

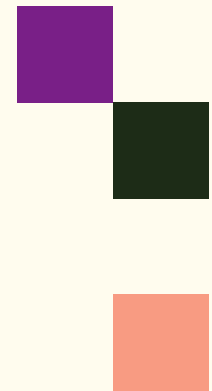


 quickbase

How No-Code Solves Sourcing and Procurement's Four Biggest Hurdles

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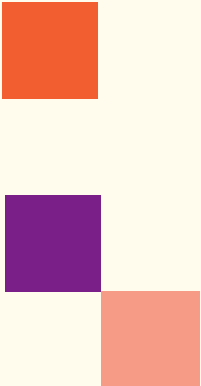


Introduction

As [supply chains](#) continue to globalize, sourcing and procurement is becoming considerably more difficult. Procurement in general needs to help maintain supplier relationships, track performance, onboard suppliers, and reduce risks. When supply chains are optimizing costs by going global and becoming specialized, this becomes incredibly challenging.

This difficulty makes disruption, well, that much more disruptive. If, for example, 10% of the global supply chain was impacted by a boat run aground [in the Suez Canal](#), sourcing and procurement professionals are often the ones put on the defensive and needing to scramble to find new suppliers and materials.

Unfortunately, reaction doesn't happen immediately. Quickbase's recent Supply Chain Resiliency Survey, which surveyed over 200 Supply Chain professionals in the U.S. within manufacturing, transportation & warehouse, and retail sectors, found 80% of supply chain professionals find themselves reacting to changes weekly or even daily.



However, the reaction time can be several days. Procurement teams are the ones closest to this work – they need to be able to communicate and pivot rapidly. Without the right tools and processes in place to react to change, and without the visibility into key supplier data and information, sourcing and procurement professionals are going to struggle to react to any changes, no matter how disruptive.

Sourcing and procurement won't be flipped upside down by factors outside of your control by focusing on these four things:

- 1. Increasing the agility of your current systems**
- 2. Preparing to rapidly adapt to change**
- 3. Increasing transparency across your teams**
- 4. Ensuring ongoing agility**

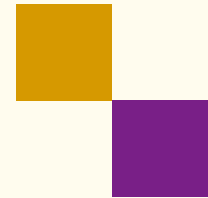
No-code plays a major role in this – organizations are using Quickbase to understand supplier capacity, make informed decisions, and make sure materials are delivered on time by connecting and activating data that is siloed in core systems into custom business applications. Read on to learn how leading organizations are leveraging Quickbase to build resiliency into their sourcing and procurement processes and react to change before it even comes.





Increase the agility of core systems

The need: easier access to data from ERPs



Many supply chain organizations rely on ERPs to manage data and business information and manage core processes - our Supply Chain Resiliency survey found 74% of supply chain organizations utilizing an ERP within their supply chain. While ERPs position themselves as a single source of truth for supply chain data with actionable insights, the reality is that ERP systems do not provide this full visibility. And while point solutions can be a good stopgap measure, as [Martin Weis](#) of McKinsey and Company points out, point solutions are too specific and not customizable enough to solve the problems of individual businesses.

When accessing data in [ERP systems](#), those insights may already be outdated. Further, ERP systems are often too difficult to navigate for those outside of IT, without the familiarity with that software to find the pertinent information that they're looking for. And lastly, any work to actually improve this situation with difficult-to-navigate core systems is time-intensive and will likely cost the business a good bit of money.

Instead of using more IT resources to continue to customize difficult-to-manage core systems, leading organizations are leveraging no-code technology to build in the agility they need to make changes on the fly for new strategies and for potential disruption down the line. Time spent waiting for workflows to be implemented, waiting for data to be pulled out of ERPs, or working through manual processes is time that could be dedicated to better satisfying customers and solving more issues much more quickly.



