

A CPO GUIDE TO AI-READINESS

READY, AI-M, PROCURE:

Unlocking The Future of AI-Driven Procurement

Andrew Bartolini, Founder & Chief Research Officer, Ardent Partners
June 2025

Research by:

Ardent Partners
RESEARCH WITH RESULTS

Sponsored by:

Zip

Report Sponsorship

The views and opinions in this report represent those of Ardent Partners at the time of publication. Sponsoring companies have had no measurable influence on the content and research in this report. The contents of this research report are the exclusive property of Ardent Partners. Please direct any comments or questions regarding our research sponsorship policy to Ardent's Chief Research Officer, Andrew Bartolini, at abartolini@ardentpartners.com and/or 617.752.1620.

Sponsor



Zip is a world-leading procurement orchestration platform. Providing an intuitive starting point for any employee to initiate a purchase or vendor request, Zip helps businesses gain clear and timely visibility across all business spend and consolidates all the steps and tools used across finance and procurement processes in one platform.

Read more on www.ziphq.com



Table Of Contents

4	Executive Summary
5	Building the Foundation
6	The ABC's of AI
7	AI In Action: Market Research
10	Optimizing Procurement Data
11	Identifying High Value Use Cases
12	AI Use Case Examples
14	Building AI Skills and Comfort
15	AI Change Management
16	AI Adoption Launchpad
17	AI Project Metrics
18	AI Use Cases: The Metrics that Matter
19	Building the Foundation for Long-Term AI Success
20	Appendix

Executive Summary

In an era where procurement is under constant pressure to deliver more with less, CPOs are placing strategic bets on AI to scale operations, unlock efficiency, and elevate performance. But success with AI in procurement is not a given. To succeed, CPOs must start with the right blend of talent, systems, processes, and data, establish a solid foundation, and then build upon it.

This CPO guide to “AI Readiness” defines the essential building blocks that will enable CPOs to optimize their AI deployments. From identifying high-impact use cases and ensuring data quality, access, and governance, to determining how best to leverage AI within existing procurement technologies and building organizational proficiency, there’s plenty of groundwork required before the real value emerges.

And while this preparation shares many of the same characteristics as past digital transformation efforts (i.e. solid data, executive sponsorship, clear goals, and change management), that old playbook must be updated. AI introduces new points of leverage and new challenges. For example, AI doesn’t just automate tasks, it can reason, learn, and uncover patterns that traditional ProcureTech cannot. That potential changes how we think about decision-making, compliance, and even category strategy.

Equally important, procurement teams must assess whether their operating models and talent are ready for the shift. What data will be used to train the models? Who will interpret the outputs? And, who will govern the use of AI responsibly? These are just a few of the important questions that CPOs must answer in order to optimize their AI deployment.

CPOs who take proactive steps now can lay the groundwork for quick wins today while charting a course toward a smarter, more adaptive procurement organization tomorrow. Use this guide to unlock value early, scale what works, and evolve toward a more data-driven, and intelligent future.

Ready, AI-m, Procure!

Building the Foundation for AI

To lead with AI, CPOs must take deliberate steps to build a strong and scalable foundation. Start by strengthening your data to be accurate, accessible, and well-governed so that it can power any new intelligent system or algorithm. Next, focus on processes by identifying and prioritizing the use cases where AI can drive clear, near-term value. Invest in your talent with training focused on developing the skills your team will need to understand and successfully begin using AI. Finally, define the right metrics to measure impact, track adoption, and guide continuous improvement. These four areas are essential to turning an AI vision into an operational reality.



In an era where procurement is under constant pressure to deliver more with less, CPOs are placing strategic bets on AI to expand capacity, unlock efficiency, and elevate performance.

THE CPO'S FOUR PILLARS OF AI READINESS



Accurate and accessible data



Focus on high-leverage processes



Training and change management



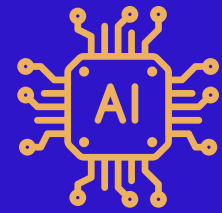
Track the metrics that matter

Establish An AI Governance Framework

At the enterprise level, most IT departments should already be working on an AI governance framework that outlines acceptable use, data access protocols, system integration standards, and audit requirements (in the mid-market, CPOs should be prepared to establish their own policies). IT can and should serve as a resource for procurement departments wanting to establish robust protocols and standards on how AI will be used, by whom, and to what extent within the procurement operation. The guidelines and frameworks emerging from these exercises should be adaptable in their design with the goal of empowering teams to harness the full potential of AI.

The ABC's of AI in 2025

AI is a complex technology that can be looked at from different perspectives and classifications, such as general, narrow, or application AI (e.g., computer vision, speech recognition, robotics, expert systems, etc.). Another way of classifying AI, which has more relevance to this report, is by AI technique. Within ProcureTech, machine learning, deep learning, and natural language processing (NLP) are perhaps the most important today, with Agentic AI and Generative AI emerging as the more impactful technologies.



