

[The MIT Information Quality Industry Symposium](#)

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### **Title:**

Organized Chaos: An Orderly Taxonomy of Data-Quality Problems That Lets You Plan Solutions For Problems You Haven't Even Discovered Yet

### **Abstract:**

Experts leverage their experience by recognizing patterns. Consciously or unconsciously, experts classify their patterns into mental schemata that formalize their knowledge. Expertise in data quality (DQ) problems is amenable to this approach, but is challenging because DQ problems are about mistakes, and mistakes are a disorderly phenomenon. Nevertheless, a content-neutral framework for classifying DQ problems is possible. The framework presented here helps organizations maximize the value of their experience solving DQ problems in one domain into accelerated solutions in other domains.

Such a framework is especially helpful to practitioners of Master Data Management (MDM), because many approaches to MDM encourage “vertical” thinking, in which businesses contemplate and classify MDM problems according to business topics, such as customers, products, addresses, or other content-specific domains. Such thinking can help businesses organize and prioritize MDM initiatives, but it obscures underlying similarities among MDM problems (and the attendant solutions).