DATA SHEET · PGC DIGITAL

Operational data matching: find the money hiding in duplicates



The same part, vendor or product recorded five ways costs you stock, discounts and downtime. Here is how we find the matches and turn them into savings.



Sappy’s 30-second version

- Duplicates in parts, vendors and products quietly lock up working capital.
- Matching them is a business exercise first: decide what “the same” means, then let the machine scale it.
- Every match is reviewed by a data steward and nothing is deleted; old codes live on as aliases.

Written for: CFO, Procurement head, Plant and maintenance head, SAP programme lead

Where the money hides

Duplicate and inconsistent operational data shows up as cost in six places. Pick the one that hurts most and start there.

Spare parts	The same bearing bought under three codes means three safety stocks.
Vendor spend	One supplier under four names hides the volume discount you have earned.
Product catalogue	Mismatched descriptions confuse buyers and break search.
ERP migration	Moving duplicates into S/4HANA moves the problem, and the cost, with you.
Mergers	Two brands, two masters, no single view of what you own.
Analytics	Reports disagree because the records underneath disagree.

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How we match, step by step

A repeatable factory that business owners can follow and sign off. Machines do the heavy lifting; people make the calls that matter.

1. Profile	Measure what is there: counts, gaps, formats.
2. Normalise	Clean names, units and part-number formats.
3. Match	Score candidates on number, spec, unit and description.
4. Cluster	Group likely duplicates together.
5. Decide	Data stewards confirm same, different or unsure.
6. Golden record	One governed record per real-world item.
7. Govern	Old codes kept as aliases; new duplicates blocked at entry.

What you get in the first six weeks

A short, fixed-scope engagement that proves the value before anything bigger.

✓ A duplicate heat map for one domain: parts, vendors or products
✓ Match rules agreed in business language, not code
✓ A savings estimate built from your own volumes and prices
✓ A clean-up and governance plan you can run before, during or after S/4HANA

Questions to ask before you start

Clean once, or keep it clean? The difference decides whether the savings last.

One-off clean-up	Fixes today’s duplicates. They grow back within a year because nothing stops new ones.
Clean and govern	Fixes today’s duplicates and gates every new record, so the savings stay.

Talk to the author



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Sources and further reading

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