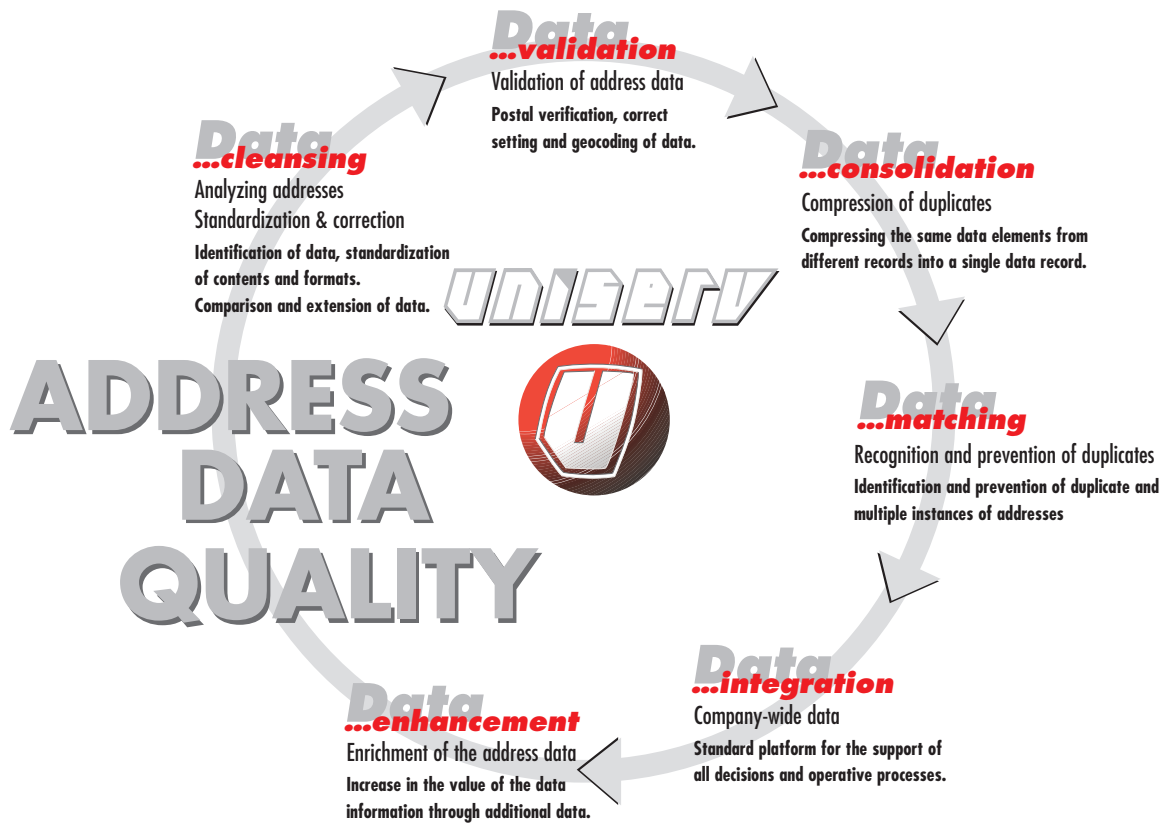


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### Additional Information



CYCLE OF DATA MANAGEMENT



Anyone who wishes to develop the relationships with his customers individually needs additional further reaching, distinctive and more comprehensive information, in order to complete and extend the existing databases. An example of this is the increase in the value of the existing data through geo-based and socio-demographic information or market and risk information. The Single View of Customer is not provided until all the customer data has been integrated across the company. This enables maximum exploitation of the data information, creates the greatest possible transparency of all business activities and offers a standard platform for the support of all decisions and operative processes.

Data quality should therefore not be regarded as a one-off measure in the company, but must be designed for the long term and be continuously implemented. As a result, a company should always set up processes which serve sustainability and continuity. After the existing data has been cleaned up, it is essential to maintain the quality. ■