



WHITEPAPER

# The biggest data bottlenecks for your organisation

# Introduction

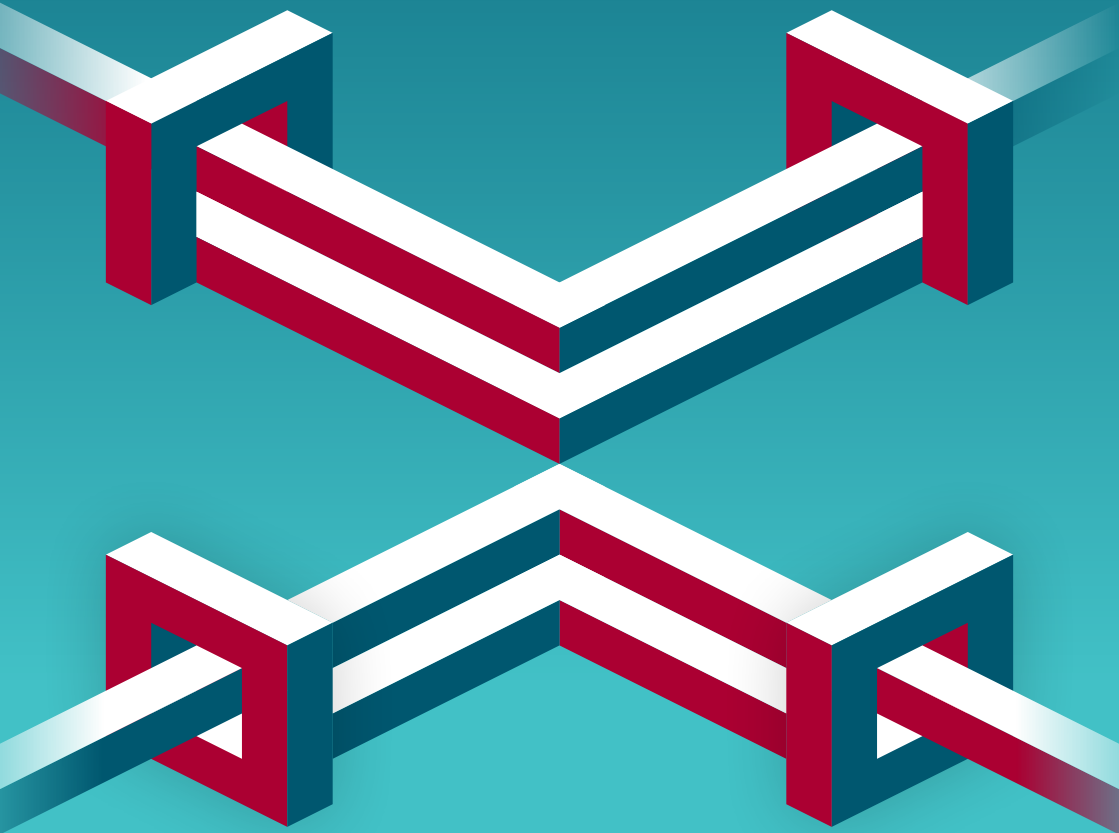
Data, all of us use it. When we google something, when we look up information about a company or when we are working in a CRM system. Every day we come into contact with over 1000 data points from companies. Having a lot of data is great, of course. Not only does it allow you to know whether a customer is solvent, it also tells you how you are doing as a company.

The problem with having a lot of data is that you also have to store and safeguard it somewhere. After all, all that data is of no use if you can't easily find and use it. In many companies, data is stored in multiple locations. These can include a CRM system, an accounting system, separate Excel files and so on. It is precisely because your data is stored in so many places that the situation can become unclear. How exactly do you know when a company has moved? And do you know where to change the address so that it's updated everywhere?

Often, all these different systems and data create a lot of problems. As a result, an invoice may be sent to the wrong address if a company has moved. Teams may also feel annoyed at other colleagues because the data is not kept up to date or the correct data is not collected. All this handling of data is what we call **data management**. Actually, data management can be compared to housekeeping. You have to come up with a system to clean everything up and then keep everything that way.