The success story:

Unified data leads to faster workflows and improved forecasting

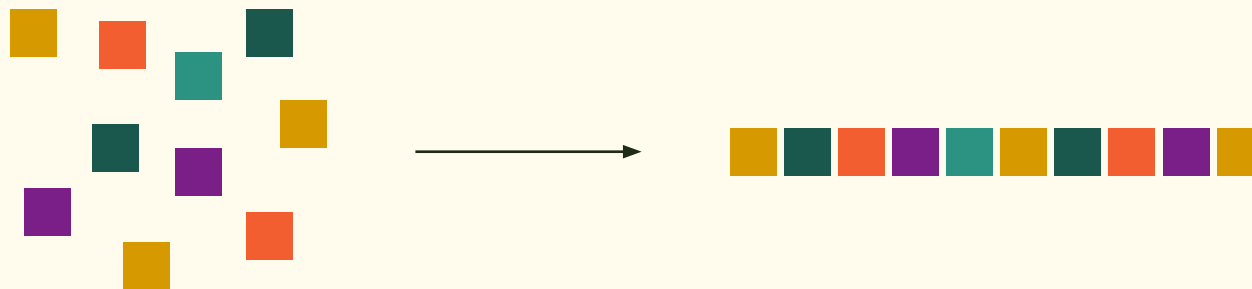
A leading industrial automation and information technology company was going through this exact issue – with burdensome core systems, their contract service maintenance process was seeing a slow rate of approvals and a large backlog of requests.

Further, limited data from their ERP and other core systems meant major holes in the data to report efficiently and best serve customers. Without the speed to adjust quickly, this backlog and this missing data was causing major struggles in attempting to adapt core systems and discover what critical data wasn't at hand.

With Quickbase, this company was able to unite the data stored in over 10 [disparate systems](#), and generate useful, simple reports with that data. Those gaps in data left by their ERP were easily covered by bringing siloed data into one central source of truth in

Quickbase. They also built an app that can audit for specific action items that need immediate attention, ensuring high-priority issues with clients would not go ignored.

Utilizing no-code capabilities to build an agility layer on top of core systems helped cut the contract management lifecycle down from 70 days to 30. Further, they have much better insight to share with leadership, who is able to more accurately forecast revenue. This is also showing an effect down the line on clients, who are seeing higher satisfaction scores since they can easily make quick changes to contracts without major work in an ERP system. Lastly, custom data reporting provides much more value by speaking directly to individual business needs, compared to the general data that ERP systems often report on.



A man and a woman are standing in a warehouse, looking at clipboards. The man is on the left, wearing a dark quilted jacket and jeans, holding a black clipboard. The woman is on the right, wearing a dark jacket with a light-colored stripe on the sleeve, also holding a black clipboard. They are both looking at their clipboards and appear to be in conversation. The background shows metal shelving units and stacks of materials. The image has a teal color overlay.

Rapidly adapt to change

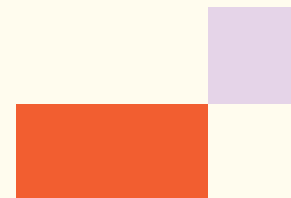
The need: reacting to inevitable disruptions



Change happens fast and furious in the supply chain world. From new industry regulations, to the recent shortage of semiconductors affecting industries like electronics and automobiles, to a ship getting stuck in the Suez Canal, organizations need to be more ready than ever to react to change and quickly pivot.

This is difficult when those changes can only come from IT. When technology issues need to be solved by developer resources, the wait for proper support can be agonizing. Taking away the barrier of IT's limited resources would unlock a new level of flexibility that can allow for immediate reaction to change.

If there's a better solution, why wait? Leading organizations are operationalizing the people closest to the work to be able to collect supplier data, track performance, manage workflows, and report on data in real-time. With the right tools, giving the people with the most familiarity with business processes the ability to report critical info and metrics doesn't take advanced technical knowledge.



The success story:

Creating visibility into suppliers during COVID-19

The sourcing and procurement team at an American manufacturer of scientific products and software experienced this firsthand when they were tracking all of their supplier information and data in manual spreadsheets. Aside from the time concerns of a manual process, this led to struggles in reporting on data since they didn't even understand what information they could access and report.

When COVID-19 hit and slowed down manufacturing, the sourcing and procurement team struggled to gain visibility into the situation with their suppliers. Without a sense for what suppliers were able to deliver, they needed to understand and manage supplier risk, and determine which suppliers could deliver key materials. Then, if needed, they would have to manage the process of switching suppliers to get the right materials.

