



Merging — 40 certain, 21 uncertain

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61 pairs · fictional document

Fictional document — demonstration example

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Fictional document, produced for demonstration. **The survivorship rule, not the detection, is the real subject of a merge.**

The 61 pairs, by degree of certainty

Matching criterion	Count	Given as
Same company registration number	26	Certain
Same address and same legal name	14	Certain
Similar legal name, different address	21	Uncertain — escalated

Why merging is not mechanical

Possible survivorship rule	Result when two values differ
Most recent wins	Overwrites verified data with a hurried entry
Most complete wins	Favours the wordiest record, not the most accurate

Possible survivorship rule	Result when two values differ
The owning salesperson's wins	Depends on who owns, not on what is true

Those three rules give three different results, and a badly set merge destroys information without leaving a trace.

What it takes to write to delegate it

Element	Effect
Field priority order	Makes the merge reproducible
Retention period of the absorbed record	Makes every merge reversible

Once the rule is written	Time
Merging the 40 certain pairs	Overnight
Deciding the 21 uncertain, with what joins and separates them	Seconds per pair

61 duplicates means 61 companies called twice by two salespeople unaware of each other.

For the company to write

Field priority order: _____

Retention period of the absorbed record: _____ days