

HOW TO BUILD YOUR OWN CONTACT WASHING MACHINE

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Inaccuracies, misspellings, missing fields and inconsistencies can bog down the team working with your database of customers and prospects. The hype around big data almost makes it sound easy. But the reality is that once you obtain that data, cleaning it up can be a major issue when trying to reach your customers. Midsize and large companies are even blacklisted by their marketing automation platform for issues like high bounce rate. The measures that marketing automation platforms have in place to prevent spam can be overwhelming for companies. Making clean data even more important.

Become the boss of your dirty data by building a Contact Washing Machine (CWM) to keep your data clean. Marketing automation platform Oracle Eloqua has made this process easier to develop and manage with the Contact Washing Machine App.

Benefits of a CWM:

- Clean and normalized data
- Ability to market to contacts who are not currently being reached due to incorrect or no contact data
- Better segmentation
- Quicker list uploads with less manual cleansing and less chance of error
- Standardized reporting on fields like country, region and more
- Better performing personalization
- More accurate lead routing and lead scoring

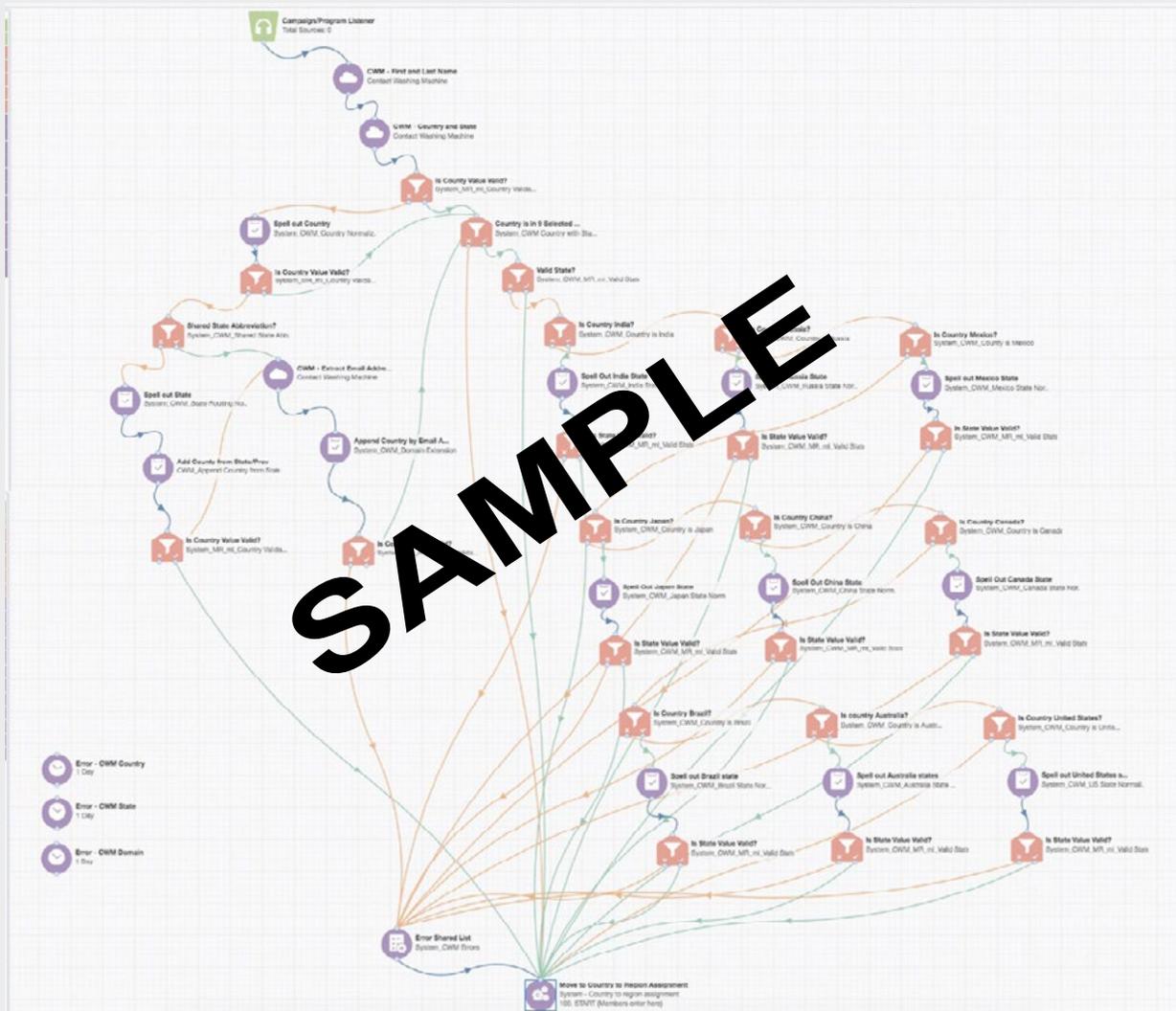
The Hiring Process

The most time intensive portion of building the CWM is the planning stage, much like the research and hiring process of a cleaning service. Once you've decided to implement the best practice, the next step is to audit your data. Look at your data for completeness and standardization. Audit your field completeness and field values to determine where standardization is needed. Utilize segments to measure your completeness and opportunities for augmentation of missing data.