AI Technology	How It Works	How It Is Used	Potential Procurement Uses
Machine Learning	Learns from data to make predictions or decisions without being explicitly programmed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyzing large datasets to find trends Predicting future outcomes based on past behavior Categorizing and classifying data points Detecting anomalies and outliers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spot savings opportunities Flag unusual spending Predict supplier risks
Deep Learning	More advanced form of machine learning that finds complex patterns in large datasets using layered algorithms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyzing images and text with nuanced understanding Identifying subtle patterns in very large datasets Tasks requiring advanced feature extraction 	Works inside tools that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forecast demand Analyze supplier performance notes Generate insights from unstructured data
Natural Language Processing (NLP)	Helps systems understand and work with human language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extracting information from text documents Analyzing sentiment and intent in communications Automating language-based interactions Summarizing and translating text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extract terms from contracts Analyze supplier emails Summarize lengthy documents
Generative AI	Creates new content like text, images, or data based on patterns it has learned from large datasets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generating and expanding text and visual content Condensing and simplifying large amounts of text Helping in the creation of ideas, solutions, reports, and presentations Powering automated conversational interactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft RFPs Summarize contracts Craft supplier communications Generate category insights
Agentic AI	An advanced AI that can take action and make decisions on its own to achieve a goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent execution of tasks based on defined objectives Planning and strategizing to reach a desired outcome Interaction with systems and potentially external entities to take action Learning and adapting its behavior over time based on results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Autonomous processing of multi-step tasks AI agents Continuous monitoring of compliance or supplier risk

COMBINE AI TECHNOLOGIES

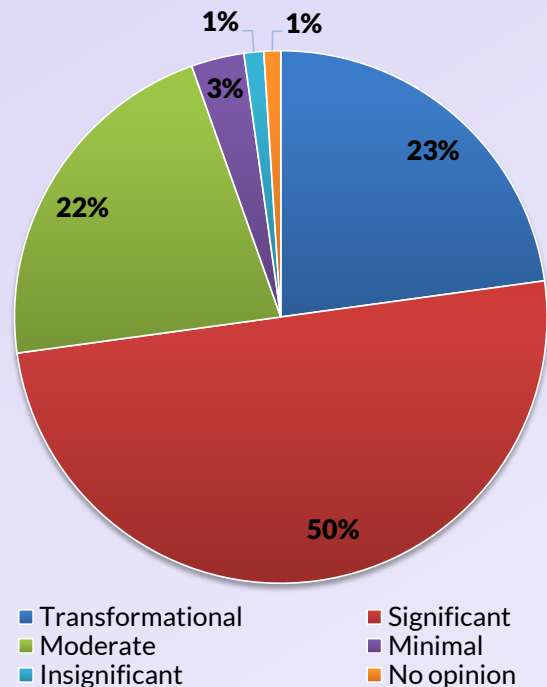
The technologies described above can be used in concert with one another across the full scope of procurement activities. AI will become a core part of procurement operations, so it is important to start investigating these technologies, and using them with controls. It is also important to understand that the path of AI within procurement over the next few years will not be linear, nonetheless the overall direction is clear.

AI IN ACTION - MARKET RESEARCH

RESPONSES FROM 326 CPOS TO A 2025 ARDENT PARTNERS SURVEY

CPO Expectations for AI are Rising

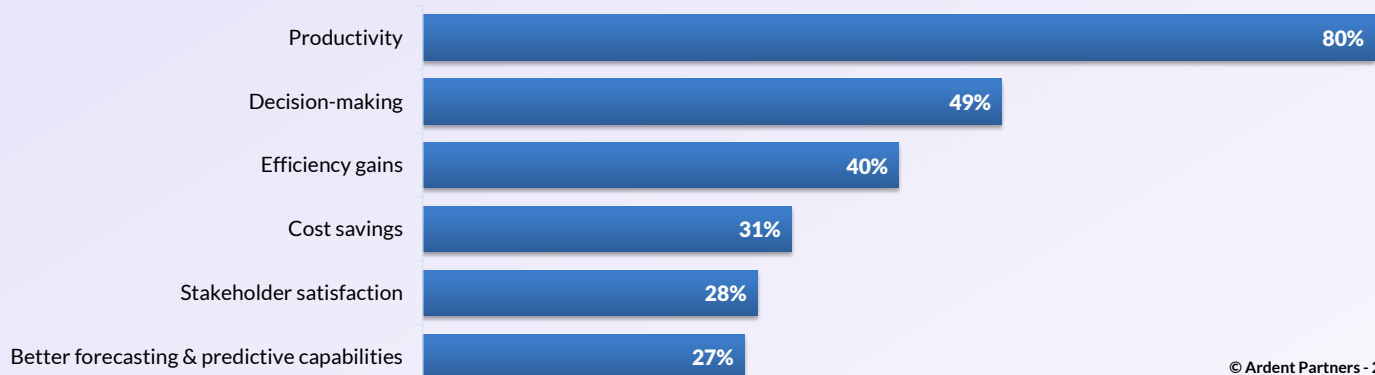
While AI adoption in procurement is not yet universal, belief in its potential certainly is. An overwhelming majority of CPOs expect AI to deliver either a significant (50%) or transformational (23%) impact over the next two or three years and that sense of potential is accelerating. As more CPOs explore AI's capabilities, expectations should scale accordingly placing pressure on solution providers to rise up and meet them. From autonomous sourcing and AI-powered negotiations to advanced contract analytics and next-gen spend analysis, intelligent tools are quickly evolving. The early results include higher levels of automation, smarter decision support, and better user experiences.



