



Singapore businesses at risk of losing millions of dollars from unreliable contact data

<http://www.networksasia.net/content/singapore-businesses-risk-losing-millions-dollars-unreliable-contact-data>

By Networks Asia Staff

29 Jul 11

A new survey highlights the importance businesses in Singapore attach to the accuracy of their contact data. The survey, conducted by Experian, also emphasizes the challenges companies face in ensuring data quality and the impact data inaccuracies can have on their bottom line.

Experian's survey revealed that despite 88% of businesses implementing a documented data quality strategy, 94% do not trust the accuracy of their contact data. Reasons cited by respondents for the lack of trust include human error (75%), lack of relevant technology and/or inadequacies in current technology (54%) and inadequate data quality strategy (34%).

"While it is encouraging to see that companies recognize the importance of high data quality and have strategies in place to ensure data accuracy, the lack of trust highlights that these are often not followed through," said Graeme Beardsell, Chief Customer Development and Marketing Officer, Experian Asia Pacific. "As business data continues to decay by approximately 37% each year, it is imperative that organisations re-evaluate strategies to stay on top of the data quality issue. It's equally critical to have a way of measuring the accuracy of their data over time, in order to be successful and maximize every dollar spent on customer engagement."

Organizations also believed that about 24% of their data were inaccurate, directly impacting on their bottom lines. The data showed that an average of 14% of departmental budgets is wasted due to contact data inaccuracies. Companies also reported that they had lost potential customers due to inaccurate data input (39%) and lack of complete data (28%). Other issues cited included sending emails to the wrong address (41%), duplicate mailings (37%) and misspelled names and address details (40%) negatively impacting the customers' perception of an organization's brand.

From an industry perspective, respondents in the financial services industry were more likely to experience challenges linked to data inaccuracies, compared with businesses in other industries including manufacturing and automotive, retail and distribution, utilities and telecoms and other public sector and non-profit organisations.

Experian has devised a four-point approach to help companies in Singapore better align systems and processes to break the causal chain of inaccurate contact data, leading to loss in efficiency, lost business opportunities and low levels of customer satisfaction, Experian believes that companies in Singapore need to consider the following:

1. Re-examine your data quality strategy – Companies need to focus on strategic objectives and ensure they are aligned with business goals. This can increase efficiency and cost savings, while improving customer communications and service delivery.
2. Align organizational processes with the data quality strategy – Companies need to identify common errors by reviewing the quality of existing data and how it flows through the organization. The data then needs to be cleaned through the removal of duplicate records and incorrect data. This will help create a single customer view and further reduce contact data errors.
3. Select the right technology tools to support your strategy – To do this, companies need to first analyze their use of data and which data is used most frequently. This will enable the organization to prioritize the data and determine how best to clean it. The data entry point should also be examined to find out the most effective tools to use for each channel.
4. Outline processes for continued measurement and improvement – Companies need to regularly review data quality strategies, evaluate the roles and responsibilities of staff involved, and revisit the viability of processes and technology tools that have been put in place to ensure a high-quality database. These reviews help measure the effectiveness of the overall process while identifying areas for further improvement.

Networks Asia Staff

