

Data Quality Strategy – a guide

Helping you to build a contact data
management strategy



Contents

	Page
1 Introduction	03
2 Creating an Executive Summary	04
- Strategic objectives	
- Key findings	
- Conclusions	
3 The Data Quality Strategy	05
4 Review and Control	06
Appendices:	
A Data Protection Principles	08
B Data Protection Policy	09
C Complete Record Sheet	10
D Data Audit Form	11

1. Introduction

Experian QAS advises over 10,000 organisations worldwide on the management of their contact data. Drawing on this experience, this guide has been devised to help you build a data quality strategy to govern the management of contact information across your organisation.

The first part of the guide assists with the creation of a suitable data strategy plan for implementation across your organisation, including; creating an executive summary, the key features of your data quality strategy and how to review and control activity once the strategy has been implemented. At the rear of this document you will find appendices which will help you build a case for committing to a data quality strategy.

2. Creating an Executive Summary

Your executive summary is a summary of your data strategy plan and is designed to give the reader a flavour as to what the larger plan contains.

Your executive summary should include detail of:

- The impact of data quality on your organisation
- The current quality of the data
- Your proposed strategy for maintenance and improvement

in the form of:

- Strategic objectives
- Key findings
- Conclusions

Strategic objectives

This should form the introduction to the need for a data quality strategy within your organisation. The strategic objectives should aim to relate data to the success of your organisation and your goals. It is often best to start by filling in a grid to identify how the results of your data strategy will impact your organisation, as below. We have listed some common drivers but these should be amended to relate to your own organisation (as shown in the table below).

Business drivers

Business drivers are derived from the concepts you decide upon which present the case for the introduction of a data quality strategy e.g.

- Improving customer service
- Compliance with data-related regulations and other legislation
- Increasing revenue by cutting costs
- Unearthing new business opportunities
- Retaining more customers
- Growing business from existing customers
- Generating new business from improved services
- Improving relations with Business Partners

Once you have distinguished the drivers, identify the aims of the data quality strategy and remember to stress the fact the data quality is the responsibility of all staff, and senior management support is paramount.

Your data quality strategy should give:

- A clear business direction, with objectives and goals
- An infrastructure that assigns responsibilities for data and ensures that those responsible have the right tools for the job

- An operational plan for improvement
- An operational plan for continued maintenance procedures
- A data quality policy that can be published internally and externally to show best practice

Key findings

Outline the level of your current data quality. This can be done using internal statistics and figures such as returned mail, incomplete orders, inaccurate deliveries, returned invoices etc. If you're unsure of your data quality, QAS Batch and QAS Unify can give an overview of your data as it stands currently and provide evidence for supporting a data quality strategy within your organisation.

Conclusions

On completion of your business needs and findings around current data, conclude that a data quality project is required and this needs buy-in from all staff in order to succeed. Everyone must be accountable for data that is under their control.

	Data strategy results		
Organisational goals	Compliance with data regulations	Improved communications	Reduced wasted mailing budget
Improve service delivery by 5%		✓	
5% revenue growth		✓	
Increase efficiency and cost saving			✓

3. The Data Quality Strategy

Following the executive summary, you should then detail the strategy. This strategy document should outline where work is required, the work your organisation is currently undertaking and that work which is yet to be undertaken. In addition, you should assign specific responsibility to individual members of staff and whole teams.

We have outlined some examples of areas which may require a data strategy that may or may not be relevant in your organisation. You need to identify the relevant areas in your organisation to be included in your data quality strategy. Wherever there is data, there is a need for a strategy to ensure quality:

Contacts added to CRM system

- Currently may be done manually by administrators
- You have investigated data quality and discovered only 60% of data inputted is accurate
- As part of your strategy, you recommend integrating contact data management software to improve data accuracy and reduce human error
- You recommend that responsibility for this process lies with office managers and IT as well as all staff who enter details into CRM

Maintaining legacy data

- Currently CRM data is not cleaned
- You have investigated the quality of legacy data through a data quality audit and discovered that 50% of all data over a year old is out of date
- You recommend introducing a monthly batch clean of the CRM database to maintain accuracy and currency
- You recommend that responsibility for this lies with your CRM team

