How to Handle Contradictory Competitor Evidence

Portable review handoff for the SERPIFAI Contradiction Adjudication Protocol

Purpose

Use this handoff after the article, quick triage, detailed review or workbook has classified a pair of competing records. It preserves evidence and the decision boundary. It does not independently calculate an outcome or replace accountable review.

Fix the proposition	State one exact claim and the decision that depends on it.
Preserve both records	Keep observations, sources, source chains, dates and limitations.
Normalize before judging	Compare entity, geography, market, segment, tier, date, definition, metric, method and evidence state.
Trace provenance	Identify copied sources, shared providers and whether collection is independent.
Classify the conflict	Record why the records differ.
Assess materiality	Determine whether the difference can change the named decision.
Choose the disposition	Record the permitted wording, action, reviewer and reopen condition.

Fail-safe rules: incomplete or invalid input produces no substantive outcome. Missing evidence is not evidence of absence without a credible detection opportunity. Shared provenance establishes dependence, not compatibility. A material unresolved contradiction blocks the dependent recommendation.

The 13 controlled conflict classes

A conflict class explains why the records differ. It does not by itself decide whether action is blocked.

Conflict class	What it explains
Missing-evidence confusion	Absence is asserted without a credible detection opportunity.
Entity mismatch	The records concern different competitors, products or legal entities.
Geography or market mismatch	The geography or market differs.
Customer-segment mismatch	The customer segment differs.
Product-tier mismatch	The plan, package or tier differs.
Time conflict	The records describe different dates or periods.
Definition conflict	The same or similar label uses different definitions.
Metric conflict	The unit, denominator or metric differs.
Method conflict	The collection or estimation method differs.
Evidence-state conflict	A claim, observation, model or inference is treated as the same evidence state.
Provenance or source conflict	The records share an origin, provider or derivation path, or independence remains unproven.
No true contradiction	The records are compatible after normalization.
Genuine factual contradiction	Comparable records address the same proposition and remain incompatible.

Three-layer rule: classify the difference, assess materiality, then choose the disposition. For provenance conflict, treat the records as one evidence family and test compatibility separately.

The 9 controlled dispositions

Disposition	Decision meaning
Retain as compatible records	Use only when normalization independently shows the records can coexist.
Segment the records	Use separate conclusions for different geography, market, segment, tier or time.
Narrow the claim	Reduce the proposition to the scope the evidence supports.
Split the claim	Create separate propositions when entities, definitions, tiers or evidence states differ.
Prefer one record with explicit reasons	Select one record only with recorded directness, currency and decision-fit reasons.
Preserve unresolved - non-blocking	Proceed with a bounded reversible action while retaining the limitation.
Preserve unresolved - decision-blocking	Pause the dependent recommendation because the unresolved conflict is material.
Refuse the claim	Do not use a proposition that cannot be responsibly supported.
Collect defined additional evidence	Name the exact evidence, owner and reopen trigger required.

Evidence-family treatment: shared or copied origin means one evidence family. Non-material dependence is preserved as a limitation; material dependence requires independent-origin evidence or a validated derivation comparison before the decision proceeds. Shared origin never proves compatibility.

Wording control: record the strongest permitted wording and prohibited wording. Confidence impact remains qualitative rather than numerical.

Portable contradiction handoff

Exact claim	
Decision use	
Record A and immediate source	
Record A original source, source chain and provider	
Record A dates and limitations	
Record B and immediate source	
Record B original source, source chain and provider	
Record B dates and limitations	
Normalized scope and evidence basis	
Conflict class	
Materiality, consequence and reversibility	
Evidence-family treatment	
Controlled disposition	
Confidence impact	
Strongest permitted wording	
Prohibited wording	
Permitted action	
Defined additional evidence	
Decision owner	
Accountable reviewer	
Specific reopen condition	

Method limitation: this handoff preserves a completed assessment; it does not establish objective truth, statistical certainty, independence or compatibility that the evidence did not demonstrate. Reopen the decision when the recorded trigger occurs.