© Ardent Partners - 2025

AI as a Strategic Lever for Productivity and Insight

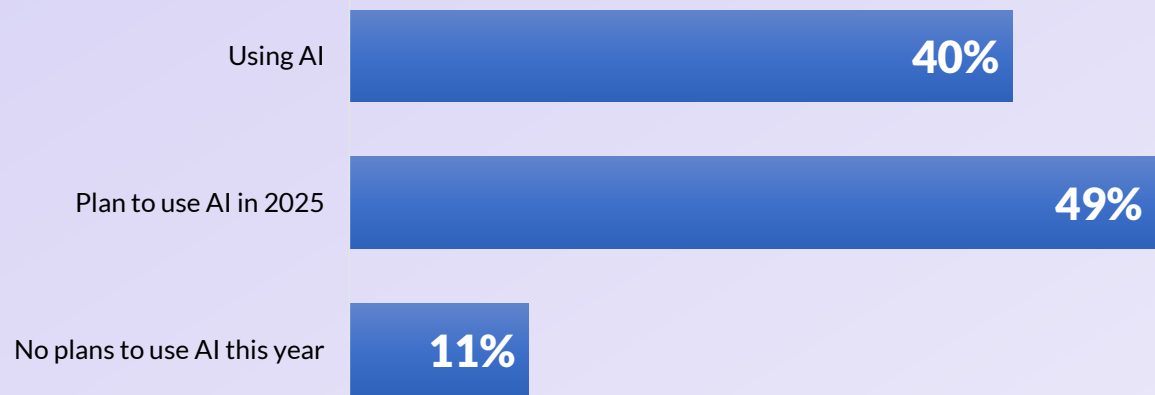
In an era where procurement is under constant pressure to deliver more with less, CPOs are placing strategic bets on AI to expand capacity, unlock efficiency, and elevate performance. For many, the first frontier is productivity. When asked to identify their top two goals in using AI, 80% of CPOs cited increasing productivity. Nearly half (49%) expect AI to improve analytics by delivering faster, deeper insights and better decision support. While an additional 40% view AI as a means to improve efficiency, specifically in response to tightened budgets or workforce reductions. Other top goals include identifying and executing on savings opportunities (31%), and enhancing forecasting and predictive capabilities (27%). From boosting output to driving smarter decisions, AI is becoming a tool that CPOs are counting on to transform their departments into a more agile, data-driven function.



© Ardent Partners - 2025

AI Adoption: A Strong Start with Room to Grow

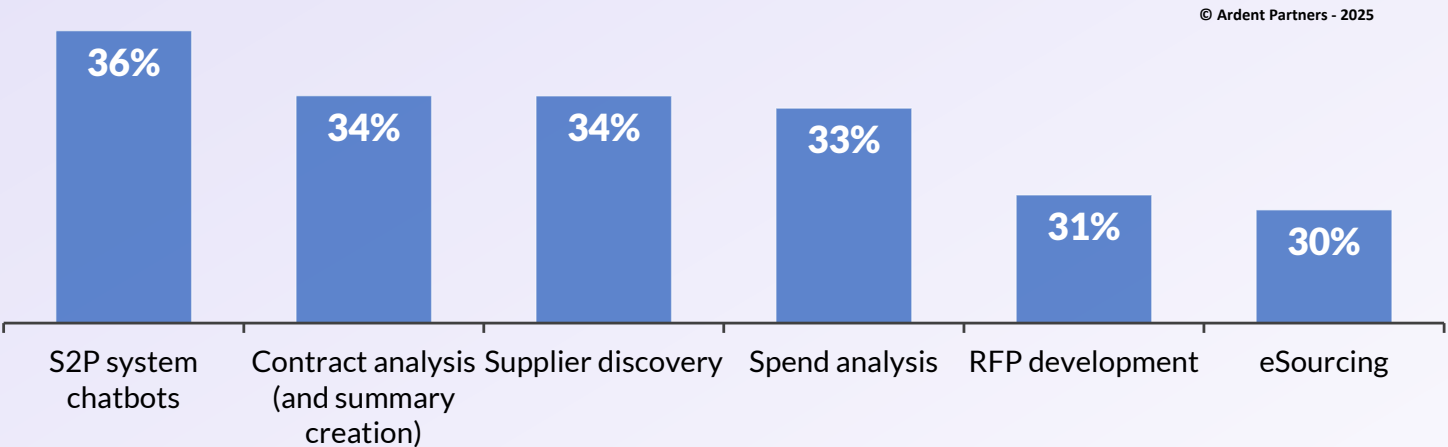
Despite the noise, headlines, and fast-moving hype cycle, AI adoption in procurement is starting to make meaningful inroads. Forty percent of all CPOs report using AI in some form today through their current procurement technology. Of course, more progress is expected since more than half of procurement organizations are not currently using AI, although most (49%) non-users plan to within the year. The good news is that the AI train is still at the station, and CPOs still have a window of opportunity to climb aboard.



