Date-a-Vendor
Evaluation Playbook #1

We need more volume!

A guide to evaluating
data vendors for
pipeline growth

"If your database doesn't reflect your ICP, you're handing opportunities to competitors.

— Jeff Ignacio, Keystone AI

Why data volume is important

- Launching a new outbound sales motion
- Entering a new region with limited CRM coverage
- Running ABM but missing buying committee contacts
- Leadership wants pipeline, fast

Green Flags in a Volume-Driven Vendor

Metric	What Good Looks Like
Match rate	High match against your ICP + CRM
Fill rate	≥ 60% with verified email + mobile
Data recency	Updated in last 6 months
Regional depth	Strong coverage in your target areas
Persona fit	Solid for roles you actually care about
Bounce rate	<5% on email campaigns

How to Evaluate Data Vendors When Volume Is Your Type

1. Run Unknown Data Testing First

Treat it like a blind date. Don't just enrich your existing data—see how well the vendor fills your gaps.

This tells you:

- Their coverage in your key segments
- The accuracy and freshness of their data
- How relevant it is to your GTM motion

> ## " Unknown testing is your stress test.

— Jeff Ignacio, Keystone AI

How to do it right:

- Clearly define your ICP (e.g., SaaS, 50–200 employees, DACH region, RevOps roles)
- Ask for 500–1,000 net-new records with key fields (email, mobile, title, company, etc.)
- Request source + last updated date
- Ask for monthly delivery estimates to gauge long-term scalability

Bonus Tip:

Overlay the vendor sample with your ICP heatmap to spot coverage gaps by persona or region.

2. Score Fill Rate & Deliverability

Raw contact volume is meaningless if the data isn't usable.

What to aim for:
- 60–70% of records with verified email + mobile
- < 5% email bounce rate (ideally <3%)
- Consistent formatting and job titles aligned with ICP

Test mobile numbers using dial tools, and always ask:
- How often is your data refreshed?
- How do you handle job changes?

> **" Fill rate tells you what's there. Deliverability tells you what works.**

— Antoine Cornet, Head of Revenue Operations at Cognism

3. Check Regional & Role-Based Depth

Database size ≠ usable coverage for you.

Evaluate:
- Strength by region (e.g., DACH, France, APAC—where many vendors fall short)
- Strength by persona (e.g., Finance, Legal, Product Ops often underrepresented)

Volume Isn't Just a Number

Choose vendors who can fill your ICP gaps, not just your database. Look for:
- ☑ Strong unknown test results
- ☑ High fill and low bounce rates
- ☑ Persona + region-specific depth
- ☑ Transparent data freshness and delivery

Data vendor scorecard

What important metrics help make decisions on the right data vendor to choose?

Fill rate

- % of records that include verified email and mobile

- % with complete job title, seniority, and company info

Bounce rate

- Run a small test campaign or validate emails through a deliverability tool like NeverBounce or ZeroBounce
- Target <5% bounce rate

Title/job relevance

- Are the job titles aligned with your ICP (e.g., not "Marketing Assistant" or "Sales Intern")?
- Does the seniority level make sense for your outreach goals?
- Are the contacts clearly decision-makers or influencers?

Recency of updates

- Are job titles current?
- Are company names and roles aligned with LinkedIn or other sources?
- When was the data last refreshed or verified?

> ## " You'd be surprised how many vendors will hand you old job data. Always ask for the 'last updated' field - or check a few manually on LinkedIn.

— Adam Thompson, Cognism CPO

Build a simple comparison table that looks something like this:

Metric	Vendor A	Vendor B	Vendor C
Sample size provided	1,000	1,000	1,000
Fill rate (email + mobile)	72%	65%	80%
Bounce rate (email test)	3.5%	7.2%	2.1%
Mobile coverage	68%	52%	77%
ICP match score (manual review)	High	Medium	High
Last verified/ updated field	✅	❌	✅
Regional accuracy (UK + DACH)	95%	78%	98%

Questions to ask data providers when looking for volume

- What % of your data was refreshed in the last 6 months?
- How many contacts match our ICP by region/persona?
- What's your monthly delivery capacity?
- What's your average bounce rate?
- Are there caps by credit, region, or seat?

How you know your data vendor is working for you

- CRM coverage increases 30%+ in 90 days
- Email bounce stays under 5%
- Mobile fill rate is 60%+
- Cost per usable contact drops over time
- Sales & Marketing actually use the data

> **" It's not just about how much data you get—it's how much you can use that counts.**
>
> — Adam Thompson, Cognism CPO

To maintain momentum (and secure budget for renewals), track these core KPIs monthly or quarterly:

Metric	Why It Matters
Match Rate by ICP Segment	Shows how well your vendor supports your GTM focus
Deliverability (Email & Phone)	Core usability metric—bounce/connect = trust
Conversion Rates	Lead → MQL → Opportunity → Closed-won
Outreach Productivity	Connect rate, reply rate, meeting booked rate
Cost per Usable Contact	Efficiency of your data investment
CRM Fill Rate	Measures how enriched and complete your data is

You can also pull in qualitative feedback:

- Are reps reporting more productive outreach?
- Is Marketing able to run new campaigns that were previously blocked due to data gaps?
- Are lead scoring models improving with richer data fields?