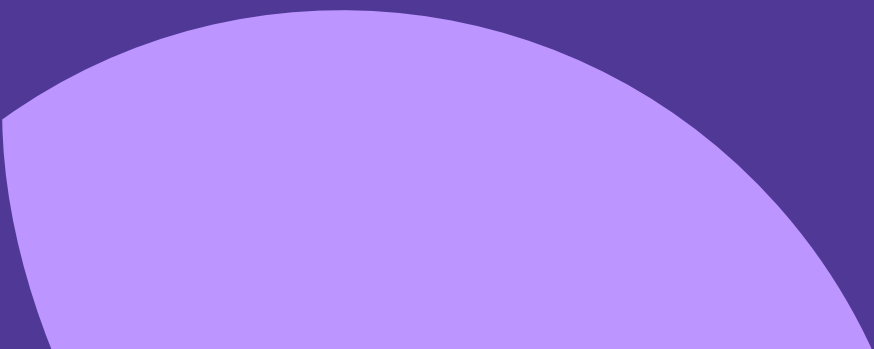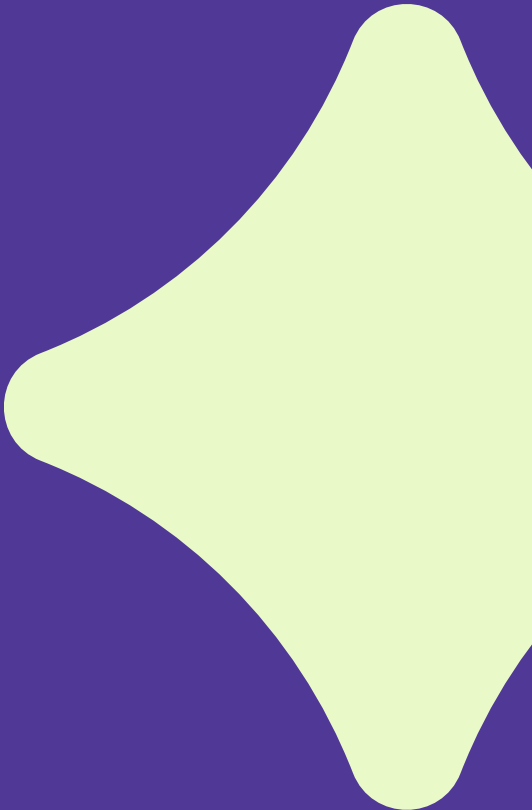cognism

Date-a-Vendor
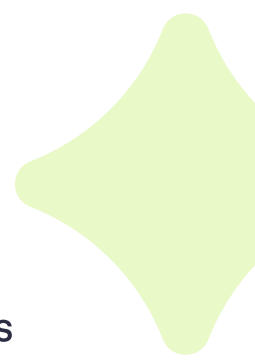**Evalution Playbook #2**

We Need Better Data Quality!

Your playbook for evaluating data partners who don't just talk a good game - they deliver.

> ❝
> # If we start with poor data, we set the whole funnel up to fail.
>
> – Jeff Ignacio, Head of GTM Ops, Keystone AI

If bounce rates are climbing, SDRs are burning out, and your CRM's a mess, you don't need more data - you need better data.

This guide helps you find a vendor who prioritises accuracy, freshness, and usability - not just vanity metrics.

Why data quality matters

- Running high-touch outbound and need high-connect rates
- Email deliverability and sender reputation are at risk
- CRM is cluttered with junk, duplicates, and outdated records
- Sales has lost confidence in the leads provided

Green Flags in a Quality-Driven Vendor

Metric	What Good Looks Like
Field accuracy	90–95%+ match to trusted CRM contacts
Field fill rate	≥ 80–90% with email, phone, title, company info
Bounce rate	<3% on enriched or net-new contacts
Mobile coverage	≥ 60% for outbound personas
Recency	Timestamped or refreshed in last 90 days
Change detection	Auto-updates for job or company changes

How to Evaluate Data Vendors When Quality Is the Goal

1. Run Known Data Testing

Known data testing is your reality check. It's the fastest way to separate marketing claims from actual data quality by using records you already know are correct.

What it is:

You provide each vendor with a list of contacts from your CRM that have been previously validated - through rep engagement, past conversions, or recent updates. The vendor then enriches that list with their own data.

Ask vendors to enrich verified records from your CRM to test their real-world accuracy.

- Send 500–1,000 trusted contacts (mixed by persona, region, industry)
- Ask vendors to return updated info + flag changes
- Evaluate for accuracy, completeness, freshness

> " **Known tests help you separate signal from sales spin.**
>
> – Adam Thompson

Bonus Tip: Spot-check 20–30 records on LinkedIn to validate job titles and employers.

2. Score Enrichment Depth

Quality isn't just finding a contact - it's how complete that contact is

What to look for:

- Business email + mobile
- Accurate job title + department
- Seniority level
- Full company info (size, industry, revenue)
- Optional: LinkedIn profile, technographics, buyer intent

Why it matters: Complete data means better segmentation, routing, and personalisation.

3. Assess Recency

Fresh data avoids wasted effort and protects deliverability.

Ask:

- "How often do you refresh records?"
- "Can you show timestamps or 'last verified' fields?"
- "How do you detect job changes or role transitions?"

> " The more senior the buyer, the faster they change roles.

