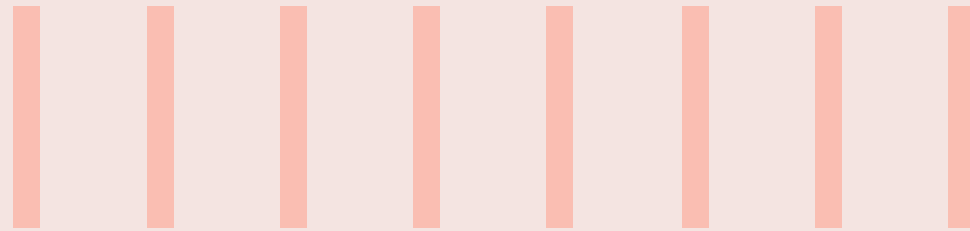




HUNGERING FOR MORE AI IN PROCUREMENT

How Infosys BPM's deployment of AI platforms is transforming a French food giant's global procurement operations



Abstract

When master data is misaligned, procurement's ability to deliver savings and strategic value is severely constrained. This was the challenge facing Lisa Longfellow, Global Manufacturing Sourcing Director at a French multinational food-products corporation. Inaccurate and misclassified data, manual processes, and fragmented systems led to poor spend visibility, unmanaged spend, and catalog leakage. To address this, Lisa partnered with Infosys BPM to cleanse and enrich procurement data and modernize sourcing through AI-led platforms—enabling autonomous sourcing, guided buying, and a managed marketplace that delivered measurable efficiency gains and bottom-line impact.



When the data becomes food for thought

As Global Manufacturing Sourcing Director, Lisa Longfellow oversees procurement operations for an enterprise that sells products in more than 120 markets worldwide. Her teams process a very high volume of purchase requisitions (PRs) across multiple regions, languages, and business units.

Over time, significant data quality issues emerged in the organization's item master and spend data. Item descriptions were often incomplete, inconsistent, or inaccurate, while non-standard taxonomies led to frequent misclassification. As a result, spend visibility was poor, making it difficult to identify savings opportunities or analyze demand patterns. Inaccurate specifications and classifications also contributed to unreliable forecasts, which in turn led to overstocking or stockouts

Requestors frequently raised free-text PRs with incomplete material descriptions. This drove contract and catalog leakage, as negotiated items and prices were bypassed. Procurement teams were forced into repeated back-and-forth interactions with requestors to clarify requirements, increasing cycle times, workloads, and purchase order rework. These inefficiencies diverted valuable resources away from more strategic sourcing and supplier management activities.

On the sourcing side, buyers spent a disproportionate amount of time on manual tasks such as extracting specifications from PR attachments, creating RFQs, and performing quote comparisons. A long-tail supplier base, combined with limited price benchmarking and market intelligence, reduced negotiation leverage and often resulted in

higher costs.

Although Lisa directed her teams to invest significant manual effort in cleansing and consolidating master data, the absence of a reliable, enriched data source made this unsustainable. Compounding these challenges was a highly fragmented IT landscape, decentralized processes, and high levels of unmanaged spend across geographies.

Recognizing that incremental fixes would not be enough, Lisa decided to seek external support. After evaluating industry references, she selected Infosys BPM as her outsourcing and transformation partner. Rahul Mehta, a seasoned sourcing expert from Infosys BPM, was appointed to lead the initiative. Lisa remained personally involved in building the right team and shaping the transformation agenda.

Adding a pinch of salt, and a lot of AI

Kicking off the project with a series of meetings with Rahul and his team, Lisa outlined her expectations: reduce sourcing

operating costs, improve compliance, and significantly enhance productivity by

leveraging Infosys BPM's deep sourcing and transformation expertise.

Approach Summary



Having understood Lisa's challenges, Rahul and his team rolled up their sleeves and began work by first implementing Infosys' Data Profiling Assistant (DPA) with non-intrusive integration into the organization's procurement systems. This indigenously developed tool evolved over time from being based on a deep learning model, to using generative AI, and now operates autonomously through AI agents. The assistant utilized multiple advanced AI models to cleanse, enrich, and standardize the organization's item master and spend data.

The first, "Get it clean" module enriched, classified, and cleansed historical data, correcting incomplete and inaccurate item descriptions. The second module built an aggregated database as a single source of truth for all procurement activities by consolidating data from various sources and properly classifying them.

