

AI Agents in Procurement

Real value in the everyday work — six stories from the field

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WHY WE'RE HERE

AI already pays off in the daily work

Not a vision of the future — six real situations from procurement, each with a concrete outcome.

25–40%

more efficient procurement
operations

30–50%

shorter sourcing cycles — days,
not weeks

5–16%

of savings lost to off-contract
buying — recoverable

Typical industry benchmarks (McKinsey · Hackett Group · sourcing studies) — illustrative, not client-specific.

Validating annual price-increase demands

User story: *As buyer at Vogelsang, I face annual price-increase demands I need to challenge on the merits.*

i Context Vogelsang Elektromotoren — family-run Bochum Mittelstand (~400 employees, five sites, founded 1918); repairs & rewinds electric motors, generators and transformers.

? The challenge

- Winding-wire suppliers cite LME copper spikes
- Steel & bearing makers pass on energy and labor
- Annual talks: many demands, little time to verify

→ How AI solves it

- Rebuilds each part's cost: copper, steel, energy, labor
- Cross-checks against LME copper & Destatis indices
- Verdict plus a briefing for the Jahresgespräch

↑ OUTCOME

**Facts,
not gut feel**

The justified share is separated from the padding — before the buyer sits down.

Watch-out: *Feed it the real bill-of-material split; the buyer owns the final number.*

Qualitative outcome — client-specific figures available on request.

Know your own cost before you quote

User story: *As a service provider, I need to know what my own offer really costs — to price it competitively and defend it.*

i Context Logtech (Munich, founded 2000, ~50 employees): CAD development of automotive add-on parts (CATIA V5) and transport logistics in steel containers (Gitterboxen).

? The challenge

- Bidding for jobs without a clear own-cost baseline
- Pricing by gut feel risks margin — or the deal
- Competitor cost levels are hard to read

→ How AI helps

- Builds a should-cost for its own services
- Benchmarks it against market & competitor levels
- Turns it into a defensible, competitive quote

↑ OUTCOME

Price with confidence

Own-cost transparency turns quoting from guesswork into a defensible number.

Watch-out: *The cost model must reflect the real service mix; revisit as prices move.*

Qualitative outcome — client-specific figures available on request.

Proving supplier due diligence at scale

User story: *As a procurement lead, I must evidence due diligence and see disruptions before they hit the line.*

i Context A German, mid-size med-tech systems manufacturer (~1,500 employees, publicly listed) — regulated supply chains with many single-source suppliers.

? The challenge

- ~800 suppliers, risk checked manually and rarely
- LkSG / CSDDD duties to document and defend
- Single-source parts fail without early warning

→ How AI solves it

- Scores every supplier 360° across nine dimensions
- Weighting tuned to the firm's risk appetite
- Hard-floor alerts on sanctions & critical flags

↑ OUTCOME

Weeks → hours

Continuous 360° coverage replaces once-a-year manual checks — audit-ready.

Watch-out: *Only as good as the master data; every alert needs an owner.*

¹ Illustrative, typical for AI-assisted due diligence — not a client-specific result.

Two buyers, a country's worth of work

User story: *As one of just two buyers for the whole country, I can't compare every quote by hand fast enough.*

i Context A German site of a global pharma / healthcare group (~300 staff) — its entire procurement run by just two buyers, under enormous workload.

? The challenge

- Two people cover all categories and requests
- Quotes arrive in every format; comparison is slow
- No time to evaluate every bid thoroughly

→ How AI solves it

- Normalizes every bid into one like-for-like matrix
- Flags gaps, outliers and lifecycle costs
- Drafts a scored, defensible award rationale

↑ OUTCOME

30–50%

shorter sourcing cycles — the lean team gets its time back.

Watch-out: *Agree criteria and weights up front; keep the audit trail.*

¹ Typical sourcing-cycle compression (industry sourcing studies).

Ordering right when demand explodes

User story: *As a requester, I just want to order the right thing, from the right supplier, at the right terms.*

i Context A German fibre-optic (FTTH) network operator. Demand for fibre infrastructure has surged — so reliable, controlled purchasing is business-critical.

? The challenge

- Rapid growth, high order volumes along the build-out
- Requesters need the right suppliers at the right conditions
- Procurement must keep control without slowing the rollout

→ How AI solves it

- Guided intake: requirement → PO, step by step
- Routes to the right framework contract & supplier
- Auto-categorizes and enforces the agreed conditions

↑ OUTCOME

5–16%

of savings protected by keeping orders on-contract and on-process.

Watch-out: *Integrate with ERP & catalogs; guardrails and training decide adoption.*

¹ Typical range (Hackett Group / industry benchmarks).

From early bet to company-wide capability

User story: *As a procurement organization, we want every buyer to use AI safely — not just a pilot team.*

i Context Deutsche Telekom began investing in AI ~2.5 years ago. Today an in-house AI team builds agentic AI solutions — and any employee gets access after training.

? The challenge

- Scaling AI from pilots to the whole organization
- Uncontrolled tool use is a data & compliance risk
- Access alone doesn't create capability

→ How they built it

- A dedicated in-house team building agentic solutions
- Access for every employee — after mandatory training
- Central team curates use cases, guardrails and prompts

↑ OUTCOME

**Pilot →
capability**

AI becomes an operating model for the whole function — not a side project.

Watch-out: *Training before access; keep data inside the enterprise boundary.*

Qualitative outcome — based on the company's publicly described AI approach.

