How to Maintain Your Phone Number Database

by James Miller - Monday, March 09, 2020

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If you use a marketing model that requires you to contact a lot of customers by phone, you probably have a phone number database.

Maybe you purchased a phone list or built your phone number database through lead generation. But, what do you know about each phone number on your phone lists? When you look at your phone list, can you answer these questions:

1. Is every phone number valid and connected?
2. Do I have the correct name for each phone number?
3. Are any of these phone numbers on the Do Not Call Registry?
4. Is it a cell or is it a landline?

Answering these questions about the phone numbers in your phone number database is important. If you don't know anything about the phone numbers on your phone list, your sales teams will waste a lot of time with disconnected numbers and calling the wrong people.

If you use your phone lists for SMS marketing, you'll waste a lot of money sending text messages to landlines.

And, worst of all, you could get slapped with some hefty fines for calling phone numbers that are on the Do Not Call list.

All of this reduces your business inefficiency and increases your customer acquisition costs. A poorly maintained phone number database could eat up all the profit margin from the first sale (or more), forcing you to depend on repeat purchases for revenue.

Here's how to maintain your phone number database, and answer all those pertinent questions about the phone numbers on your phone list. That way, you can depend on your phone number database to make you money.

Phone number database maintenance best practices

Maintaining your phone number databases is a combination of data cleaning, data enhancement, and data management.

Yes, you need to quality control the phone numbers and information in your phone number database. But, you also need to handle your data properly, to avoid data errors and data integrity issues.

This is what you need to do.

Organize your phone lists

This might sound simple. And, your phone list may be fairly organized already. But, organizing your phone number database goes beyond just sorting your phone list alphabetically by name.

You also need to create separate columns in your phone list for each piece of information you have about the phone numbers. So, you should have separate columns for first and last names, location data (street address, city, state, zip code), and the phone numbers themselves.

Organizing your phone lists will make it easier to use [data cleansing](#) and data enhancement on your lists. And, good organization makes it easier for your sales teams to use the phone number efficiently. For example, if it's easy to see which state a phone number is in, your salespeople can make sure they call at an appropriate time, based on the time zone.

Or, if you're running a [geo targeted campaign](#), you can easily sort the phone numbers by zip code.

So, organize your data first.

Backup your phone number database

This *should* go without saying. But, a surprising number of businesses have no backup plan for their data. There are all sorts of things that can go wrong. So, it's vital that you backup your phone number database.

Enough said.

Limit who can access your phone number database

In general, only people who *need* to use the phone numbers in your phone number database should have access to it. And, you should limit who can edit the data to just those who need to make changes to perform their jobs.

For instance, sales reps who make cold calls will need access to edit your phone number database. That way they can update the information and add notes to help other sales team members.

Anyone who's not directly involved in your telemarketing campaigns doesn't need access. Or, if they have access, it should be read-only.

Controlling who can edit the data in your phone number databases helps prevent errors from being introduced into your phone lists. If you have more people editing the data, you're going to get more typos and data entry errors. So, fewer hands in the pot is better.

Add phone numbers directly to your phone list

Some companies have a process where they collect phone numbers and store them in a database. Then, they transfer the newly collected phone numbers to the phone number database that they actually use for phone marketing.

This two-step process is not only inefficient, it presents opportunities for data entry errors.

It's best to create a system where new phone numbers are checked and added directly to your phone list. This makes your process more efficient and helps keep bad data out of your database.

The most efficient way to do this is by connecting your lead generation system directly to your phone number database, and filtering the incoming phone numbers with an API, like the Searchbug phone validator API.

The phone validator API integrates with your lead generation form, and checks the phone numbers as they're entered. That way, you'll spot disconnected phone numbers, disconnected phone numbers, and phone numbers on the Do Not Call list before they ever get into your database.

It's the most efficient way to protect your phone number database from bad data.

Improve your phone number database

Continually adding phone numbers to your phone list is necessary for business growth. But, you should also use data enhancement to add information *about* the phone numbers on your phone lists. That way, sales teams have more information to personalize sales pitches (and make more sales).

If you have just names and phone numbers, you can use a data append service like the Searchbug batch append service to get physical addresses and email addresses for all your phone numbers.

ARE YOU MISSING PERSONAL CONTACT INFORMATION FOR YOUR CONSUMER OR BUSINESS CUSTOMER RECORDS?

This do it yourself data append tool makes it quick and easy to update your list of database records. Find names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses.

THERE ARE NO MINIMUM OR MAXIMUM NUMBER OF RECORDS. PROCESS JUST A FEW OR A MILLION RECORDS.

UPLOAD TXT, CSV OR EXCEL FILE TO GET STARTED

| CHOOSE FILE | No file chosen | Enter E-mail Address | CONTINUE |

This enables you to diversify your marketing channels and gives your sales teams some geographic data

to work with when developing their pitches.

Remove bad data

Even if you check phone numbers as they're entered with a phone validator API and enhance your phone data, people change their phone numbers all the time. Customer databases are like cars: they start to break down as soon as you build them.

So, you need to clean your phone number database periodically.

If you purchase phone lists, simply merge your purchased phone lists with your existing phone number database, then clean and update your entire database. This way, you check new phone numbers as they're added. And, you run through your existing database to find phone numbers that have gone out of date or were added to the Do Not Call list.

A bulk phone validator will take care of this for you. For example, you can simply upload your list to the Searchbug batch phone validator to check all the phone numbers. It usually takes just a few minutes to get your updated list. So, you can get back to making calls.

That way, you don't lose efficiency and money as the phone numbers on your list change owners, get ported from being a landline to a cell phone, or get added to the Do Not Call list.

Make more money…

If you follow these steps to maintain your phone number database, your phone lists will become more profitable. And, your marketing efficiency will improve. You'll be spending less money to make more money. That's how business is done.

What to do now

If you want to implement some of these best practices *right now*, use these tools:

Validate all the phone numbers on your list with the Searchbug **bulk phone validator**.

Get more contextual information about all your phone numbers with the Searchbug **batch append tool**.

Protect your phone number database with data integration using the **Searchbug API**.

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