The third, "Keep it clean" module proactively improved spend data quality by offering AI-powered item recommendations to requestors while they created PRs, guiding them to the correct buying channel, and helping arrest catalog leakage. For any new unique item, AI agents performed enrichment and classification in real time, ensuring that spend data remained clean from the point of origin. This significantly reduced the manual effort previously required to maintain master data.

Next, Rahul and Lisa discussed and agreed on implementing a managed sourcing model combining human expertise with AI. Rahul leveraged Infosys BPM's alliance partnership with Aerchain to offer Aerchain's autonomous sourcing solution enhanced with Infosys' domain expertise. Once implemented, all PRs from across regions were directed to a single platform,

where they were allocated automatically based on business rules. An AI agent first read the PR and its attachments and created a structured summary of the requirement.

The system then checked relevant rate cards, catalogs, last-purchased prices, and historical suppliers so that decisions could start with facts and compliance built in. From there, the AI recommended the best buying path. If the PR was for a repeat or rate-card purchase, the buyer could complete the procurement in a single click with auto-populated supplier and agreed pricing details.

When sourcing was required, the AI auto-created RFx sections such as specifications or statements of work (SOWs), vendor evaluation criteria, and commercial terms based on category intelligence. Buyers needed only to review rather than manually build the RFx.

The AI also strengthened competition by recommending a broader supplier set based on spend data rather than just incumbent vendors.

As bids came in, the AI normalized and compared commercial and technical offers side by side, highlighting variances and identifying the best option with a clear rationale. Finally, using price benchmarks

and market intelligence, the AI agent performed autonomous negotiations and helped secure better prices and terms with consistent governance.

Finally, Rahul and Lisa discussed deploying a managed marketplace solution powered by Gen AI. The personalized, closed marketplace offered requestors an intuitive, consumer-like shopping experience while aggregating demand

across plants and business units. This aggregation enabled better supplier negotiations through volume leverage. The marketplace integrated seamlessly with existing source-to-pay systems, supported unlimited categories and suppliers, and provided AI-powered product recommendations, comparisons, and basket optimization.

Bringing home the bacon

The project had its share of teething troubles, which Rahul and Lisa worked through together. For instance, the organization's IT function underestimated the effort required to integrate the new systems, resulting in delays to transition timelines. Some users also raised concerns about limited visibility into

how the aggregator and autonomous sourcing models were set up and how they integrated with legacy ERP systems. There were also unforeseen regulatory challenges, technology dependencies, and organizational coordination requirements

Resolving these hurdles required focused

attention, clear communication, and proactive engagement to close gaps and build trust. Once the transformation was complete, the new sourcing and marketplace models streamlined procurement operations, simplified tail-spend management, and accelerated supplier base consolidation.

Key benefits



Infosys' Data Profiling Assistant enriched and classified over one million spend records in less than three months, improving classification accuracy from approximately 30% to nearly 95%. This cleansed data enabled autonomous sourcing, improved spend visibility, and savings identification. With up to 50% enhanced spend visibility, procurement teams found it significantly easier to analyze and manage purchases. Catalog and contract leakage is set to reduce by approximately 20%, improving compliance with procurement policies and ensuring negotiated prices are retained.

The Aerechain sourcing platform is expected to unlock approximately 50% additional process efficiencies over time, with an anticipated threefold improvement in procurement turnaround time. It is also expected to enable 4–6% potential spend savings through autonomous negotiations and auctions. The managed marketplace model is projected to deliver an additional ~3% savings while optimizing the supplier base by 30%, making supplier relationships more strategic and easier to manage

Overall, the improvement in procurement cycle times will allow the organization

to make faster decisions and complete purchases more quickly. Buyers have started experiencing up to three times faster buying cycles, supported by guided buying, autonomous sourcing, and a user-friendly marketplace. Following the successful pilot in Mexico, Lisa mandated Rahul to replicate the transformation across other geographies and plants. As rollouts begin across North America, Europe, and AMEA, Lisa continues to seek greater bottom-line impact through increased negotiation savings and optimized inventory levels.

**Names have been altered to preserve the identities of the people involved.*

For more information, contact infosysbpm@infosys.com



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