— Antoine Cornet

Metric	What to Look For	Target Benchmark
Known data match rate	% of fields correctly matched	90–95%+
Field fill rate	Email, mobile, title, etc.	80–90%+
Bounce rate	Email validity on enriched contacts	<3%
Mobile coverage	Mobile numbers for ICP personas	>60%
Recency indicator	Timestamp or last verified field	Present
Change detection	Role or company change flagged	Preferred

Questions to ask data providers when you're looking for quality

1. What's your average bounce rate? (<3%)
2. How frequently is your data refreshed? (Monthly or better)
3. Do you detect job changes and role transitions?
4. How do you validate mobile numbers and job titles?
5. Can we see customer references from our industry?

" **If they can't explain how they keep data fresh, they're not a quality-first vendor.**

— Adam Thompson

Signs Your Data Vendor Is Actually Working

How to tell if your quality-first data investment is paying off.

Once you've chosen a provider based on data quality, success isn't just about delivery volume - it's about real, measurable improvements across your GTM motions. Below are the key indicators that your vendor is delivering value, not just contacts.
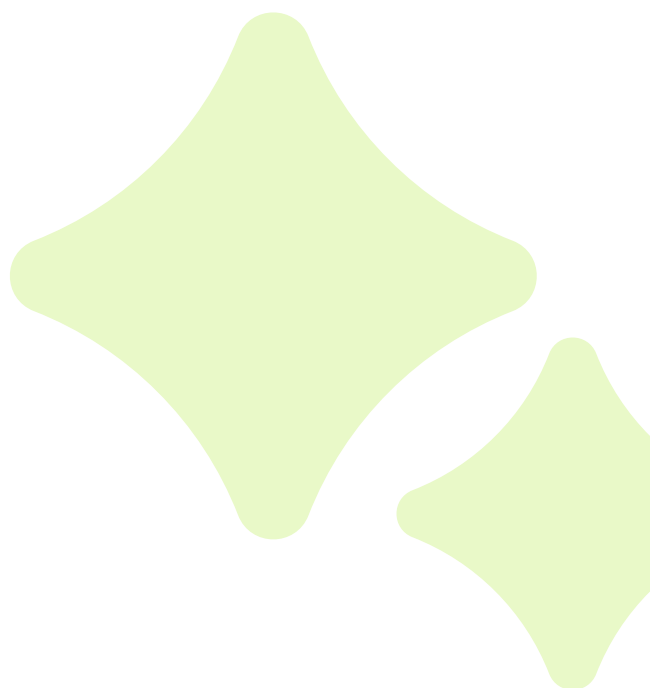
Metric	What to Track	Why It Matters	What 'Good' Looks Like
CRM Field Match Rate	% of enriched records that match verified fields in your CRM	Validates that the vendor's data is accurate and aligns with your internal records	≥ 90–95% match on email, job title, company, etc.
Bounce Rate <3%	Email bounce rate from test or early campaigns	High bounce = low trust, poor deliverability, and damaged sender reputation	<3% bounce rate, ideally closer to 1–2%
Mobile Fill Rate >60%	% of contacts enriched with mobile/direct dial numbers	Essential for SDRs, AE outreach, and multi-touch sequencing	>60% for sales personas; higher is better
Sales/Marketing Adoption	Usage of the data in sequences, campaigns, and CRM workflows	If the team uses it, they trust it — adoption is a strong vote of confidence	Active usage across SDR/AE tools and marketing platforms
Less Manual Cleanup	Time spent by RevOps/Marketing on fixing, formatting, or validating vendor data	Clean, ready-to-go data saves time, reduces delays, and improves campaign speed	Noticeable reduction in cleanup time and QA effort
Pipeline Velocity Up	Faster lead-to-opportunity movement; improved conversion rates	Good data connects you to the right buyers faster, improving conversion and reducing waste	Shorter sales cycles, higher lead-to-opportunity rates

Build a Comparison Scorecard

Once you've run your known (and/or unknown) data tests with 2–3 vendors, the most effective way to present the findings is with a simple, structured comparison table.

This lets stakeholders visually compare vendor performance across the metrics that really matter for data quality.

Metric	Vendor A	Vendor B	Vendor C
Known data match rate	93%	85%	96%
Field accuracy	92%	81%	95%
Fill rate (email + phone)	88%	72%	91%
Bounce rate (test email)	2.8%	6.5%	1.9%
Mobile coverage	64%	6.5%	73%
Last verified field	✅	❌	✅
Job change detection	✅	❌	✅

When it comes to B2B data, quality isn't a nice-to-have - it's the foundation of every successful go-to-market motion. From protecting your sender reputation to boosting connect rates and increasing conversion, the right data provider should make your job easier, not harder.

By prioritising known data testing, enrichment depth, and freshness, you move beyond vendor promises and start measuring what actually matters: **can this provider deliver data your team trusts and uses?**

Before you commit, make sure your chosen vendor can:

- ✅ Accurately enrich the contacts you already trust
- ✅ Deliver complete, outreach-ready records at scale
- ✅ Provide visibility into data freshness and change detection
- ✅ Reduce cleanup and boost campaign performance
- ✅ Earn the trust of Sales, Marketing, and RevOps alike

Because in both dating and data: if they're not adding value, they're wasting your time.

Choose a vendor who's not just compatible on paper - but proves it in practice.

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Evaluating Data Providers for Quality

Want to learn more about how to evaluate data providers when you're looking for quality?

find out more