

DATA QUALITY MATTERS.



The quality and value of a central database is only as good as the integrity of the data being entered and maintained. For most organizations there are many players and points of data entry/collection. Identifying the key data fields to collect, having consistent processes to promote data integrity, and verification of data management practices and compliance are all crucial to building a meaningful and useful database.

Use Fields Consistently

Don't cheat. This may seem obvious but it's so easy for someone to say, 'well, I don't have a field of x-type of data so I'll just drop it into this empty field...' and just like that, your database is getting messy. Take time to customize your database and put your information where it belongs. As the saying goes, "a place for everything and everything in its place".

Timely Data Entry

Don't wait. We understand sometimes data is recorded on paper and entered later but don't wait! When data isn't in the system, it can't be reported on so letting data sit on paper or in spreadsheets means there's valuable information you aren't including in your reports.

Manage Duplicates

Duplicates happen. A good data system gives you functions to identify potential duplicate records and merge them. Use them and use them regularly. Make it a weekly task and it'll only take a few minutes, do it once a year and it becomes overwhelming.