© Ardent Partners - 2025

AI's Most Common Uses Today

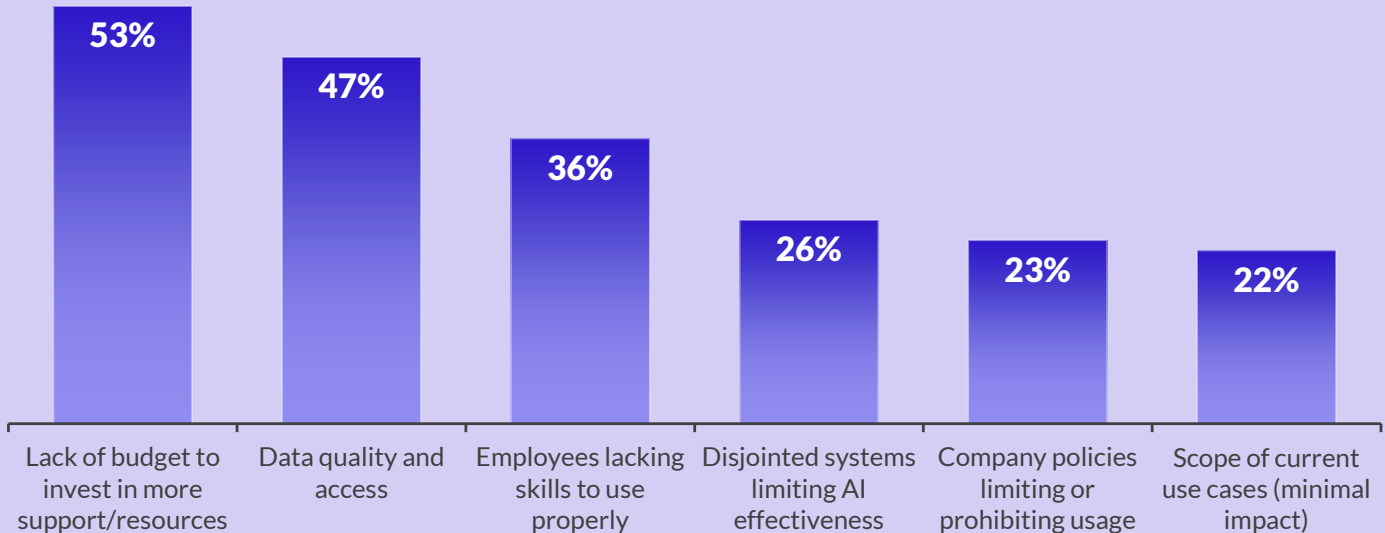
AI is steadily gaining traction across various facets of the procurement organization, with use cases growing in number as organizations try harnessing the technology's potential. The most frequent use of AI within specific procurement activities is the use of S2P system chatbots, where procurement teams are beginning to benefit from AI-driven support embedded in their core platforms. These chatbots help streamline workflows, answer queries, and assist with routine tasks. The second most common is contract analysis and summarization, where teams are starting to use generative AI to extract key information and generate summaries, saving time and reducing manual review effort. Third is spend analysis, a function well-suited to AI's ability to process and interpret large datasets. Together, these early-stage use cases mark a growing comfort level with AI across procurement operations and set the stage for a new series of use cases in 2025 and 2026



© Ardent Partners - 2025

BARRIERS TO AI SUCCESS

© Ardent Partners - 2025



As AI gains traction across procurement, most CPOs agree on its potential, but many are still struggling to translate that potential into value. The biggest current barriers to AI success are not the technology itself, but internal organizational challenges. These include limited budgets to support AI initiatives, poor data quality and access, lack of employee skills, disjointed or legacy systems, restrictive company policies, and uncertainty around which use cases will deliver impact.

Interestingly, few CPOs cite vendor or solution shortcomings as major roadblocks. This suggests that AI technologies are largely living up to expectations. The real issue lies within the organization's ability to adopt, scale, and govern these tools effectively.

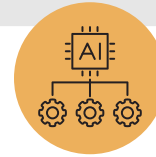
Ardent Partners 2025 research makes it clear that CPOs need a practical roadmap to navigate the complexity of becoming AI-ready. From aligning data and systems, to identifying high-impact use cases, building team capabilities, and setting the right metrics, the next sections outline the foundational steps needed to unlock both near-term wins and long-term strategic value.

Optimizing Procurement Data for AI



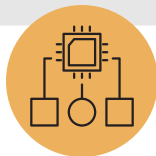
Data Access

Without fast, reliable access to the right data, even the most advanced AI cannot deliver meaningful insight or action.



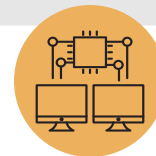
Data Quality

AI is only as smart as the data it learns from, so errors, gaps, and inconsistencies will lead to flawed outputs and wasted effort.



