

10

THE
DIGITAL
DATA
QUALITY

PLAYBOOK

TEN
STEPS TO
DATA QUALITY
NIRVANA

ObservePoint

Observe Point

THE DIGITAL DATA QUALITY PLAYBOOK

Ten Steps to Data Quality Nirvana

There is a big difference between having data and having correct data. But collecting correct, compliant digital data is a journey, not a destination. Here are ten steps to get you to data quality nirvana.

1

PROMOTE THE DATA CHAMPION





THE FIRST STEP
towards data quality

N I R V A N A

is to assign ownership to data quality. A data quality owner should have the right background and authority to

**INFLUENCE ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICES
AND BELIEFS**

**STRONG TECHNICAL
BACKGROUND**

Competency with the technology and familiarity with the platforms each digital property is built upon is a must.

SENIORITY

A person with context, influence, and trust improves the odds you'll have a better marketing technology ROI.

**UNDERSTAND BUSINESS
VALUE OF DATA**

Understand and create dialogue about the requirements, purposes, and methods of data collection.

DATA ORIENTATION

A data-oriented steward understands the effects of breakage, knows where to look for problems, and will choose effective corrective actions.

2

DEFINE GOVERNANCE FOR DATA QUALITY



Data collection and governance best practices revolve around three key processes:

NEW TAGS

Create clear, consistent business process for adding data collection. Integrate with development and content deployment cycles.

VERIFY TAGS

Confirm variables are properly populating and code functions as expected under all conditions. Ensure data collection is consistent as possible across browsers, devices, geographies, and does not hurt the user experience.

CONDUCT AUDITS

Deploy a process to confirm that tag deployments are maintained over time. Websites have enough moving parts and enough people touching code that tagging problems are common and frequent.

Tag auditing solutions are designed to improve accuracy and mitigate the challenges associated with tag-sourced data. Tag Management Systems are a step in the right direction, but they do not reduce the need for Quality Assurance processes.



DEPLOY A DATA QUALITY ASSURANCE PLATFORM



DATA QUALITY MATTERS

Web Analytics, Advertising, Testing tools, DMPs and TMSes are only as good as the data they process. Data Quality Assurance confirms that the source of this data – the tags on your website, in your video, and in your apps – are deployed correctly and completely.

MEASURE AND IMPROVE DATA QUALITY

Compared to the cost of traditional Quality Assurance processes and the risk associated with bad digital data, can't afford to not deploy Data Quality Assurance.

IMPROVE ROI IN ALL DIGITAL

Consistently complete, correct, and compliant data improves the ROI of your entire digital marketing technology stack.

WHAT IS IT?

More than simple tag scans, Data Quality Assurance offers solution-specific data confirmation, complex tag verification, proactive alerting for all digital marketing channels and content types.

4

AUDIT DATA COLLECTION REGULARLY



Launching scheduled site audits ensures that verification and validation of your data collection environment becomes part of your organization's digital DNA. Start with weekly and monthly scans.

WEEKLY “DIFFERENCE” SCANS DETECT WHAT HAS CHANGED

Many websites change on a continuous basis. Your tagging should keep up with the change, and this means that you should be testing early and often.

For highly effective difference scans, only audit at pages that have changed. Simply feed ObservePoint a list of changed URLs to confirm they are tagged properly.

MONTHLY “FULL” SCANS VALIDATE BASELINE DATA QUALITY

Monthly complete scans confirm data collection is occurring as planned and create lists to repair the problem quickly.

Regular site audits promote high quality data pollution by providing validation and documentation necessary to steer clear of tagging problems.



AUDIT DATA COLLECTION ONCE, TWICE, THREE TIMES



Web site content is constantly added, changed, and retired, and this creates tracking challenges. Data Quality Assurance helps you manage for these changes while still being productive with your other duties.

“We have 40 or 50 developers dedicated to the website and we roll code twice a week. [Before ObservePoint], we didn’t have an easy process to validate page tagging on such a frequent basis. I needed to hand check new or altered pages with each roll-out, which could easily lead to missed errors in the tags.”

—Tim Munsell, lead Web Analyst at DaveRamsey.com

A THREEFOLD AUDITING STRATEGY IS PRESCRIBED FOR ALL NEW CONTENT

- 1 Test frequently during the development process** — Audit multiple times during any large-scale deployment effort. This instills resources throughout your company with data collection best practices. Share the results with developers and project managers when appropriate.
- 2 Test often during quality assurance and testing phases** — Closely monitor the data being passed to your analytical systems after your development project has passed into your QA environment.
- 3 Test immediately following deployment to confirm data is being collected as planned** — Confirm data collection has successfully migrated from the development and staging environments to the production environment. When problems are identified in this phase, act quickly to correct them. Assign resources to post-deployment efforts tasked with ensuring data collection is correct.

THE PAY-OFF

The deployment process is not considered complete until all aspects of the code are deemed functional in a production environment including data collection code. Commitment to data accuracy and utility within the broader enterprise means asterisks next to numbers are seldom seen.

6

SET PROACTIVE ALERTS



Breakage of web measurement code is harmful to business processes and early detection is challenging. Problems can go unseen until the forest fire is raging unless you've configured a proactive alerting system. Proactive alerting helps you detect tagging errors before they become data disasters.

WHAT IS A PROACTIVE ALERTING SYSTEM?

