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**The State of Supplier Data:
2026 Edition**

March 4, 2026

Agenda

01

The Data Problem: How Bad Data Holds Back Procurement

02

Why Centers of Excellence Are Uniquely Positioned to Solve This

03

The Best Ways to Solve Poor Data Quality

04

The Pace of AI & Path Forward

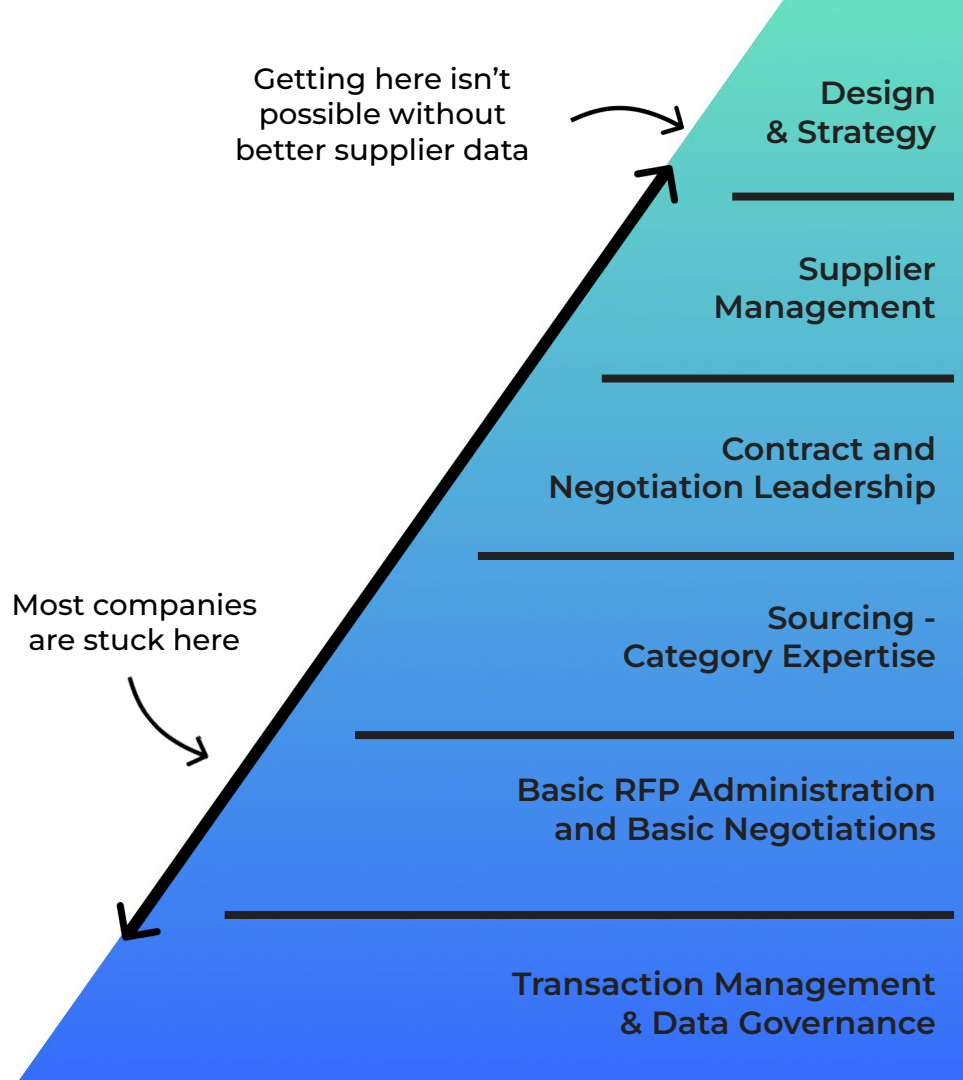
Transformational Excellence Requires Better Data

You're weighed down by data cleanup & constantly answering slacks, emails and requests from suppliers and stakeholders

Procurement has to move faster to meet the needs of the business

Supplier & vendor risks are more costly and amorphous than ever before

Unreliable supplier data holds you back from delivering strategic supplier management



