



TeraTech News

Tools for Programmers

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Data Entry Woes: Why Does It Matter?

By Beth Barnett

Does your company have more than one database, possibly several databases, with the same names and contact information? It might be your clients, your members, your partners or your contacts. This duplication of databases has gotten worse with the growth of online transactions -- e-commerce. Even companies that have one integrated administrative database frequently don't have the admin database integrated with the website. Main reason: the admin database(s) are in the office, on the network, and the website database is at the web hosting company.

Everyone knows that this duplication adds unnecessary work for office staff. It creates duplicate data entry -- the same change of address has to be entered twice. It causes mistakes. For example, the change of address card might get to the customer service department but not to the accounting department. It is possible to needlessly lose touch with an important contact when someone else in the company knows how to reach the person.

But additional administrative costs are only the tip of the iceberg. Have you thought about the lost revenue?



Let's say you lose a customer because the advertising or marketing mailings are no longer getting to him or her. What is the value of a customer to your company? Depending on the kind of work, it could be anywhere from \$200 to \$200,000! Let's say the value of a customer is \$2000. If 10 customers are lost in 1 year, that is \$20,000 in lost revenue.

There are other hidden negative effects. Interruptions in service cause the company reputation to be diminished. Wrong contact information means lost opportunities to make additional sales to the same client. Late payments due to misdirected invoices increase debt and interest payments.

There are ways to solve the duplicate database problem, even when it means getting the website to talk to the internal administrative database(s). There are options. Real-time or batch processing. Staffs review prior to updating the admin database.

Add up the value. Lost revenue: \$20,000. Additional expense (staff salaries, returned mail): \$5,000. Opportunity costs: \$4,000. Interest expense: \$50. Almost \$30,000 a year for our example company.

Duplicate databases aren't just a staff annoyance, they are a money loser.

Seven Tips for Successful Online Membership Renewal

By Michael Smith

Posted on

www.associationinsite.org

1. Make it easy.

Make renewal easy. Don't make people re-enter their address and other data -- provide it on screen to let them edit it. Figure out what options members pick most and make those options easiest to select. Laid out your screens clearly and make them easy to read (and to print out too in case people need to get your pricing approved by their boss). Allow for an automated annual renewal using a credit card kept on file.



2. Link directly to your accounting system and AMS

Your website should automatically enter member renewal and payment information into your AMS (Association Management System) and not require re-entry by your staff. This avoids mistakes and means the data is instantly updated instead of there being days of delay for the update. If you accept credit cards charge the credit card while the member is renewing the membership. Keep all the data secure by the use of SSL encryption.

3. Allow for address updates

Let your members update their own addresses online while they renew. You can have the "before" and "after" addresses be previewed by your staff before sending to your database if you are worried about data quality. Don't make people have to phone in with address changes.

4. Up sell other options such as journals and conferences

When members are renewing their membership they are thinking positively about your association. Let them buy other options such as journals and conferences at the same time. Consider giving a discount for doing so. If you accept donations then allow that on the renewal form. You might also give a discount for referring a friend for membership.

5. Personalized Alert days left in membership on website

If you have a member's only section of your website show the number of days they have left in their membership on the website (this is personalized information for that member), together with a link to your renewal page. As the number of days decreases make this text larger.

6. Automatically email renewal notice with link logon

Automatically email renewal notices to only those members who have not renewed. Do this 60, 30 and 1 day before their membership expires. In the email give a link that includes their userID, so that when they click on it they can automatically go to the renewal screen with their membership info filled in.

7. Provide receipt via automatic return email

After your member has renewed online automatically email them a receipt and thank you note immediately. This both gives them a record of their purchase and is good customer service.

Value of online renewal

Online renewal provides many values to an association:

- Improves renewal percentage, more pay, pay earlier in the year.
- Cuts down on mailing costs.
- Gets the member to the website, builds relationship.
- Automates database correction.
- Opens opportunity for cross marketing.
- Gives association a modern, efficient appearance.

Whether Writing or Reading— People Hate Resumes



Just about everybody thinks that writing a [good] résumé is the most odious task in job hunting, but few realize that *reading* them falls in the same category for most managers. At least there is no conflicting information on how to read a resume—because there is no information! This is possibly the only managerial action in the world that does not have at least six how-to books devoted to it.

It's not rocket science to know that reading resumes takes time. And the payoff is iffy—you win some, you lose some. The payoff for not reading resumes is absolute. No ifs, ands, or buts—you lose. So the trick is to increase your resume-reading skill, which will increase your productivity, as opposed to just spending more time.

Whether a resume is chronological or functional, straightforward or fancy, long or short, the most important point to remember is that you are *not* hiring the resume. It's merely the brochure for a potentially interesting "product" that may solve your "problem." Its' purpose is to lure you into having a "demo" so that you'll "buy" it.

(Continued Next Month)

Training Schedule

<http://www.teratech.com/training/>

Held at TeraTech Inc
405 East Gude Drive Ste 207
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ColdFusion Classes	Dates
CF101 ColdFusion Intro Seminar	January 17 th 2004
CF102 Introduction to ColdFusion	January 20 th 2004
CF201 Building ColdFusion	January 27 th 2004
CF202 508 & ColdFusion	February 3 rd 2004
CF206 ColdFusion SQL Skills	March 16 th 2004

Fusebox Classes	Dates
FB 100 Welcome to Fusebox	February 7 th 2004
FB101 Introduction to Fusebox	February 17 th 2004
FB201 Intermediate Fusebox	February 18 th 2004

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