Proactive alerting is a continuous background testing process that verifies the deployment and function of tags. And when a test fails, you're notified immediately. ObservePoint Data Quality Assurance verifies the functionality of tags by executing javascript on the web site. This is vital because tagging scripts can still exist on a page but either execute incorrectly or fail to execute altogether.



PROACTIVE, POWERFUL AND PRACTICAL

When tagging on any page fails or is out of compliance with the test criteria, ObservePoint sends alerts.

END RESULT

With proactive alerts, ObservePoint becomes a key part of measuring and improving data quality.

7

THE DATA QUALITY MANAGEMENT PROCESS



Analyzing audit and simulation data is where you will make data quality improvement recommendations, and confirm changes. There are two modes in the data quality assurance process.

AGILE MODE

In agile mode, you're cleaning up tagging issues that have already happened. It's a necessary task, but you'll see immediate benefits. Your Data Quality Assurance platform helps you get faster, more accurate results so you can take effective corrective action.

PROACTIVE MODE

In proactive mode, you're preventing future tagging issues. This happens through regularly scheduled audits and simulations in established core content areas, ad-hoc audits in beta environments, and simulations in coordination with campaigns.

RECOGNIZE TRIGGERS

The first step to improving data quality is recognizing the signs of poor data before anyone else does. These triggers are your signal to perform quality assurance. Triggers come in two types: external and internal.

External triggers are things you don't have control or insight into, but nevertheless impact digital data. For example, website code updates, a question about data quality from a coworker, or a breach. Agility in responding to external triggers is key to maintaining data quality.

Internal triggers are places where you have control

and insight, like the deployment of new tags or planned launch of new web content. Internal triggers allow you to be proactive and build in baseline quality assurance processes.

TARGET THE RIGHT CONTENT

You must focus your QA efforts on the right content. Knowing the priorities of your business and how those are mapped to your measurement is vital. Identifying whether you are acting based on an internal or external trigger helps you focus your efforts and configure your tools to get the most value with the least work.

MAKE IMPACTFUL RECOMMENDATIONS

After audit results are generated, you must analyze the data. This might mean regression testing, in-context QA or going back to documentation. Your job is to communicate clearly and efficiently to stakeholders what needs to be repaired.

Ideally, you will combine proactive and agile methods of data quality assurance. Where you have control and a steady baseline, regularly scheduled audits detect anomalies that can creep in. This leaves you overhead to deal with external triggers. ObservePoint Data Quality Management makes all of this faster and more accurate than any other solution.



CONFIRM COMPLEX INTEGRATIONS

DIGITAL MARKETERS
have become accustomed to
complex, dynamic technology integrations
that create data in specific ways based on visitor behavior.

Testing the proper functionality of this tooling has historically been a

LABORIOUS PROCESS

requiring specialized browser-based tools, careful interpretation of raw data, and manual logging in purpose-built excel files.

ADVANTAGES OF DQA

With

OBSERVEPOINT DATA QUALITY ASSURANCE
the most complicated
validation processes become automatic.

Verification of complex integrations becomes a

MACHINE-DRIVEN

background process.

LEVERAGE AUDITS FOR DOCUMENTATION



Ideally, you'd have a quarterly review of your Solution Design Document, and revise it regularly to maintain an accurate reflection of which data is being collected.

BACK IN THE REAL WORLD

Although a great deal of time is spent developing thorough documents about data collection and technology integrations, many of these documents are never revised. Meanwhile online properties change rapidly and often. As a result, when someone has a valid question about why or how data is being collected there is little real, reliable documentation available.

LEVERAGE AUDITS FOR DOCUMENTATION

ObservePoint Data Quality Assurance generates documentation about the current state of digital integrations. According to Tim Munsell, lead Web Analyst at DaveRamsey.com, "The report we get from ObservePoint is a more useful and accurate reflection of our implementation than our original documentation. We are able to export our audit to Excel and essentially work backwards, making sure that the data collected on each page on our site matches our business requirements."

An audit report is a true-to-life assessment of what tags are actually doing on your site. Data exports from ObservePoint can be packaged for a variety of users to address specific needs faster than an SDR can be generated or updated.



PREVENT DATA LEAKAGE

CONSIDER THESE FIVE SCENARIOS:

- 1** An employee leaves the company to work for a direct competitor but maintains access to traffic and revenue data through unknown deployment of analytical tools.
- 2** An agency deploys tools with questionable PII collection and handling practices.
- 3** A TMS is deployed in an effort to consolidate the chain of authority for controlling site tags, but others circumvent this process and deploy tags outside of the TMS to meet their own needs.
- 4** A third-party vendor deploys tracking that sells data to other third parties, potentially exposing your data to direct competitors.
- 5** A policy bans particular technologies on all sites, yet these tags continue to appear.

Deploying data collection systems without a clear plan for maintaining accuracy, validity, and security of data collected is undoubtedly a poor practice. ObservePoint Data Quality Assurance detects hundreds of technologies, many of which you may be unaware of. With this data, you can reduce the risks of data leakage.

CONCLUSION

Digital data is a treasure trove of information for business online. But effectively leveraging this data requires it to be complete, accurate, and truly reflective of visitor behavior online. ObservePoint Data Quality Assurance is the only enterprise-class platform that empowers your team to be proactive and agile about tagging QA.

1-855-TRUTH NOW

 observepoint.com 

We'll see you there.

Observe Point