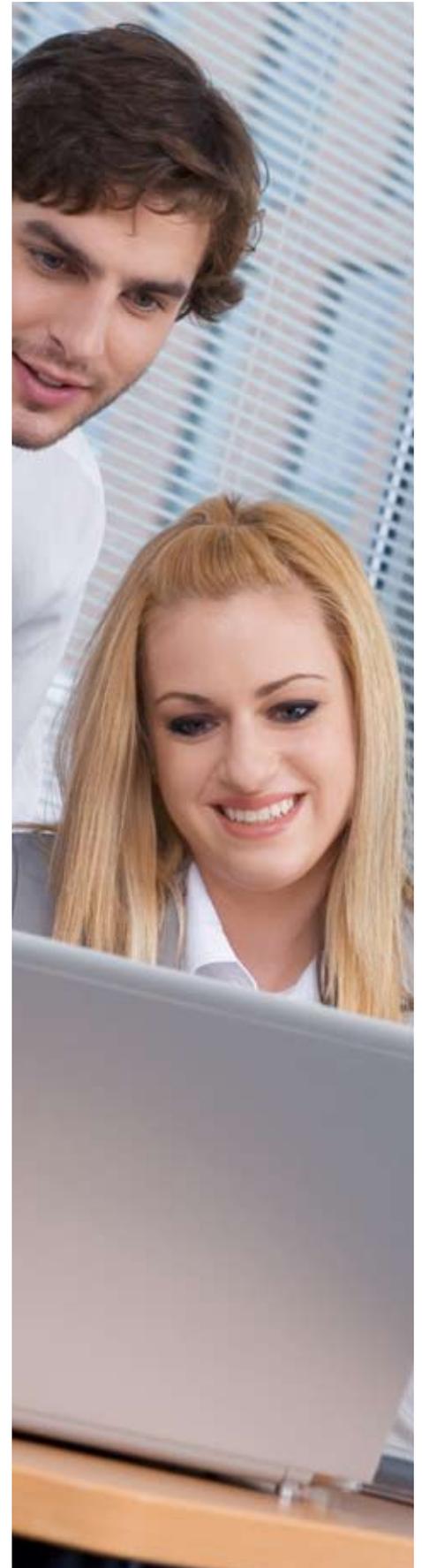
Reducing returned mail

- Currently returned mail rate is an average of 5% at an average cost of £3.50 per item mailed

- Investigation shows that many are a result of people moving
- You recommend in-house suppression be done on a monthly basis to reduce costs and returned mail while improving your brand perception
- You recommend that marketing takes responsibility for this area

Complete record

- Currently there are gaps in your contact records; only 45% are considered complete
- Investigations show that within your organisation when people are on the phone they are not asking all the relevant questions to complete the record
- You recommend a change in staff perception of data quality and that a list of vital questions are asked and answered; in the short term you suggest some data acquisition to fill in the gaps in legacy data
- You recommend that all people in the company take responsibility for this



4. Review and Control

Now you have written an executive summary and identified areas where the strategy needs to be implemented, what that strategy is, and who is ultimately responsible, you need to ensure that there will be a review of all these areas. You need to outline a business process where improvements can be measured and further extended. For example, a monthly audit of data to see if improvements are being made or a count of returned mail to see if there has been a reduction.

Data quality is the responsibility of every member of staff. You need to get buy in from senior managers and make them push the strategy through the organisation. Remind staff of the benefits of a data quality strategy and the measurements being carried out to continue to improve data quality across your organisation.



Appendices

We have included appendices to help you build your data quality strategy and get buy in from senior management.

Appendix A - Data Protection Principles

First principle

Personal data shall be processed fairly and lawfully and, in particular, shall not be processed unless:

- At least one of the conditions in Schedule 2 is met (www.hms.gov.uk/acts/acts1998)
- In the case of sensitive personal data, at least one of the conditions in Schedule 3 (www.hms.gov.uk/acts/acts1998) is also met

Second principle

Personal data shall be obtained only for one or more specified and lawful purposes, and shall not be further processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose or those purposes.

Third principle

Personal data shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose or purposes for which they are processed.

Fourth principle

Personal data shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.

Fifth principle

Personal data processed for any purpose or purposes shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose or those purposes.

Sixth principle

Personal data shall be processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects under this Act.

Seventh principle

Appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data.

Eighth principle

Personal data shall not be transferred to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area, unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data.



Appendix B – Data Protection Policy

Statement of Policy

This is a statement of the data protection policy which you could potentially adopt.

Your organisation needs to collect and use certain types of information about people with whom it deals in order to operate. This could include information about:

- current, past and prospective employees
- suppliers
- customers and prospective customers
- others with whom you communicate

In addition, you may occasionally be required by law to collect and use certain types of information of this kind to comply with government requirements.

