

Mentys™ vs. Data Cleansing software

Although Mentys and data cleansing software both address problems of data quality, the two approaches are very different and, in fact, complementary.

Unlike data cleansing software, Mentys is not intended to reformat, recode, or match customer names and addresses in a credit database. Yet Mentys can detect and explain changes in a customer's credit rating, assuming the rating has a “clean” or legitimate value. In other words, Mentys is more closely tied to robust decision-making, not just data.

If the customer's credit rating is missing and non-redundant, data cleansing software cannot fill that gap, although Mentys can fill the missing credit rating through *inference* – that is, using its knowledge base that “understands” complex relationships among credit attributes.

The table below provides a high-level, thematic comparison of Mentys and data cleansing software.

	Mentys	Data cleansing software
Goals	“Understand” data.	Transform and normalize data.
Focus	Complex relationships in data, cause-effect analysis.	Matching, re-coding, formatting, eliminating duplicates, etc.
Data types	Quantitative, categorical.	Names, addresses, Social Security Numbers, categorical, quantitative, etc.
Approaches	Discovery, prior knowledge, “soft” rules.	Fixed rules and patterns.
Refreshability	Learns from data, updates and validates knowledge base without human intervention.	Requires rules to be refreshed and validated manually.
Assumptions	Data cleansed.	Data unclean.

The figure below illustrates the relationships among Mentys, data cleansing software, and data mining software. (See the white paper “Mentys versus Data Mining” at www.informeta.net.)

Note the complementary overlaps and sequence of application.