Data Governance

A clear framework for how data is managed, secured, and shared is essential to scale AI responsibly and sustainably.



Data Sources

Incorporating reliable, high-value third-party data can dramatically enhance AI's ability to generate insight, surface risks, and inform smarter decisions.

BUILDING THE DATA FOUNDATION FOR AI IN PROCUREMENT

To unlock AI's potential, CPOs must begin with a strong, accessible, and trustworthy data foundation. Start by mapping where critical procurement data lives across different systems and platforms (and silos) and work with IT to remove barriers to access. Work to create centralized data environments where AI tools can pull consistent, up-to-date information.

Next, focus on data quality. Standardize formats, clean legacy data, and implement ongoing validation processes. Leverage AI itself for initial cleanup and anomaly detection, but assign ownership for continuous monitoring to key team members or data stewards. Data governance is equally important. CPOs should work with internal AI Councils and IT leaders to define policies around who owns what data, who can access it, and how it must be maintained. Establish clear protocols for privacy, compliance, and security, which will soon be critical as AI usage may potentially introduce new regulatory and ethical considerations.

Finally, look beyond your own walls. Augment internal data with trusted external sources, such as market intelligence, supplier databases, ESG scores, and risk ratings to give AI a broader context for analysis and decision-making. Make sure those sources have proprietary rights to share this data and that it is well-integrated and current.

Identifying High Value Use Cases

OPTIMIZE AI'S IMPACT

From Big Pains to Key Gains

AI is most effective when it is solving real problems, not just automating for automation's sake. Identifying high-friction, high-impact pain points across procurement is the first step to unlocking meaningful ROI. Procurement teams should look for areas where delays, manual effort, or inefficiencies consistently slow down performance or introduce risk, then prioritize those for AI exploration.

Perform a Process Audit

A process audit provides visibility into how work actually gets done and where opportunities for AI-driven improvement exist. It helps uncover bottlenecks, redundancies, and variations that may not appear in system data alone. Teams should map core workflows end-to-end, engage stakeholders who live the process daily, and assess where data and decision logic intersect.

Scope the Market

The right AI solution is the one that supports the desired use case(s). Understanding the vendor landscape and evaluating how AI tools integrate into current systems is essential to long-term success. Procurement teams should define clear requirements and pilot thoughtfully.



Building AI Value Through Smart Use Case Identification

Smart use case identification ensures that your early AI investments deliver results and help justify future investments. CPOs should begin by identifying where their teams are spending the most time, encountering the most friction, or leaving the most value on the table. This means starting with real business pain points, where AI can transform inefficiency into speed, visibility, or insight. A structured process audit brings these opportunities to the surface. It exposes the gaps between how work is designed and how it is actually being executed. This can help uncover process-level obstacles to automation, such as fragmented workflows or poor and inconsistent data usage.

Once priorities are established, it is time to match the need to the right tool. The ProcureTech solution provider landscape is evolving quickly, and not all solutions are created equal. Integration, data compatibility, and ease of use are among the criteria that should guide the selection process.

AI Use Case Examples: Part 1

RFP Creation and Bid Analysis

AI is transforming the front-end of the sourcing process by streamlining how RFPs are created and evaluated. Procurement teams can now use generative AI to draft RFPs quickly on their eSourcing platforms, pulling from sourcing templates, prior events, and other documents like category strategy documents and commodity reports to ensure internal requirements are clearly defined and communicated in the RFP. Once bids are received, AI tools can help teams quickly compare responses based on different criteria and identify the best-fit supplier(s). This accelerates sourcing cycle times while making the analysis more objective.

AI-Powered Intake Management

Intake management solutions improve the procurement request process by providing a centralized, user-friendly interface for stakeholder needs. Intake management systems offer a “single front door” that employees can use to engage procurement. AI can improve the solutions by extracting and pre-filling data for new forms, ensuring accuracy and completeness from the outset. Dynamic workflows then route these requests through appropriate approval channels, adapting based on the request’s details. This automation reduces cycle times and minimizes errors, leading to faster, more compliant procurement processes. And, by streamlining intake with AI, procurement gains earlier access to sourcing projects and better visibility into enterprise spend.

Contract Review and Risk Identification

Procurement contracts often contain hidden risks, delays, or obligations that are easy to miss within PDFs that can be hundreds of pages long. AI-driven contract review tools analyze agreements line-by-line to identify standard and nonstandard terms, compliance gaps, and liability risks. These tools can highlight renewal dates and terms, summarize complex clauses, flag risky language, and compare contracts to company standards with great speed. They can also integrate with CLM systems to suggest new authoring suggestions and accelerate approvals. By automating the contract review process, procurement leaders gain better control over liability exposure, reduce contract negotiation times, and improve compliance to pricing, SLAs, and other general terms.

