



2019 BUYERS GUIDE

3 'Gotchas' to Avoid When Evaluating B2B Data Providers for Sales

SUMMARY

As sales professionals, we understand the need for data providers – but we’re also aware that these vendors are a dime a dozen, and they’re all ready to provide us with versions of the same promise: *quality leads to increase win rates*. While the latter mention of increased win rates is inarguable if and when you see those numbers spike, the quality part is, well, always subjective – rendering the guarantee suspect.

Quality data may come in various shapes and sizes, but the one thing that is certain is you can’t recognize quality if you don’t know what you’re looking at; *if the data at your disposal isn’t transparent*.

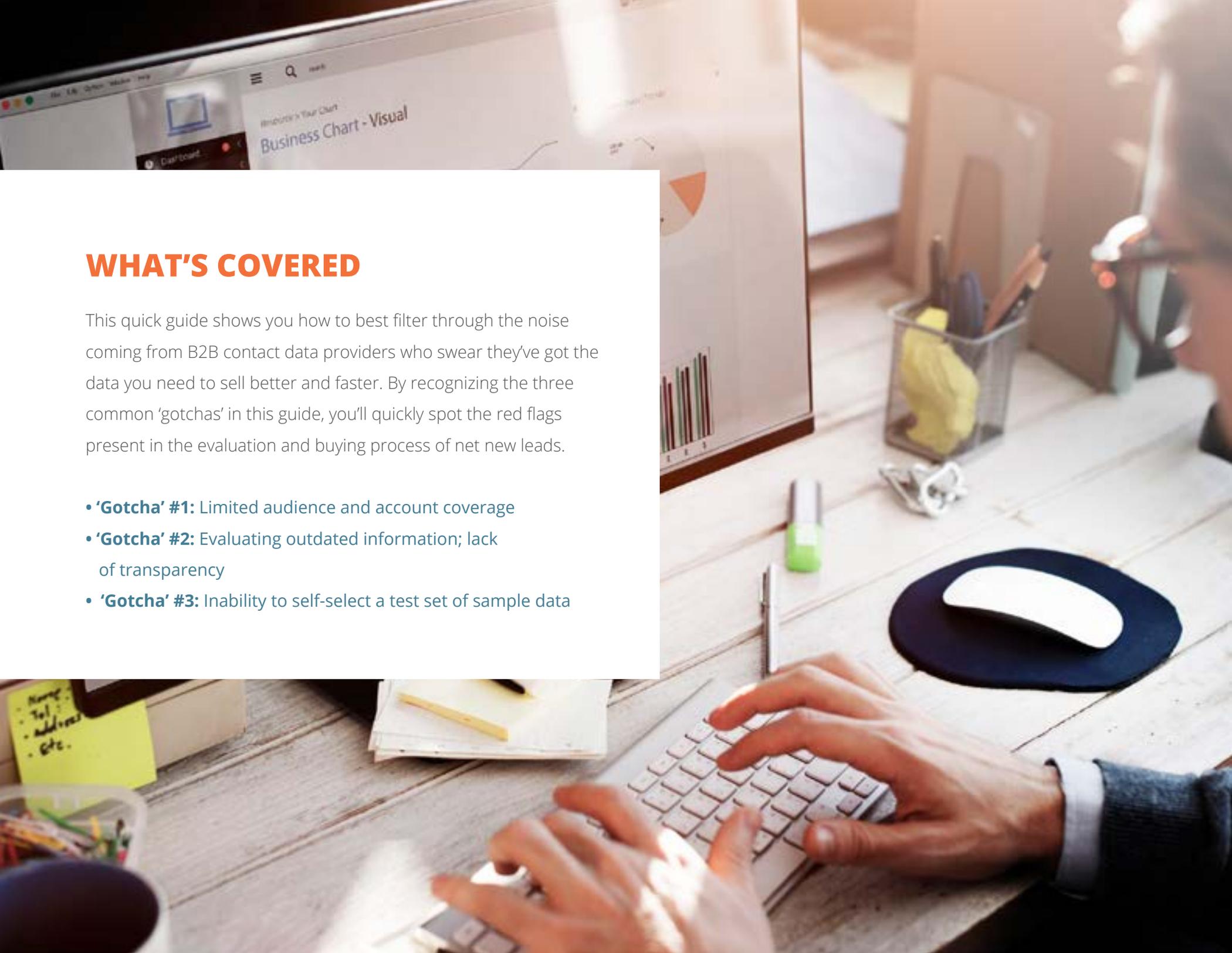
In this guide, we’ll refine our discussion of data to focus on what’s at the heart of every sales pro’s outreach initiatives and the driver of more conversations – the makings of **contact and account data** (from email addresses and direct dial phone numbers to job functions and management levels).