To measure the success of the CWM, keep track of your current state prior to implementing the CWM. Once the CWM is active, you can then utilize the same reports, filters, and segments to determine the level of improvement to your data.

How often do you want your data cleansed? Immediately, hourly, daily? The Oracle Eloqua program canvas allows you to automate repetitive manual tasks like data cleansing. The listener feature triggers program actions in real time based on contact creation or contact actions. The listener functionality is like the iRobot of vacuums. [Read more about initiating listeners.](#)

CWM Program Example



The above chart is a visual representation of how complex the flow can get.

Light Cleaning

Oracle Eloqua offers the Contact Washing Machine App to assist with standard field cleansing. The app can be used on both the campaign canvas or the program. The app enables cleansing of all contact fields. The cleansed data is then mapped back to either the same field or to a separate field.

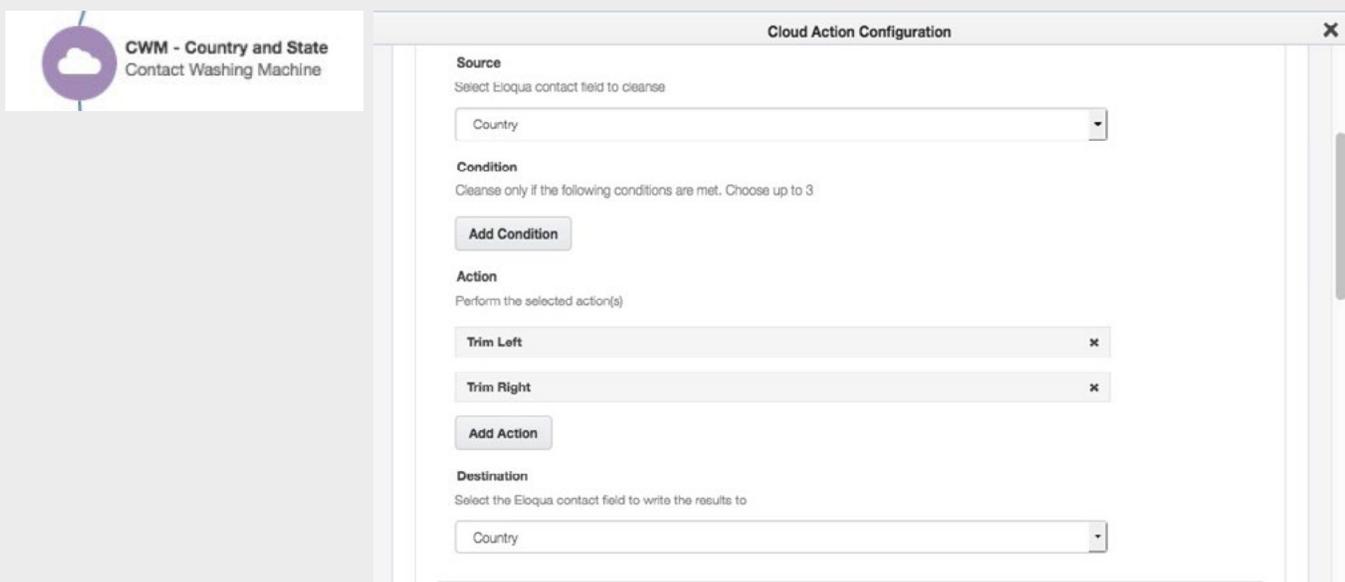
Standard Contact Fields for Cleansing:

- Country
- State/Province
- First Name
- Last Name
- Phone Number
- Email Address

Once you've identified what you want to cleanse, you should evaluate what tool you want to use to perform the action. Broom, mop, vacuum, bleach? Oracle Eloqua provides a [list of available operations](#) that can be performed with the app.