AI Use Case Examples: Part 2

Autonomous Task Processing

AI agents are emerging as powerful tools capable of autonomously executing tasks across the procurement lifecycle. Based on defined goals or triggers, these agents can initiate actions such as automating approvals, flagging compliance issues, or scheduling reorders without human intervention. This creates significant efficiency gains by reducing manual effort and enabling round-the-clock operations. More advanced platforms even offer “build-your-own-agent” capabilities, allowing procurement teams to customize task automation to fit their unique workflows. These agents can interact with internal systems, external data sources, and even other agents, thereby streamlining many activities across the full Intake-to-Pay process.

Invoice Coding

AI can streamline invoice coding by learning from past entries to automatically assign GL codes and cost centers based on vendor, item descriptions, and spend categories. This reduces manual effort, improves consistency, and shortens processing times. As models are trained on supplier-specific data, accuracy improves and the need for manual review declines. AI can also support employee-driven submissions by suggesting codes during entry. Over time, this improves compliance, spend visibility, and reporting accuracy, making invoice coding a practical and impactful starting point for AI in financial operations.

System Chatbots

AI-powered chatbots are becoming a frontline interface for procurement systems, helping users navigate tools, execute tasks, and access information. These conversational assistants are embedded within ProcureTech solutions, allowing employees to find contracts and suppliers, check invoice status, or get policy guidance without any formal training. Chatbots can also support procurement teams directly by answering supplier inquiries, flagging anomalies, or sending alerts based upon contract and sourcing milestones and activity. Their 24/7 availability reduces ticket volume and ultimately increases the usage of these tools.

Building AI Skills and Comfort

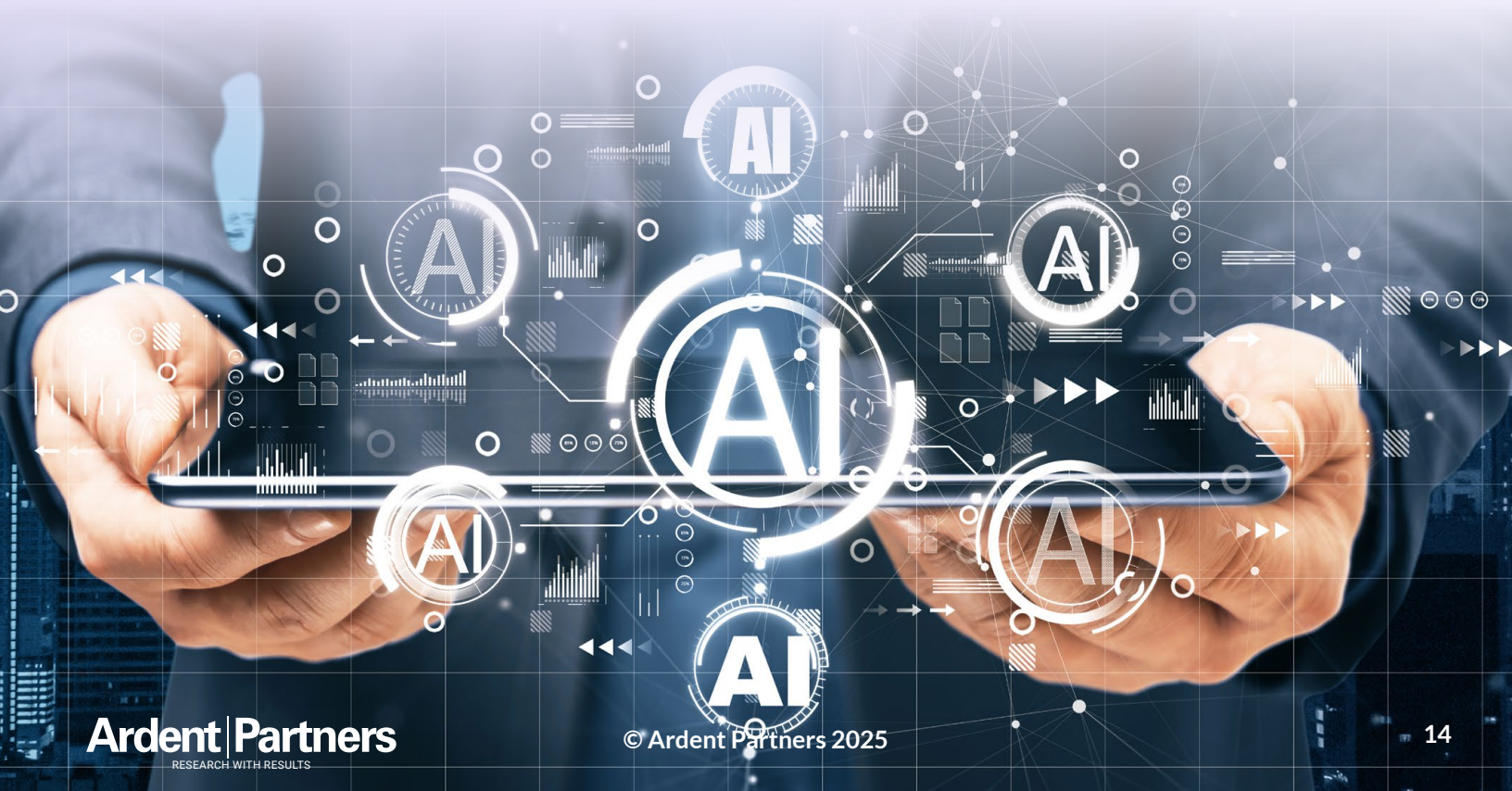
AI is the most talked about, and arguably, most misunderstood technology to impact procurement this century. It is no surprise that procurement teams may feel overwhelmed and unsure of how to engage with it, maybe even skeptical. This backdrop and the very “black box” nature of how AI works is why building a baseline of AI literacy will be critical to success.