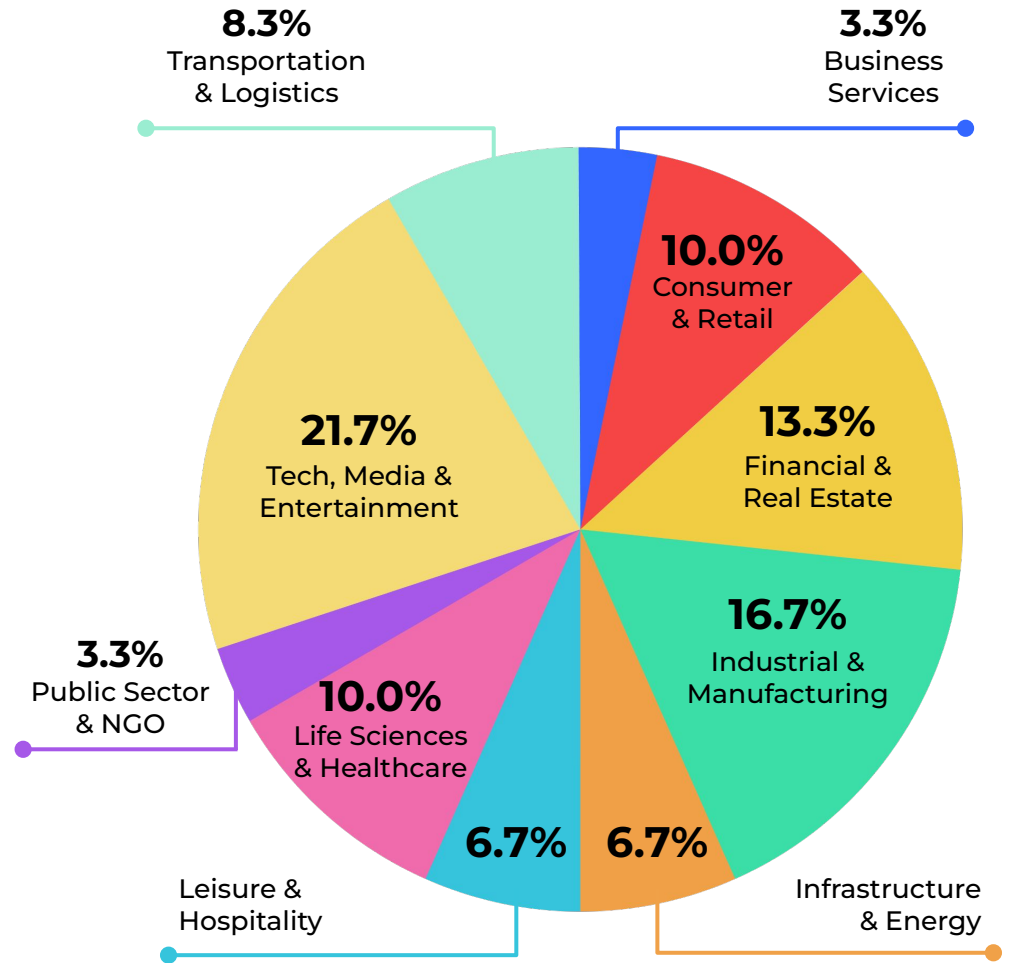
The 2026 State of Supplier Data Benchmark Report

Methodology

60 Procurement leaders were surveyed from September 2025 to January 2026, verified as decision-makers in their organization.

Respondents were limited to Director+ titles, all the way up to CPO.

All of the respondents were currently employed at companies headquartered in **North America or Europe**, spanning **10 industries**.



