Duplicate Debtors

A guide on finding duplicates & how to fix them

If you have duplicate debtors in your Lariat, there are a couple ways to deal with this. If it's an isolated situation, you can combine those debtors manually (see our "Combining Debtors" quick guide.) If you want to check and see if you might have possible duplicates and combine them on a larger scale, you'll want to use our Duplicate Debtors tool.

You'll find the tool by going to **Admin > Duplicate Debtors**. Before you can use this tool, it will need to be configured. To configure duplicate checking contact support@lariat.co and our team will help you.

NOTE: *if you have a lot of debtors, the duplicate checking can take a long time to run the first time you use it. So if you've been using Lariat for a while without turning on the duplicate checking option, this is something to keep in mind.*

Understanding "fuzzy" debtors

When two debtors *may* be the same, we refer to this as fuzzy duplicates. When finding possible duplicates, Lariat can be very strict (the two debtors must be almost perfect matches) or not very strict at all.

You set the minimum "strictness" of the duplicate checker by assigning a numerical threshold on the **System Configuration > Globals** page:

Fuzzy Duplicate Threshold	1650

The following will give you an idea of what to expect from the results:

> **1000-1200 –** Possible match, but something critical is missing. Expect to see things like spouses with the same address, people with similar names and addresses (Roger Smith vs. Robert Smith), or duplicates with no tax ID. A significant portion of this range will be false positives.

> **1200-1900 –** Very likely a match, at this range, most false positives are debtors with erroneous tax ID, or spouses with similar first names (Jane and John).

> **1900+ –** Extremely likely a match, any score above this requires multiple key fields to be very similar as well as a matching tax ID.

The higher the number the more exact the two debtor records must be to be judged a duplicate. The fuzzy duplicate score is a scoring system designed to make a best guess at how likely it is that two debtors are duplicates. It is meant to take something like Bob Smith at 1234 Main Street and match it to Robert Smith at 1234 Main St.

How the score is calculated

Several tests are performed and then an overall score is achieved. The first step is to determine the minimum threshold score that you want to have reported as a possible duplicate (default 1000). The minimum score is theoretically zero, but the likelihood of that is almost nil (even Jane Smith and Jack Johnson have one letter in common). The maximum score is 1900 plus the minimum threshold (so default max score is 2900). The reason the maximum score varies with the value of the threshold is we assume that anything with a matching tax ID should be investigated, so two debtors having a matching tax ID adds the minimum threshold value to their fuzzy test score.

Scoring is based on numerous fields, including debtor name, birth date, address and phone information, and the tax ID. The more closely the information matches, the more score is added. For example, an individual debtor can have a maximum of 500 points added if the first and last names are an identical match. If they are slightly different, they will get only a portion of that score. As an example, take Bob Smith and Robert Smith. These two would get 316 out of 500 possible points on a name match. But Rob Smith and Robert Smith would get 363 out of 500.

Once all the scoring is complete, the sum of the scores for the individual tests is summed up and compared to the threshold:

Duplicate Debtors			
[Ignore All]			
Debtor 1	Debtor 2	Score	Ignore Page
Bob A Wiley (11631)	Bob A Wiley (11628)	1825.00	Combine Ignore
Bob A Wiley (11634)	Bob A Wiley (11632)	1825.00	Combine Ignore
Bob A Wiley (11634)	Bob A Wiley (11638)	1825.00	Combine Ignore
Bob A Wiley (11634)	Bob A Wiley (11645)	1825.00	Combine Ignore
Bob A Wiley (11634)	Bob A Wiley (11642)	1825.00	Combine Ignore

Combining and Ignoring

To review the debtors listed, hover the mouse over the score and it will compare the details (name, address, SSN/EIN, etc.) for you.

Taking a closer look at the debtors side-by-side will help you decide if you want to combine them or not.

1825.00		Combine Ignore
1825.	Bob A Wiley	Bob A Wiley
1825.	123 somewhere ave	123 somewhere ave
1825.	po 543	po 543
1825.	out there	out there
1825.	IN	IN
1825.	1234567	1234567
1825.	(123) 456-7890	(123) 456-7890
1825.	123456789	123456789
1825.	07/09/1967	07/09/1967
1825.00		Combine Ignore
1825.00		Combine Ignore

If you have two debtors with a high score, click "combine" on that row. This will delete one debtor and put both debts under the other.

If you do not want to combine them at all (they are not the same) then select "ignore."

You can also choose "ignore all" to dismiss an entire page of results, but this is not recommended unless you are certain this is what you want to do, as it cannot be reversed.

That's it!

Lariat will automatically check for duplicates each night, so you can come check **Admin > Duplicate Debtors** whenever you'd like to review for possible duplicates.

Still have questions? Contact us at support@lariat.co

or call 877.268.6667.