Data vendors who arm reps with a complete picture of prospects by offering a *free trial* (as an ideal scenario) before campaign execution, are better able to make good on their promise of delivering value – and quality data.

The ability to screen a contact data provider is akin to taking a test drive at the car dealership before committing to a purchase. So, when evaluating providers, B2B contact data vendors who transparently deliver targeted, net new contacts matching your criteria of firmographic and demographic benchmarks, are the ones best suited to present you with an array of long-term campaign benefits. Better yet, through a free trial, the prospect profiles and contact information should be workable in your preferred workspace, which will show how this information can reduce your time researching -- causing a corresponding reduction in lead to revenue and response time.



38% of salespeople say getting a response from prospects is getting harder ([source](#)).

A person is working at a desk in a bright, modern office. The desk is made of light-colored wood. On the desk, there is a laptop, a mouse on a dark blue mousepad, a green highlighter, a pen, and a small container with pens and pencils. In the background, a large computer monitor displays a business dashboard with various charts and graphs. The person's hands are visible, typing on the laptop keyboard. The overall atmosphere is professional and productive.

WHAT'S COVERED

This quick guide shows you how to best filter through the noise coming from B2B contact data providers who swear they've got the data you need to sell better and faster. By recognizing the three common 'gotchas' in this guide, you'll quickly spot the red flags present in the evaluation and buying process of net new leads.

- **'Gotcha' #1:** Limited audience and account coverage
- **'Gotcha' #2:** Evaluating outdated information; lack of transparency
- **'Gotcha' #3:** Inability to self-select a test set of sample data

———— GOTCHA #1 ————

Limited audience and account coverage

When it comes to the audience data used to fuel your selling strategy, the more you have at your disposal, the greater your ability to choose the right leads to contact. But, not every B2B data vendor boasts the breadth of coverage and volume of data you need to effectively and intelligently scale, segment, and deploy your outreach initiatives.

In other words, the ability to taste-test the data (does the Pepsi Challenge ring a bell?) will prove indispensable to your evaluation process. How else will you know if the vendor in question serves your niche market? Similarly, if you're covering a broader range of industries, how will you know if the data vendor you're considering even covers them? The honest answer – you won't; not without access to the vendor's actual data sets.

Red flag: The promise of quality, underemphasizing the importance quantity

To better understand your buyers, there's little benefit to compromising quantity for quality. Just as scientists prefer to

draw conclusions from experiments tested in as many variables as possible – often to as many people as possible – so too are marketers and sales pros better able to assess and perfect the performance of their outreach with access to more of the right data.

Best practice: Request a free trial; doing so will allow you to best understand the data in your possession and ensure the data set is capable of connecting you with more *ideal* customers, faster.

B2B data providers who understand the role and value of both – quality and quantity of data – are better able to infuse your selling initiatives with the data needed to test segments, small or large, of information and zero in on the insights delivered more accurately.



“According to a Top Challenges of the Inside Sales Industry 2017 report by AA-ISP, in partnership with ZoomInfo, both sales leaders and reps cite lead quantity and quality as the most pressing and growing challenge in need of addressing to date.” ([source](#))

GOTCHA #2

Purchasing outdated information; lack of transparency

Fact: your selling strategy is only as good as the data that powers it. And most of the time, the data you're using doesn't come with a freshness guarantee stamp, so it's up to you to ask the vendors you're evaluating the right questions in regards to the recency – and quality – of their data. Ask the vendor: Does your solution have an adequate breadth of relevant coverage? And if so, ask them to prove it.

While sheer volume within a vendor's contact and account coverage is critical to your selection, the volume of irrelevant contacts is not. For this reason, the right data vendor will go the distance to provide you with a free trial that's fully customizable to your needs.

Red flag: Rigid, one-size-fits-all-data, with no time-stamps or "last verification dates."

How do you know if you're dealing with a whole lot of generic data? When testing your free trial, try filtering by recency, and considering only the last six to 12 months.

Best practice: Have a pool of your best reps test the contact & account data through a free trial.

As the reps become more accustomed to the platform, ask how much more effective they are in their day-to-day prospecting. Is the information about contacts and accounts easy to navigate? How about the actual outreach? Are they connecting with the right people through direct dial phone numbers and email addresses provided or is the information outdated?



Between 10-25% of an average B2B organization's customer and prospect records "include critical data errors ranging from incorrect demographic data to a lack of current disposition" ([source](#)).