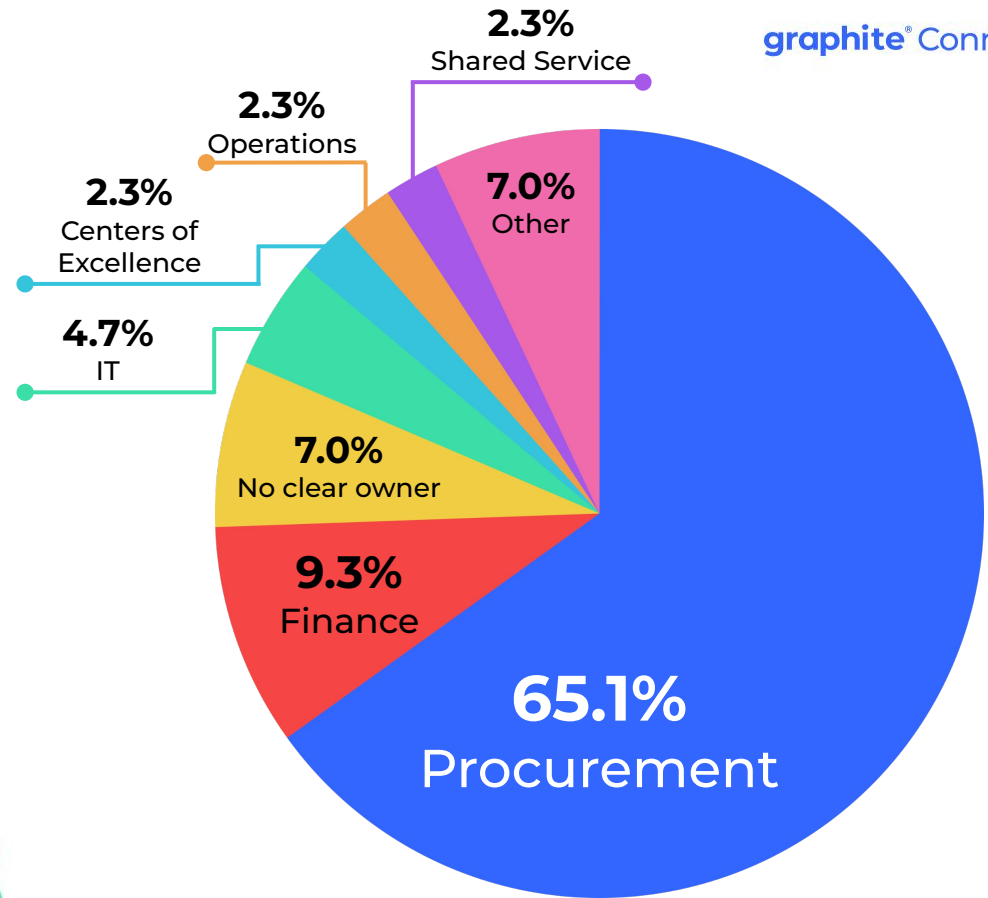
Industry Breakdown

Who Owns Supplier Data Quality?

In most organizations, **procurement** owns supplier data quality.

However, supplier data quality is critical to Finance, Risk, IT, Supply Chain & Procurement teams.

This creates a perfect opportunity for Centers of Excellence to drive impact through cross-functional collaboration to create a trusted vendor master.