The goal of initial training is not to turn sourcing managers or category leads into data scientists. Instead, it is about providing the team with the foundational knowledge that they need to feel confident and competent working alongside AI. Training should start with demystifying what AI is and is not. Clarify core concepts like machine learning, natural language processing, agentic AI, and other technologies in real world terms and in a procurement context. Explain what these technologies can realistically do today and where their limitations lie.

With this baseline in place, teams will be better equipped to find meaningful opportunities for AI use, ask smarter questions about outputs, and collaborate more effectively with their teams. They will also begin to understand how to validate AI-driven insights and maintain accountability.

An “AI 101” approach should be part of a broader upskilling effort that includes hands-on exposure to AI tools in action. Short, scenario-based training modules can go a long way toward building comfort and engagement. Make AI feel accessible, not abstract.

Creating a culture where it is safe to experiment and learn will be key. When procurement professionals understand how AI works, they’ll be more likely to trust it, use it, and contribute to its success. AI readiness relies on people, but it begins with education.



AI Change Management

AI-specific change management requires a thoughtful, people-centric approach that aligns with the unique nature of AI technologies. Unlike traditional tools, AI systems evolve over time and often produce outputs that may feel opaque or uncertain to end users.

To succeed, leaders must clearly communicate the purpose and limits of AI (Steps 1–4), build trust through transparency, and address fears around job displacement. Training (Step 5) should focus on interpretability, human oversight, and responsible use.

Support and feedback loops (Steps 6–7) should emphasize continuous learning and adaptation, reinforcing that AI augments the procurement function, not replace it.

Equally important is avoiding the isolation of AI initiatives within procurement. Partnering with IT, AI Councils, and other early adopters across the enterprise brings valuable insight, avoids duplication, and promotes alignment. Leveraging existing governance frameworks and/or establishing procurement-specific AI governance ensures responsible use, mitigates risk, and creates consistency in data, policy, and oversight.

The CPO's 7-Step AI Change Management Process

- 1** Define the Vision and Goals
- 2** Secure Executive Sponsorship
- 3** Assess Readiness and Impact
- 4** Develop a Communication Plan
- 5** Deliver Training and Enablement
- 6** Deploy and Support the Change
- 7** Reinforce, Measure, and Optimize

AI Adoption Launchpad

Incentivizing Usage and Removing the Risk of Early Mistakes

Driving AI adoption means creating a safe environment for experimentation. Procurement leaders should incentivize usage by recognizing early adopters, celebrating small wins, and embedding AI tasks into high usage workflows. Make it clear that perfection isn't the goal, learning is. Reduce fear of failure by offering sandbox environments, active user support, and a clear escalation path for troubleshooting. Establish guardrails for responsible use so employees can explore confidently without risking compliance or data integrity. When people feel safe to engage, they're far more likely to contribute to the long-term success of AI. In year two, build AI usage into staff bonus plans.

Starting Fast with Quick Wins

Launching an AI initiative with small, targeted wins builds momentum and confidence across the procurement team. Focus on low-risk, high-impact use cases like AI-assisted RFP creation or invoice triage, areas where automation can deliver immediate time savings. Quick wins can demonstrate real value early, helping to validate the investment and gain broader stakeholder support. By solving specific pain points quickly, teams become more open to future AI applications. Early successes also provide proof points that can be shared with leadership, reinforcing commitment and justifying further investment. Starting fast sets the tone that AI in procurement can be practical, useful, and available.

5 Steps to Early Success and Sustainable Engagement

1

Identify Low-Risk, High-Impact Use Cases

2

Pilot in a Controlled Environment

3

Empower Early Adopters and Champions

4

Incentivize Participation and Learning

5

Track, Communicate, and Scale

AI Project Metrics

Establishing clear, outcome-driven metrics will help determine the relative success of any initiative in procurement. Without defined goals and measurable progress markers, projects are more prone to fall short of expectations. Metrics help turn plans into action, and they facilitate better team alignment, greater accountability, and tighter execution.

Start by defining project goals, objectives, and timing. What problems are you solving? What improvements do you expect to see? Faster sourcing cycles? Greater request volumes? Higher stakeholder satisfaction? These goals should be translated into SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) objectives or the metrics model used by your business to guide both strategy and execution. Set a clear timeline for pilot launches, scaled rollouts, and second wave expansion.

