I learned that there isn’t just one way to deal with messy data. The main thing I noticed were nulls in several tables, which sql server doesn’t have an issue with importing, if the columns are set up to allow for nulls. The problem with this is that it hurts the integrity of the db in the long run if nulls are always allowed. The solution I came up with is to allow them temporarily so that each file could be imported with minimum editing.

After importing the files, I would work with the client to audit each row for missing data since the client has a better understanding of how their process works and where to look for missing data.

After fixing what can be fixed, a finalized version of the tables can be inserted into the clients db, disallowing nulls where appropriate. All data that cannot be verified should use placeholder values that are easily identifiable and accounted for when creating queries.