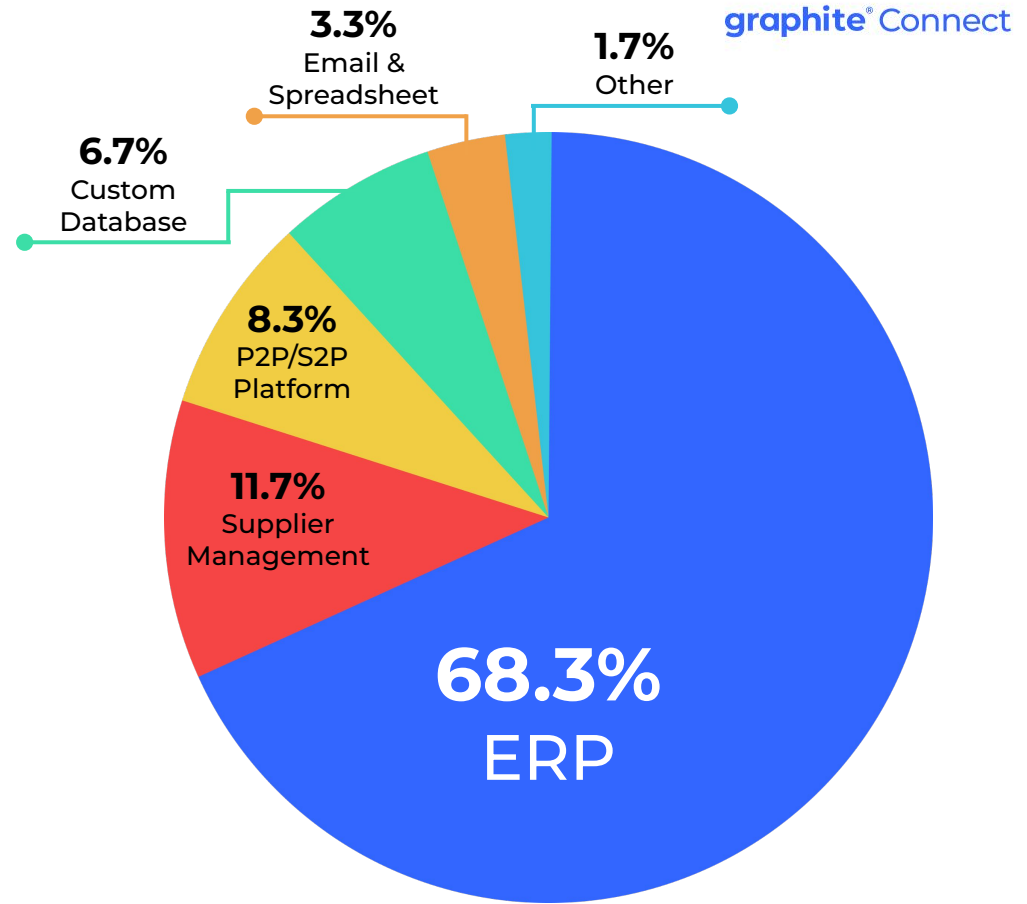


Primary Department Responsible for Maintaining Supplier Data

Where It Sits: The Tech Stack Challenge

However, the ERP is where that data is most likely to be stored and shared — creating data governance challenges for procurement as they work with IT, Finance and Operations to deliver better data quality.

How does Procurement drive better data in a tech stack they don't primarily own?



Master Data Location

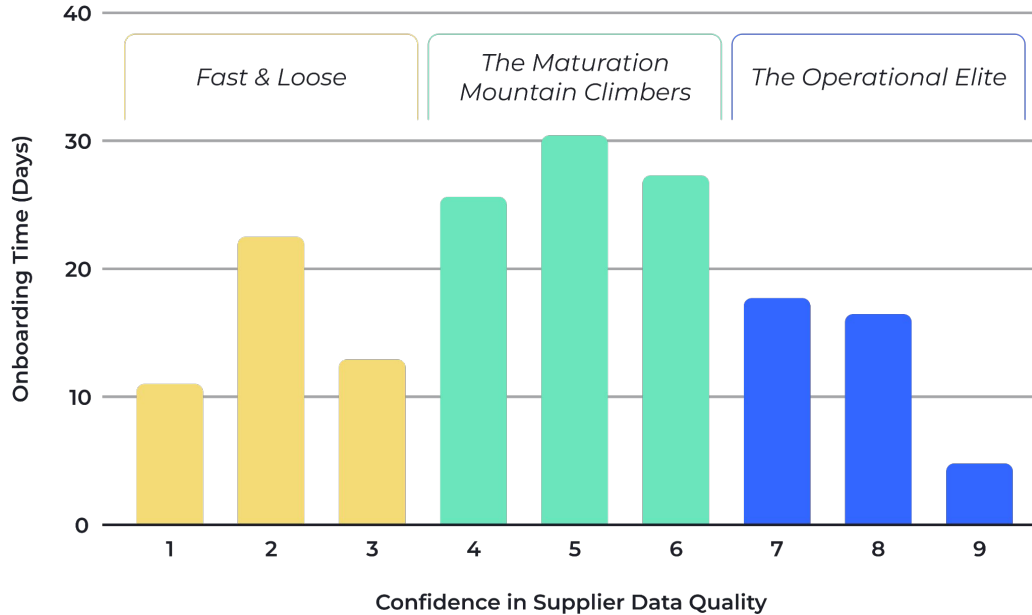
STATE OF SUPPLIER DATA

The Top Challenges Dirty Data Causes for Procurement

Respondents were asked to select the three most important challenges facing their procurement team due to bad supplier data quality.