This personal information, however collected recorded and used, should be processed in accordance with your own data protection policy to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Your organisation should regard the lawful and correct treatment of personal information as very important to successful operations, and to maintaining confidence between those with whom you deal and yourselves.

Data Processing Principles

Your organisation adheres fully to the principles of Data Protection as described in the Data Protection Act 1998.

These principles require that personal information:

a) shall be processed fairly and lawfully and specifically shall be processed only if specific conditions relating to its collection are met;

b) shall be obtained only for one or more specified and lawful purpose/s and shall not be processed in a manner incompatible with that purpose;

c) shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose or purposes for which they are processed;

d) shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date;

e) shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for the purpose or purposes;

f) shall be processed in accordance with the rights of the data subjects under the Data Protection Act 1998, specifically in relation to subject access requests;

g) shall be subject to appropriate technical and organisational measures against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data; and

h) shall not be transferred to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data.

Data Measures

Through the use of appropriate contractual requirements and strict application of criteria and controls your organisation will:

a) observe the conditions regarding the fair collection and use of information;

b) meet its legal obligations to specify the purposes for which information is being used;

c) collect and process information only to the extent that it is needed to fulfil operational needs or to comply with any legal requirements;

d) ensure the ongoing quality of information used;

e) apply regular checks to determine the length of time information is held;

f) ensure that the rights of people about

whom information is held can be fully exercised under the Data Protection Act 1998. These include:

- the right to be informed that processing is being undertaken,
 - the right of access to the subjects own personal information,
 - the right to prevent processing in certain circumstances,
 - the right to correct, rectify, block and/or erase information which is regarded as wrong information
- g) take appropriate technical and organisational security measures to safeguard personal information, governed by company policy;
- h) ensure that personal information is not transferred abroad without suitable safeguards and permissions, as applicable.

Organisational Measures

Your organisation will ensure that:

a) there is a department in the organisation with specific responsibility for data protection;

b) everyone managing and handling personal information understands they are contractually responsible for following good data protection practice;

c) everyone managing and handling personal information is appropriately trained to do so and aware of their obligations;

d) anybody wanting to make enquiries about handling personal information are promptly and courteously dealt with;

e) the way personal information is managed is monitored on an ongoing basis.

Appendix C - Complete Record Spreadsheet

As part of the complete record strategy, put a check list together of information required by your organisation for a record to be considered complete e.g.

Contacts field

Title	Pick list
First name	Free text
Last name	Free text
Full accurate address	Address management software
Postcode	Address management software
Telephone number	Address management software with additional data
Sex	Pick list
Date of Birth	Free text
Nationality	Pick list
Mosaic code	Address management software with additional data

Or if you work B2B like Experian QAS your pick list could look like this:

Accounts field

Account name	Address management software
Full accurate address	Address management software
Postcode	Address management software
Industry SIC code	Address management software with additional data
Industry description	Free text
Main telephone number	Address management software with additional data
Main fax number	Address management software with additional data
Website	Free text
Employee Count	Address management software with additional data
Turnover	Address management software with additional data

These are just a few examples; you know your organisation, information that is vital should be added to this check list and everybody within the organisation should be responsible for completing the record on your CRM system

Appendix D - Data Audit Form

This form should be used for research and ongoing data quality measures with each department within your organisation to ascertain what data is held and where, and how that data is processed.

Department name	Who collects data?	What data is collected?	Where does the data come from?	Who uses the data?	Where is the data stored?	Who owns the data?	How is the data kept up to date?	How frequently is it kept up to date?

These 10 components are an additional guide to help you construct your strategy

10 essential data strategy components

01. Understand the day to day needs of the data and its usage
02. Relate data to every nook and cranny of the business
03. Determine the data collected
04. Implement appropriate data processes for collection
05. Train and educate top to bottom
06. Establish strict business rules
07. Determine standards of data hygiene
08. Identify problems (audits)
09. Implement maintenance procedures
10. Integrate data across multiple systems and touchpoints

Experian QAS
George West House
2-3 Clapham Common North Side
London
SW4 0QT

T 0800 197 7950
info@qas.com

www.qas.co.uk



© 2009 QAS Limited.

QAS Limited. Registered in England.
No. 2582055. Landmark House, Experian Way,
NG2 Business Park, Nottingham, NG80 1ZZ.

The words 'Experian' and 'QAS' are registered trade marks in the
EU and other countries and are owned by Experian Limited and/or
its associated companies.

All rights reserved.