From there, shift to outcome-focused metrics that track how AI is improving procurement operations. Look beyond simple usage stats or login rates. Instead, measure the impact of AI across key functions: cycle times, cost savings, supplier management, compliance rates, and decision speed. These results help validate the investment and tell a compelling story to project executives and stakeholders. Where possible try to include both quantitative KPIs and qualitative insights to get the full picture.

As important is setting the right expectations and timing. Year one is about creating traction, so set stretch targets that challenge the team to maximize impact. Future years should focus on deepening usage, expanding into new areas, and improving proficiency. This will almost certainly mean introducing more use cases. Celebrate early successes but be wary of complacency as AI maturity is on a steep continuum.

Given the longer-term outlook of the technology, your AI transformation will be a multi-year journey. The metrics established at the start should evolve as the team learns and grows, so plan to revisit and recalibrate KPIs regularly.

These AI metrics will be used as a scorecard, but they should also be used as a strategic tool that can guide and improve future actions while keeping the team focused on the most important.



AI Use Cases: The Metrics that Matter

The table below outlines the six common AI use cases discussed earlier, along with key metrics, baseline guidance, and tracking recommendations to help CPOs measure progress and impact. Each use case includes practical KPIs that reflect both efficiency gains and strategic outcomes.

Use Case	Key Metrics	Baseline Setup	Tracking Approach
RFP Creation & Bid Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time to draft RFPs % using AI Bid review speed Supplier participation rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measure historic cycle times Count manually created RFPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Log AI-generated documents Track bid turnaround time and quality
Intake Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time from request to routing % of requests auto-handled User satisfaction Reduction in backlog 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map current intake processes and delays Survey users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track request volumes and resolution time Periodic surveys and feedback
Contract Review & Risk Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review time saved % of flagged contracts Risk flagging accuracy Compliance improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time current contract reviews Document known risks caught manually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track flagged issues vs. true risks Audit post-AI contract reviews
Autonomous Task Execution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of tasks automated Time saved per task Error reduction SLA adherence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit current manual workflows Log time and error rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly task volume reports Compare pre/post automation performance
Invoice Coding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First-pass coding accuracy Time to code per invoice % of invoices manually coded or corrected AI-suggested vs. user-accepted GL codes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current invoice processing logs to document: Average coding time Manual coding rate Accuracy of initial GL assignments Common exception types 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build a dashboard to monitor: Accuracy and override rates weekly Coding speed trends monthly Exception volume and type AI model improvement over time via feedback loops
System Chatbots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AI-handled query % First-response resolution User satisfaction Ticket reduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Log manual support traffic Identify top questions/issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compare pre/post chatbot volumes Survey user satisfaction regularly

Use this framework to guide your own AI initiatives by starting with a clear understanding of current performance, setting measurable improvement goals, and establishing a consistent process for monitoring results. This methodology can and should be applied to any additional use cases you identify as part of your broader AI plan.

Building the Foundation for Long-Term AI Success

In 2025, AI is starting to make its mark on procurement. The decisions you make today in how you prepare, where you choose to start, how you train your teams and stakeholders, and how you define success will shape the trajectory of AI's impact within procurement and the enterprise. From strengthening data quality and governance to identifying high-impact use cases, building team skills, and applying clear project metrics, the steps outlined in this guide provide a framework for responsible, thoughtful adoption of AI.

As AI capabilities continue to advance and evolve, so to should the approach to begin using them. But success with initial use cases will create proof points, build organizational confidence, and establish the infrastructure and practices needed to scale AI in the future. Ready, AI-m, Procure!

Appendix

Report Author



With 26 years in the industry and 16 years leading the charge at Ardent Partners, Andrew Bartolini is a globally recognized expert in sourcing, procurement, supply management, and accounts payable. As the Chief Research Officer at Ardent Partners, Andrew oversees all research and client programs, including the annual State of the Market and Metrics that Matter eBook Series, Technology Advisor Reports, Ardent's monthly webinar series, as well as its in-person and virtual CPO Rising Summits. Andrew is also the publisher of CPO Rising (www.cporising.com) and Payables Place (www.payablesplace.com). Follow and connect with him on [LinkedIn](#).

Report Publisher



Ardent Partners is a next-generation analyst firm that leverages its data-driven research to help business executives make smarter decisions and achieve better results. Ardent's clients (and global community) understand and appreciate that when we publish research and guide our clients, we do so based upon literally thousands of data points collected and analyzed over the past two decades. Our unique primary research methodology, high-impact research publications, and deep domain focus set Ardent apart from its competition. Our community is expansive, our influence is extensive, and our research is unrivaled. To access our research library visit [here](http://www.ardentpartners.com). For more information visit www.ardentpartners.com or call 617.752.1728



© 2025 Ardent Partners, Ltd. All rights reserved. Reproduction and distribution of this publication in any form without prior written permission is forbidden. The information contained herein has been obtained from sources believed to be reliable. Ardent Partners, Ltd. disclaims all warranties as to the accuracy, completeness, or adequacy of such information. Ardent Partners, Ltd. shall have no liability for errors, omissions, or inadequacies in the information contained herein or for interpretations thereof. The contents expressed herein represent Ardent Partners' best analysis at the time and are subject to change without notice.