CoEs solving the data problem should look to business cases around **risk reduction, efficiency and accuracy.**

Challenges	% of Responses
Increased risk exposure	55.0%
Duplicate or inconsistent supplier records	50.0%
Inefficient procurement or payment processes	41.7%
Supplier relationship management	36.7%
Delays in onboarding new suppliers	36.7%
Manual workarounds to correct or validate supplier data	36.7%
Inaccurate spend reporting	35.0%
Difficulty consolidating data across systems	31.7%
Poor supplier communication	28.3%
Confidence Issues in data-based decision making	21.7%
Supplier regulation compliance issues	20.0%



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The Quality & Speed Balancing Act

CoEs often need to balance agendas that seem to compete in the organization: Procurement needs to move quickly, but Risk/Finance need to move safely & with high data quality.

The result is three types of organizations:

- Fast & Loose (left tail)
- The Maturation Mountain Climbers (middle)
- The Operational Elite (right tail)

Obtaining high data quality at speed is possible.

Characteristics of the Operational Elite

Holistic Data Governance

These organizations use an established, central data governance model where supplier records are treated as a shared, trusted asset, not siloed by department (e.g., finance, procurement, legal).

Continuous Vetting

Security and compliance are not seen as a one-time onboarding step, but as a continuous, automated loop of real-time monitoring and validation.

Standardized Workflows

Teams have eliminated manual workarounds by standardizing intake and validation processes firm-wide, allowing technology to automate repetitive checks.

Delivering Better Supplier Data: A Clear Use Case for CoEs

Why Should CoEs Own This Problem?

Supplier data often sits across **multiple systems** and **portals**.

CoEs are uniquely positioned to solve this issue, delivering **cross-functional efficiency gains** and solving for multiple stakeholder needs (Risk, Legal, Finance, IT and Procurement).

CoEs use **supplier data** as a cornerstone of delivering transformational results. Spend analytics, AI - it spans nearly every project.

How Should They Begin to Solve It?

People, Process, Tech methodology

Begin with the end in mind. What is your goal? Data hygiene in support of the outcome you're looking for. Don't boil the ocean.

an evaluation of your **process**. Root cause analysis on where your biggest bottlenecks are happening and where dirty data is entering your vendor master (new vendors, legacy suppliers, manual data updates, etc.).

AI Project Success Depends on Quality Data

AI adoption projects are often trumping data quality projects.

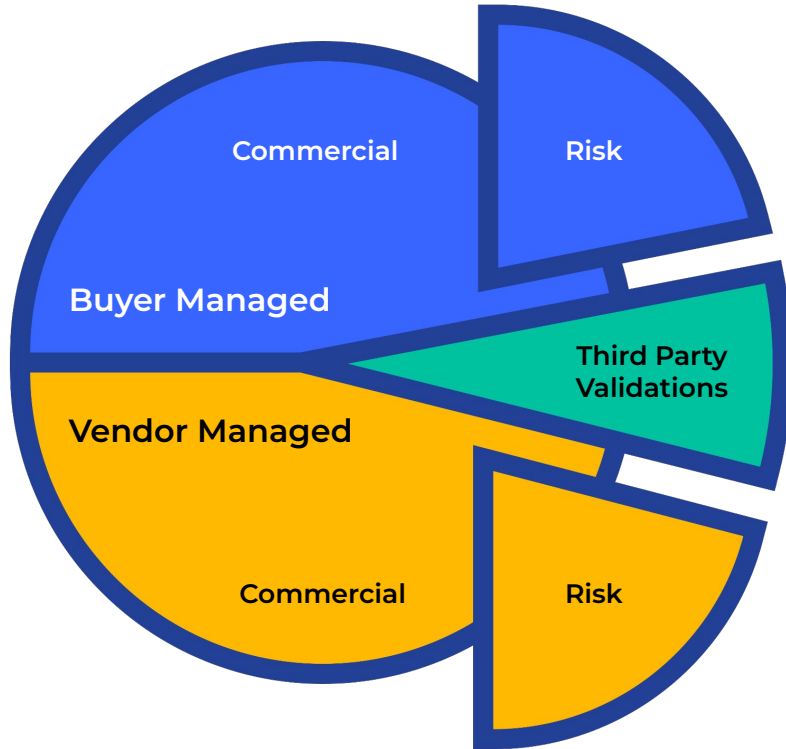
To deliver operational excellence to the organization, CoEs are being called on to solve this problem as **foundational** to their success.