Contact Field	App Operation(s)
Country	Trim, Propercase
State/Province	Trim, Propercase
First Name	Trim, Propercase
Last Name	Trim, Propercase
Phone Number	Trim, Regex Replace
Email Address	Trim, Lowercase

If you just need a little clean-up then the app cleanse and replace feature may be all you need. You can [follow these CWM App installation steps](#).



The screenshot displays the 'CWM - Country and State Contact Washing Machine' application interface. On the left is the app logo. The main window is titled 'Cloud Action Configuration' and contains the following sections:

- Source:** Select Eloqua contact field to cleanse. A dropdown menu shows 'Country'.
- Condition:** Cleanse only if the following conditions are met. Choose up to 3. An 'Add Condition' button is present.
- Action:** Perform the selected action(s). Two actions are listed: 'Trim Left' and 'Trim Right', each with a close button (x). An 'Add Action' button is present.
- Destination:** Select the Eloqua contact field to write the results to. A dropdown menu shows 'Country'.

Deep Cleaning

For a more thorough and deep clean, you can use a series of picklists, lookup tables and update rules to cleanse and append data.

A deep clean can lookup and replace missing data such as:

- Country from State/Province
- State/Province from Zip or Postal Code
- State/Province from Area Code
- Country from email address domain

How do you tell Eloqua to find a country value based on an email address domain? Combine a regular expression (aka RegEx) and a lookup table. Here, the RegEx Extract action checks email domain to see if it matches a pattern of {something}.{two letters}. Regular expressions are complicated enough to fill [entire books](#), but here's how to match a string that ends with a period and two letters.

The pattern:

```
\. ([A-Za-z][A-Za-z] )$
```

The \. says "a period"; the backslash is an escape character because the period has special significance in regular expressions. So this says "just a plain old period."

The parentheses mean "remember everything inside us for later." There's only one set of parentheses, so it only needs to remember one thing. More on this later.

The square brackets say "a single character of this set," and the A-Za-z says "of any uppercase or lowercase letter from A to Z." So [A-Za-z][A-Za-z] means "a letter, any case, followed by another letter of any case." If you had previously run a lower-case step on email address domain, you could just use [a-z][a-z].

Then the \$ indicates the end of the string that you're searching. So to find a match, it has to be period-letter-letter-end. This means that the ".it" in "pirelli.it" would match, because it's a period, two letters, then the end of the string. But the ".co" in "gmail.com" would not match, because there's an "m" between the period-letter-letter and the end of the string.

Now back to the parentheses. In the example where pirelli.it gives a match, the RegEx Extract step only remembers things inside parentheses. In this case, it was the two letters (it) that were part of the match. So the result of the RegEx Extract should be \$1, where the 1 means the first set of matched parentheses. (Here, we only had one set.) Eloqua can then push what was in the first set of parentheses into the contact field you tell it to.

Running that new field value (say, Temp Email Domain Country) against a lookup table of known two-letter values for country and full country values lets you programmatically guess at a country from only an email address domain.

RegEx Extract
✕

Enter regular expression to extract matched value from source field.

```
\\.[A-Za-z][A-Za-z]$$
```

Trial Clean

Ready for a trial cleanse? You can test your CWM app before activating it on your campaign canvas or program. You can view the outcome of the cleansing process without updating contact data.

To test, click on the test icon and select up to 10 contacts.

App Testing

Run Test
+

Test Last Run: 2017-06-08 14:03:16, EDT

	Email Address	Name	Step	Condition Met?	Input Value	Actions	Output Value	Status
<input type="checkbox"/>	adrianna.lemke@fakedickinson-oberbrunner.com	adrianna lemke						✔
			1	Yes	First Name: adrianna	Trim,Propercase	First Name: Adrianna	
			2	Yes	Last Name: lemke	Trim,Propercase	Last Name: Lemke	

The test displays the step number and if the conditions were met. The dirty data is the input value, the action that should be occurring during that step, and the cleansed data which is the output value. The final column is the status. A detailed error message is displayed if the test did not complete.

Are you ready for a trial cleaning of your Eloqua data? Contact us for information on a free Eloqua data audit.

About the Authors:

Please welcome our guest blogger and former Simantelite, Rob Palmer. Rob is a marketing operations professional with a passion for international work. He is skilled at bridging gaps between departments with his years of previous experience on website development and database work of all sorts. He is currently the marketing automation specialist at Caterpillar.

Rachel Myers is a senior marketing automation configuration specialist at Simantel and is responsible for partnering with our internal team in designing, building, documenting and executing campaigns. She is a go-to expert in marketing automation content strategy and continues to push our clients' marketing and sales efforts forward by driving best practices for campaign performance, reporting and lead optimization.