If your company is in the process of digital transformation, or if you as a company understand how important your data management really is for effectiveness, then this white paper is for you. In this white paper, we reveal the biggest data bottlenecks that prevent your digital transformation from succeeding. Your housekeeping (a.k.a. data management) starts with identifying the data issues in order to then form a data strategy that can help you with the digital transformation of your company.

# The four biggest data bottlenecks



## 1

# Missing processes

Data is cumulative. This means that layers keep being added throughout a customer journey. First marketing data, then sales data and finally customer data. All these touchpoints pass a data item on to your data system. Touchpoints include website visits (marketing), a telephone conversation (sales) or even a ticket at customer service. Business customers already need about 5 to even 50 touchpoints before they decide to become a customer. Let alone if the prospect becomes a customer, then more data points will only be added. All in all, it quickly leads to a huge clutter of data. If we also tell you that 40% of this collected data is out of date on an annual basis, it seems like you'll never be able to control the situation.

As mentioned in the introduction, all kinds of problems can arise between teams if the data is incorrect or incomplete. If no one within your organisation is responsible for managing and maintaining all these data flows, you have no **data governance**. Data governance ensures that data is always correctly managed and maintained, and regularly (automatically) updated. If all that data is to flow really well through your company, getting teams to agree on clear rules is paramount. In other words, make sure that there are processes that regulate which data is collected where and why. You can use a number of principles for that purpose:

- The next team is always leading. Marketing primarily collects data for sales, sales for the onboarding team and the onboarding team for the service team and again the sales team (cross- and upsell).

- Have teams ask each other which data the next team needs to perform its work efficiently. Do not collect more data than necessary to avoid contamination. Much of the data that one team thinks is great is completely irrelevant to the next.
- Set out a unique, clear location to store all the (customer) data and make sure that every stakeholder can access it. Usually, it's a CRM system.

By consistently implementing these three principles, you will notice that your data management is progressing by leaps and bounds. The advantage of these principles is that you probably collect less data, but that the data you collect is used well and really adds value for the team that will work with this data. You also reduce the chance of data being stored twice and all data is always easy to find, even if there are doubts about certain data.



## 2

## Dirty data (and its cost)



Dirty data is actually like a dirty house. A little bit of dirt here and there goes unnoticed, until you get to the point where it really is a mess. Your CRM system requires a clean-up sooner than you think: duplicate records, outdated data, incorrect data. In itself it doesn't sound that bad, because a dirty house is still a house. But dirty data costs money, a lot of money. In 2019, Forbes estimated the costs of dirty data in the US alone at around **600 billion dollars a year**. In addition, you can also make big mistakes with incorrect data. By delivering a large order to a company that has been declared bankrupt, or delivering to a (recently) sanctioned company, for example. Dirty data is almost unavoidable, because mistakes are made when people enter data, especially if there is little or no automation.

It is therefore advisable to start with a clean slate, a data set that is as little corrupted as possible. Think of it as spring cleaning for your CRM. Once you know which data you need and how you're going to use that data, you can start extracting that data from all your systems and 'folders'. In terms of Master Data Management, we call that 'having a single source of truth across all your systems'. How do you do that? For example, with a solution to link, monitor and enrich your data. Think of [APIs and integrations](#). It is also important to realise that data management is actually a continuous process. For example, parallel to your data cleansing, you will also have to come up with a strategy, roles and processes (data governance) for handling data. Otherwise, it will become dirty again before you have even taken your first steps in the right direction. We also call this a ['data detox'](#).



## 3

# Missing data

*Less is more* we said earlier, but too little data is also not good. Relevant and especially complete data is very important for various departments, as data constitutes the backbone of effective decision-making within an organisation. Various departments, such as marketing, sales, and finance, also rely on accurate data to develop strategies and achieve their goals.

- For example, marketing departments need accurate customer data to launch targeted campaigns and better understand their audiences.
- Sales departments can streamline their sales process with detailed prospect information and insight into customer preferences.
- For finance teams, complete data is crucial to perform reliable analyses and assess the company's financial health.