But without high-quality, structured data, AI projects fail or underdeliver.

By 2027, **85%**
of procurement
organizations will
STILL be improving
data quality to get the
most out of their AI.*

Don't be one of them.

*Gartner®



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What Do We Mean By 'Supplier Data'?

The ERP can be the “home” for the supplier data, but risk, commercial, performance, quality and more are important to the full view of the supplier and for AI to deliver impactful insights.

Survey respondents using supplier management tools as their vendor master had the highest likelihood to appear in the 'Operational Elite.'

Unplugged AI

A Working Session with
OpenClaw

The AI Project Push

2025: The Year of Experiments

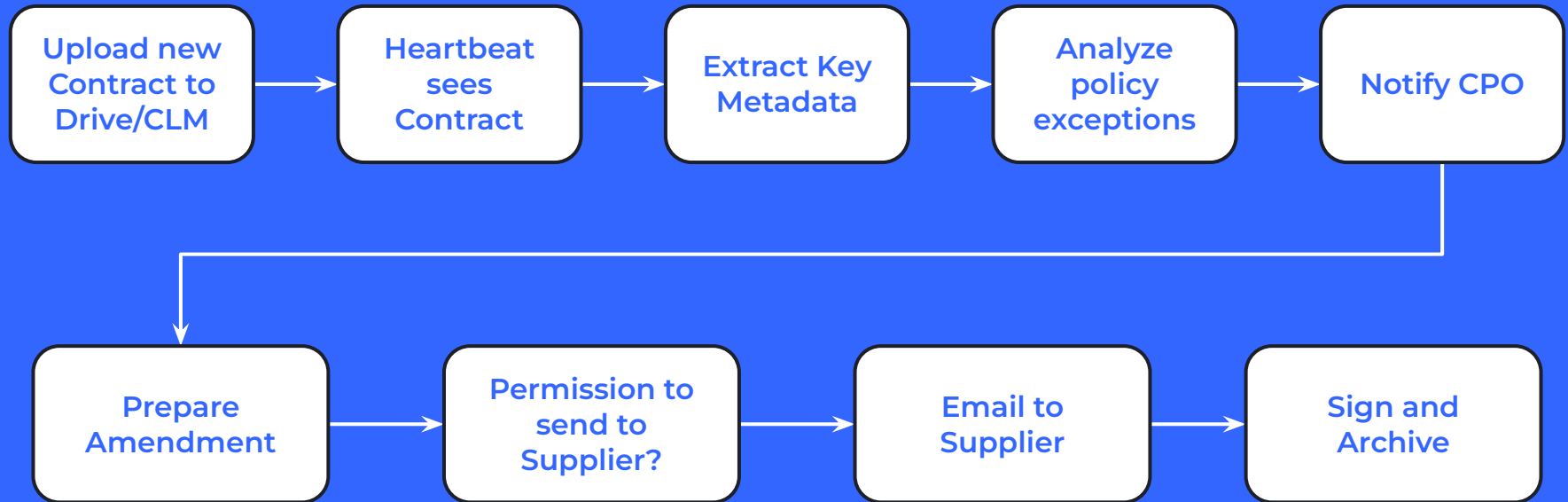
- POCs // beta projects in flight in most major organizations
- Most organizations buying agentic tech within existing tech stack
- Collaboration between CIO to set company-wide policies, usage limitations, MCP servers