GOTCHA #3

Inability to incorporate the data within your actual workflow

Of course, great data will help – thus, inventory and quality are king. However, the vendors who merge these qualities with key integrations to make their data accessible are even more potent.

Red flag: B2B data vendors whose data platform lack integrations.

Think about your CRM, sales automation tools, or even common prospecting environments (e.g. LinkedIn). These data-dependent applications and environments. For instance, the sales reporting and performance tracking is only as good as the data within the CRM. That nifty sales automation tool (auto-dialers, email sends) won't work if the contact data inputted is full of errors. Finally, wouldn't it be great if you could actually reach out to that perfect prospect you found on LinkedIn?

Best practice: After analyzing the data quality & coverage, ensure the data can be used within the environments your reps already work.

For example, if you save time prospecting by filtering and exporting in Salesforce, then ideally, the functionality your data vendor provides eases your already set in place processes by feeding you data from one, centralized workspace.

ZoomInfo's Salesforce.com plugin accelerates opportunity generation through perfected outreach and significantly decreases your call to connect time with access to direct dials and accurate phone numbers and email addresses. The easy-to-install plugin increases the accuracy of your existing database with automatic updates and saves time spent on manual errors by effortlessly exporting contacts directly into Salesforce.com.



According to research from TOPO, 50% of high growth companies use 5 or more applications within their tech stack. ([source](#))

CONCLUSION

You have the right selling strategy; we have the right audience. With a database of over 20 million company profiles, 60 million direct dials, and 120 million business emails, ZoomInfo has helped customers identify and connect with their best buyers for over a decade.

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We used other data providers for the first three months of using ZoomInfo so we could compare the accuracy of the data, and ZoomInfo was by far the best. ZoomInfo's data is superior to the competition and is accurate 90% of the time.

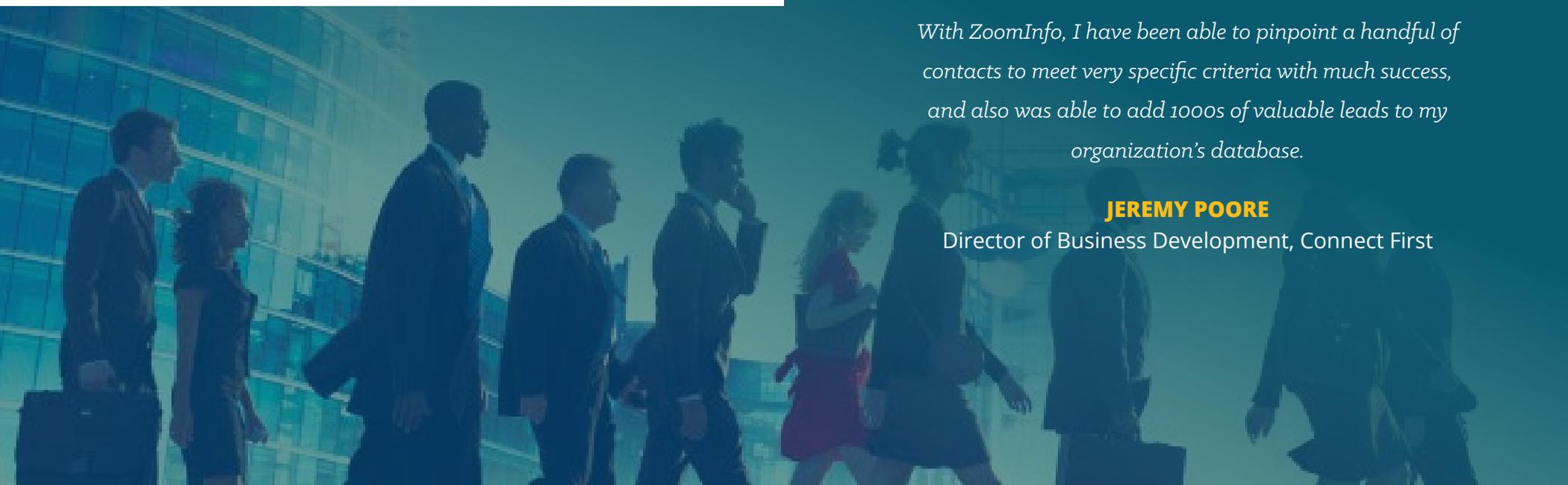
CHRIS FLORES

Inside Sales Manager, Namely

With ZoomInfo, I have been able to pinpoint a handful of contacts to meet very specific criteria with much success, and also was able to add 1000s of valuable leads to my organization's database.

JEREMY POORE

Director of Business Development, Connect First





Accelerate your growth with ZoomInfo.
Visit www.zoominfo.com or call 866-904-9666 to find out how.

