

Data automation: The next level of data quality

Data quality has been both a key concern and objective for businesses in recent years. With a massive disruption in consumer buying behaviours and the rising popularity of digital channels, sound data quality has been crucial to rapid response and decision-making. That said, while data quality is essential, with such swift transformation in the market, data automation is necessary for business agility. Our latest research report uncovered that 86% of business leaders believe that they need to automate their data quality activities to overcome skills shortages, reduce effort, and speed up data analysis. In this article, we will discuss the importance of data automation, examples of automation in action, and how you can achieve it for your business.

Defining automation versus augmentation

Before we detail the benefits of data automation, it's important to define what it is in comparison to emerging concepts like data augmentation. Data automation involves the use of data quality tools to automate the gathering, processing, and analysis of data. From there, it's up to user interpretation what to do next. By contrast, with data augmentation, you can use technology like machine learning to automate the extraction of new data from existing data. The primary benefit of this is the ability to model scenarios so that your business can remain prepared across a range of both expected and unexpected changes in the marketplace. The biggest takeaway here is that data automation lays the groundwork for data augmentation. Therefore, achieving automation is necessary to realise the next level of high data quality.



Benefits of data automation

Our latest research report paints the picture well. We asked business leaders what improvements they expected to come of data quality automation and here's how they responded.

92% expect business resilience

Business resilience is your ability to respond to extreme changes in market conditions, whether that be a new competitor, a disruption in pricing, or a global pandemic. Think of companies who continue to expand work from home opportunities as part of their response to employee satisfaction. To engage this change in workforce preferences, companies have been required to sophisticate IT workflows, adjust management style, reconfigure salary scales, and so much more. This is a huge undertaking, which is why automated data quality is key to ongoing maintenance of your resilience plans.

85% expect revenue to increase

Efficiency is always an essential business goal, and that should be especially true when it comes to handling your data. For example, we see this now with strained supply chains across the globe. While the situation seems to be improving, the outlook is fragile and another shock to your supply chain could present itself at any time. Data automation allows you to manage such challenges by ensuring the data that your customers manually input is valid and correct at the point of entry. In turn, you can avoid further shipping and communication delays and even optimise future campaigns, all of which will have a substantial impact on your bottom line.

83% expect digital transformation

Digital transformation occurs when businesses are prepared to keep up with advancing technology and consumer buying behaviours. The past few years have certainly shown the importance of being able to quickly adjust your digital strategy. Take retailers for example – they have aggressively sought new ways to engage customers and serve their needs. As a result, we're witnessing the biggest boom in online shopping, delivery service apps, enticing loyalty and rewards programs, and immersive digital campaigns that we've ever seen. In this competitive environment, data quality automation allows you to quickly generate insights that help you serve your customers' wants and needs.

Picturing data automation

It's clear that data automation should be a key focus for a modern business. But what does data automation look like? Here are a few examples.

Filling online forms

Customers are online shopping at unprecedented rates. When they do so, the experience should be seamless and simple. This is especially true when it comes to the checkout process. With contact data solutions, you can automatically populate a customer's information as they go to checkout, and even correct their name and mailing address before it (1) enters your database and (2) creates a delivery problem or unsatisfactory experience.

Merging multiple databases

Understanding your customer base is crucial for targeted marketing and improving operational strategy. However, on average, organisations are managing up to 19 databases at a time. You can imagine how much more difficult it is to understand your customer when their information is spread across various sources with different formats and baselines of information. That's where an automation tool can help to consolidate, format, and deduplicate your data to give you a trusted and holistic view of your customers.

Kickstarting a marketing campaign

While you can manually clean your data, it's not ideal. It takes up an impractical amount of time, has high susceptibility to human error, and you can't validate that your contacts are real and working. Consider that you're launching an email marketing campaign and your data hasn't been properly or completely cleansed. Some of your communications will end up in the wrong inbox or never be delivered. That can be costly, minimise ROI on your marketing spend and time, and weaken engagement with your customers. A data cleansing tool can turn hours into minutes by automating the removal of incorrect, incomplete, duplicate and improperly formatted data. In turn, this saves you money and improves your customers' experience.

Almost half of business leaders are using a standalone data quality platform

Experian can help

Aperture Data Studio is a one-stop shop data quality platform. With our tool, you can create and automate a consistent, accurate, holistic view of your consumer data. We provide a scalable way to validate, cleanse, de-duplicate, and enrich data from any source with the ultimate goal of enabling you to output improved consumer marketing and regulatory efforts.

Speak to our data quality experts today and start your journey to data automation