2026: The Year of Execution

- Models are SIGNIFICANTLY more able to accomplish true agentic activities
- Newcomers like OpenClaw are creating opportunities to create “homegrown” agents safely
- Clear use cases + quality data + human in the loop = successful implementation recipe

CASE STUDY IN ACTION

Agentic Contract Management

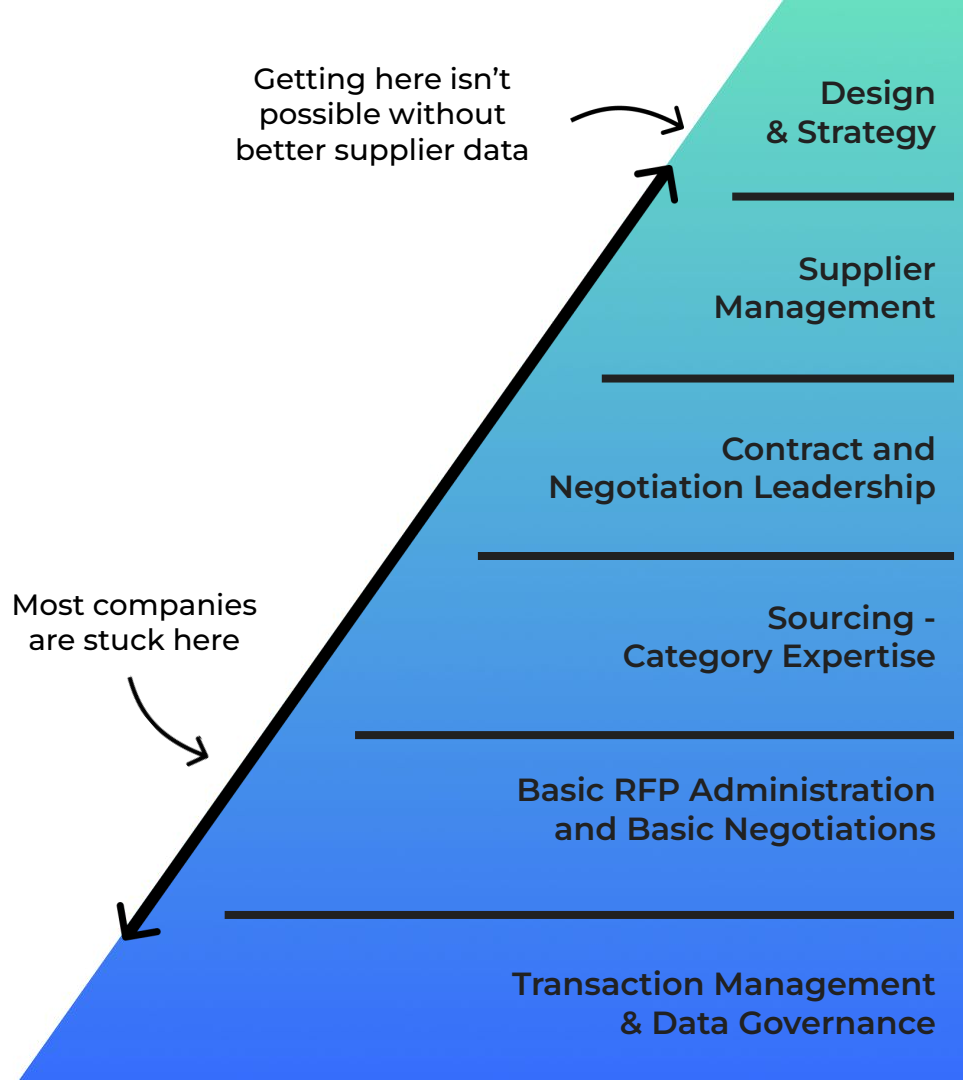


What's Your Data's AI Readiness?

Examine the core principles — **People, Process, Tech.**

- **Process:** Clear data governance and policy documentation
- **People:** Cross-functional alignment on who makes policy changes, what level of “human in the loop” vs. autonomy are you comfortable with?
- **Tech:** Data architecture that delivers results

Unreliable data will hold you back from the level of autonomous AI capabilities that will arrive this year.



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Questions?

Thank you for your support!