APPENDIX

Backup

The how behind the stories: why procurement fits, the market signal, the agent suite, a live demo and traction.



THE ENGINE BEHIND THE STORIES

Why procurement fits — and how the agents work

The fit, the market signal, and the Procurement Intelligence Suite behind the outcomes.

Why procurement is a natural fit for AI agents

01

Structured, recurring decisions

RFQs, contracts and POs follow repeatable patterns an agent can learn and execute reliably.

02

Data-rich, time-poor

Teams sit on spend, supplier and market data they never fully exploit.

03

Information asymmetry

Suppliers often know more about cost and market; agents rebalance the table.

04

ROI is measurable

Savings, cycle time and risk are directly quantifiable.

The shift is already underway

80%

of global CPOs plan to
deploy generative AI within
three years

EY Global CPO Survey 2025

25–40%

productivity gain in
procurement from AI
copilots & agents

McKinsey

<5%→40%

of enterprise apps
embedding task-specific AI
agents by 2026

Gartner

~20%

savings potential from
analytics that surface
opportunities

McKinsey

A chatbot answers. An agent does the work.

Assistant / chatbot

- Responds when you ask
- Single turn, single answer
- You gather the data and take action
- Output is a reply

AI agent

- Pursues a goal you set
- Multi-step: plans, gathers, reasons
- Acts within guardrails you define
- Output is a decision-ready deliverable

Bottom line: *an agent doesn't just answer — it completes the task and hands you the output.*

The procurement value chain — mapped

SOURCE-TO-CONTRACT

Bid & offer evaluation

Normalize quotes, compare, rank

Should-cost analysis

Cost breakdown vs. market indices

Contract evaluation

Extract clauses, benchmark, flag risk

Supplier risk & spend

360° risk, spend & cluster analysis

PROCURE-TO-PAY

Negotiation support

Fact base, briefing, counter-arguments

Guided P2P

Requirement → PO, auto-categorization

The six stories span the whole source-to-pay chain.

My agents in the field: the **Procurement Intelligence Suite**

1

Procurement Portal

P2P

Requirement → PO, auto SAP categorization, cost-centre assignment, PO dispatch.

2

Should-Cost Agent

COMMERCIAL FOCUS

Analyzes price-increase demands and generates a negotiation briefing.

3

Supplier Pool Agent

ANALYTICS

Spend analysis and cluster-risk — fully client-side, GDPR-friendly.

4

Supplier Risk Agent

RISK

360° risk across nine dimensions, configurable weighting, hard-floor rules.

Bilingual DE / EN / BG · hosted in Germany · GDPR-friendly by design

Should-Cost Agent — is that price increase justified?

The trigger: a supplier demands a price increase.
Should you accept it?

- **Cost breakdown** — Splits material, labor, energy and overhead
- **Market indices** — Pulls commodity & labor data (Destatis GENESIS)
- **Verdict badge** — Clear justified / partly / not-justified call
- **Counter-arguments** — Ready-to-use rebuttals + alternative suppliers
- **Briefing PDF** — One-click negotiation briefing to take into the room

BUILT FOR REAL NEGOTIATIONS

Markets: DE · CH · BG · EU · INT

Languages: DE · EN · BG

Why it lands

It replaces “we think the increase is too high” with a defensible cost model and market evidence — the buyer negotiates auf Augenhöhe.

Risk, spend and P2P — the rest of the suite

1

Supplier Pool Agent

Spend & cluster-risk analysis. Fully client-side — supplier master data never leaves the browser. GDPR-friendly, per-category drilldown and currency auto-detection.

2

Supplier Risk Agent

360° risk across nine dimensions via an n8n backend. Customer-configurable weighting live in the frontend, plus hard-floor rules with transparent dual-value display.

3

Procurement Portal

Guided dialogue from requirement to purchase order: automatic SAP categorization, cost-centre assignment and PO dispatch — structure at the P2P front door.



LIVE DEMO

See the agents in action



Should-Cost Agent

We paste a real supplier price-increase demand — the agent breaks the price into copper, steel, energy and labor, benchmarks it against market indices, and returns a verdict plus a negotiation briefing.

In minutes, not days



Supplier Risk Agent

We pick a supplier and see a 360° risk score across nine dimensions — then adjust the weighting live and trigger the hard-floor alerts for sanctions and critical flags.

Live, on stage

Bring a case — we can run it right here.

Already live with paying customers

RUNNING TODAY

Vogelsang — pay-per-use

Logtech München — subscription

IN THE PIPELINE

Live demos with real cases across DACH — feedback feeding the roadmap.

FOUR LESSONS FROM THE FIELD



Start narrow — One painful, measurable use case beats a broad platform.



Data quality > disclaimers — Fix the source; don't label the limitation.



Keep humans in the loop — Guardrails and a clear verdict, not a black box.



Ship deliverables — Agents that hand over decision-ready output win adoption.

20 years in procurement — now building the agents



ProCom — procurement consultancy, Munich, established 2013. Two decades advising senior procurement leaders.

CPO Value Lab® — the product arm: practical AI agents for day-to-day procurement work.

Selected clients: GSK · E.ON · Telefónica · Sky · Burda · Stratec SE · Deutsche Glasfaser

My lens: put the buyer on an equal footing with the supplier — *“auf Augenhöhe verhandeln.”*

THANK YOU

AI is a value driver in the daily work.

“Auf Augenhöhe verhandeln.”

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