Essential data that is often missing can include contact information such as an e-mail address or telephone number. A person's gender is also crucial, as you don't want to mistakenly call someone sir when this is not the case. This type of information is of great importance to several departments. If you have complete data, prospects and customers can be better segmented based on their interests, behaviours and needs. This enables the marketing and sales departments to implement targeted approaches and make personalised offers. Gathering comprehensive customer data can also help identify risks, such as customer churn and payment issues. This enables companies to take proactive measures to minimise these risks.





# Collecting missing data

It is not always possible to obtain and/or request all this data from customers. So, how do you collect the data you need? There are two solutions, and you should use them together for the best result.

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## Request data via online forms on the website

When a (potential) customer fills in a contact form, you often receive useful data such as contact details. If you can link this data to a company, that's even better. A Direct+ integration can help you with this. Even if a customer misspelt the name of the company he/she works for, we would still find the right company thanks to our [D-U-N-S numbers](#).

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## Use external sources to clean, enrich, and maintain data

Supplementing (enriching) your data externally is an easy solution. External data sources can provide valuable additional information to enrich existing data. This can be done, for example, by consulting third-party databases that contain additional demographic information. For example, there is the Dun & Bradstreet Database. This database contains more than 500 million companies and uses 30,000 worldwide sources to provide you with up-to-date company information. In combination with [dataxes](#), this database helps you to not just enrich your database, but also to clean (get rid of duplicate data) and even maintain it (automatic adjustment when data is updated). But let's not get ahead of ourselves too much. Having a solution, however, doesn't mean there is a data culture yet. And that's what we're going to discuss now.



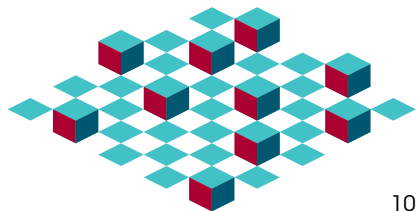
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# Lack of data culture

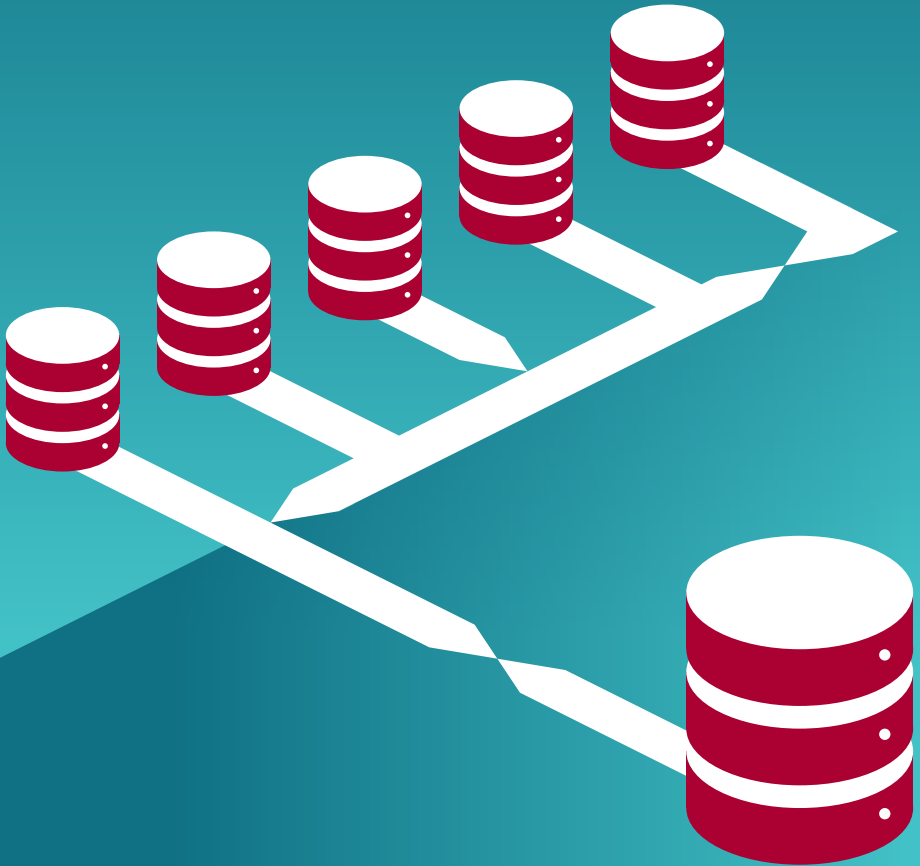
An effective data system cannot be created without a culture. Think of it as a change from within. Acquiring an external solution does not automatically mean that all data issues will disappear. If sales are not used to entering data, and marketing continues to collect incorrect data, not much will change even if you purchase an external solution. So, it's time to also adjust the data culture.

