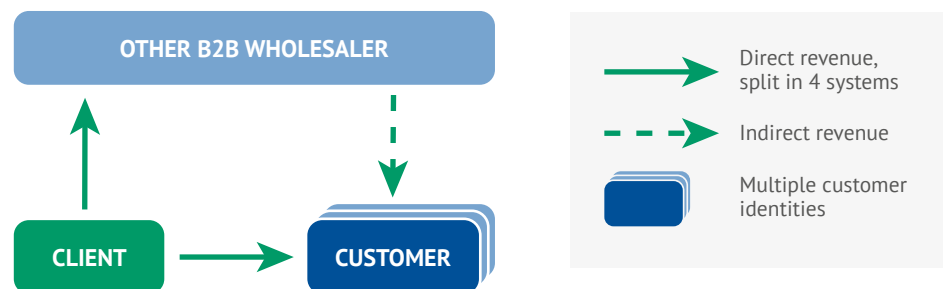# Where CRM is missing: Towards an integrated view of customer data

B2B wholesale company has gained transparency on customer transaction data across several ERP systems. Duplicate customers were detected and transparency on delivery channels created – our solution allows a targeted steering of the customer base.

Challenge

Given a history of multiple acquisitions, the client has **subdivisions with different ERP systems,** containing customer master data and transaction history data. Due to a lack of integration and no working CRM system in place, the customer data is spread across four different systems. To get a view on basic metrics like revenue per customer, the **customer data has to be manually extracted from all systems**. Even within each of the systems, one **customer may have multiple identities**, further complicating the data effort.

As an additional challenge, the client sells to other B2B wholesale companies, who then sell to other end-users. These end-users may partially also be existing customers of our client already, or currently just indirectly served customers. Our client therefore wants to **develop a view on the split of direct and indirect business** with each customer. Since all the products are directly shipped from our client to end-users, we could use delivery addresses as unique identifiers helping to identify the end-users behind and leveraging geographic external data.

OTHER B2B WHOLESALER

CLIENT

CUSTOMER

Direct revenue, split in 4 systems

Indirect revenue

Multiple customer identities

Solution

1 Integrate data across systems

01. Define required output metrics for each customer (e.g. master data, revenue, quantities, margin, order channels, etc.)

02. Pull data extracts from all related systems, both master data and transaction data.

03. Create mapping logic of data fields, focusing on the defined relevant metrics.

04. Build fuzzy-match workflow to identify potential duplicates and same customers across systems, utilizing available data:

- Customer name
- Address
- Phone and Fax number
- E-Mail
- IBAN
- Tax number

05. Create customer matching table based on confidence level of fuzzy-match, manually check cases where matches are doubtful.

> **Insights:**
> For the integration it is necessary to **clearly define the output metrics first**. This allows a focus on the relevant fields and speeds up the process tremendously (<6 weeks for integration). As a working hypothesis the **fuzzy-match results can be accepted up to a conservative confidence level**. For backward harmonization in ERP/accounting systems, manually checks of results need to be conducted by the marketing and sales department.

2 Determine indirect revenue per customer

01. Fuzzy-match the delivery addresses of shipments to other B2B wholesalers within the customer base.

02. Re-allocate revenue as "indirect" to the identified address-customer matches.

03. Take remaining addresses and perform Google Maps API queries:

- Identify all related businesses around the delivery address using automatic queries.
- Filter businesses by industry keywords.
- Determine most likely B2B end-customer.
- Extract public customer master data (e.g. phone number, website, mail address, etc.).

> **Insights:**
> To identify new customers not present in own systems, **Google Maps API** offers a great source of information to learn about the identity and basic information of these customers. Often certain types of businesses are geographically clustered e.g. car workshops – here it is necessary to constrain the geographic search very narrowly. Alternatively, **industry specific databases** or yellow pages can be utilized.

Results

With the implemented solution, the client was able to put his customer analytics to a new level:

- Allow an integrated view on each customer from a whole company perspective.
  This has helped the client to:
    - Learn about their customer base (e.g. largest customers, loss customers, etc.)
    - Steer the sales force towards the important clients
    - Adjust marketing activities

- Identify "new" customers that are already served through indirect channels but have not yet been targeted directly.

Example:
It was found that one of the main B2B wholesale competitors is buying through an indirect channel, making use of special promotions of our client. In addition, thousands of new customers where identified and could be targeted directly to steer flows from indirect to direct sales.

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