First, you need to determine whether there is already a data strategy within the company. How do we handle data? Who enters which data? Developing a data strategy is essential to create a data culture. During our ['Data strategy in the boardroom' webinar](#), we quickly discovered that the board also finds it difficult to develop a data strategy, but that this is necessary to streamline business objectives and increase turnover. Then we wrote a [blog](#) explaining how to easily set up a data strategy in four steps.

Even if the board has a clear data strategy in mind, there is still some work to be done. Everyone who works with data must be convinced of the added value it can offer them. Employees must be motivated. Show them how data can help them in their work, and how it makes it easier and more enjoyable.



# Your organisation's biggest data bottlenecks revealed



In this white paper, we identified the main data bottlenecks for your organisation and provided solutions to effectively address them. We learnt that data is cumulative and that the lack of clear processes and data governance can lead to a clutter of information. You can greatly improve data management by ensuring that teams come to clear mutual agreements and by providing a central location for all the data.

Dirty data also proved to be a significant issue, which can lead to costly errors and a waste of resources. A thorough data detox process, during which you clean, enrich, and maintain data, can help you make the most of a data set that is as little corrupted as possible.

The importance of relevant and complete data was emphasized, considering that various departments in an organisation rely on accurate data for effective decision making. We saw that collecting comprehensive customer data can lead to better segmentation and risk assessment.

In addition, we stressed how essential it was to link people, processes, and data. Implementing clear data strategies and employee engagement in data-driven work are crucial pillars in creating a strong data culture.

### Recommendations for collecting valuable data and agreeing on clear rules

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Use forms on the website to request relevant data from (potential) customers.

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Use external sources to enrich and clean data, such as the Dun & Bradstreet Database in combination with dataxess.

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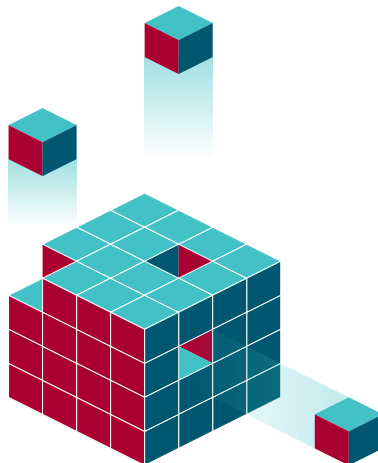


Lay down clear principles and procedures between teams defining which data is collected where and why.

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### The importance of a data culture and involving employees in data-driven work

A strong data culture is essential for effective data management. It is not just about purchasing external solutions; the internal data culture also needs to be adapted. Employees must be convinced of the value of data and motivated to integrate data into their work. Drawing up a data strategy and the involvement of the board are key factors in achieving this transformation.



# Conclusion

A well-organised data management system offers countless advantages for an organisation. It enables teams to make more informed decisions, streamline processes, and work more efficiently. By collecting and maintaining the right data and actively involving employees in data-driven work, an organisation can become truly data-driven and strengthen its competitive edge in a world where data is a key to success. It's time to embrace the power of data and build a robust data management system to become a successful digital company.

**Do you have a data challenge that you'd like to discuss sometime? Talk to an expert.**

[Schedule a consultation](#)

Or call us right away  
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OUR VISION

# Smart insights to shape your future

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is only valuable  
when it has a  
purpose



**WE** guide you  
through this ever-  
expanding data  
universe



**YOU** create a  
company culture  
where data is  
empowered to be  
a strategic growth  
change-driver

# Smart insights to shape your future

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