The team brought on Quickbase to generate this visibility into suppliers. In just eight days, they built an application to manage

supplier contact information and track whether suppliers were able to deliver during the pandemic. This gave them the ability to track risk across suppliers and quickly follow up or pivot to a new supplier if needed. The application also gave them visibility into department spending, so they could see if they were staying within budget and reducing costs.

Not only did this team create visibility into key information they were lacking before, but they had the ability to almost immediately react to a world-shaking change and address new issues that didn't exist before. With the ability to reduce costs and track the status of suppliers, they will be ready for any future disruption that could cause similar uncertainty in their supply chain.



A man and a woman, both wearing white safety vests over dark clothing, are looking at a tablet together. The woman is on the left, and the man is on the right. They appear to be in a construction or industrial setting. The image has a teal overlay and white geometric shapes in the corners.

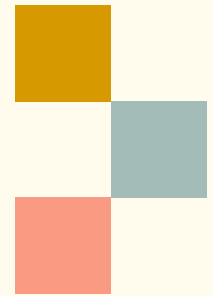
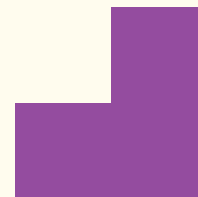
Increase transparency

The need: bringing suppliers out of the dark
for better collaboration



Overall transparency is one of the greatest problems that sourcing and procurement professionals face. Without visibility into supplier data, sourcing and procurement professionals face challenges with their suppliers and their operations. Not being on the same page as suppliers could lead to uninformed decisions, misunderstandings about capacity, and ultimately untimely delivery of materials and supplies.

It's time to end the days of being stuck in the dark with suppliers. There are ways to effectively collaborate with suppliers and gain real-time visibility into their inventory, material quality, and costs to easily understand and report on supplier performance.



The success story:

Tracking previously untracked processes saves money and eliminates lost parts

A subsidiary of a worldwide material handling company had just landed a major contract to handle an eCommerce and wholesale distribution center. They were using this opportunity to formalize workflows and better keep track of parts during the building process – which, at the time, came in spreadsheets, offline platforms, and email. Since they had to track over 3,000 parts for their robotics division, keeping tabs on issues and schedules led to a major lack of coordination between teams. Further, an outdated MRP (materials requirement planning) process made it difficult to track parts, leading to parts being lost considerably more often than is acceptable.

Quickbase initially came on board to solve for [project management](#). Eventually, this company expanded their use of Quickbase to replace its MRP process. When this company was previously tracking thousands of parts in their supply chain in spreadsheets, it was deeply inefficient and had zero collaboration. Quickbase is helping ensure their supply chain is tracked from the bill of material all the way through the purchasing cycle and assembly cycle.

This transparency allows for increased collaboration and an understanding of processes that were previously impossible

to track. Now, the team has full visibility into purchasing and manufacturing processes.

The impact is real – while the company saved \$100k by building an MRP with Quickbase instead of a fully homegrown MRP, the rate of lost parts went down to almost zero and late deliveries due to misplaced parts were virtually eliminated. The transparency that they were able to create allowed them to better serve customers down the line, and reach the lofty standards of this new contract.



Increased collaboration



Understanding of previously-untrackable processes



Full visibility into purchasing and manufacturing processes



Reduce lost parts and late deliveries

A woman with blonde hair and glasses on her head is smiling and looking at a laptop screen. A man with a beard and glasses is also smiling and looking at the screen. They are in an office environment. The image has a yellowish-green tint and white geometric shapes in the corners.

Ensure ongoing agility

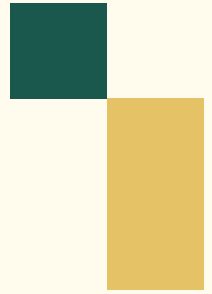
The need: staying flexible and adaptable for any potential changes



Unfortunately, nobody is anticipating an end to this era of constant disruption in the supply chain world. Success will come from organizations that are able to not just weather this disruption and survive in spite of it, but thrive within it.

Building the agility and flexibility to react to any change is one way to ensure the ability to thrive within disruption. Putting a long-lasting operational agility platform in place will give sourcing and procurement teams the ability to react on a moment's notice. But just as importantly, IT needs to trust that any changes being made on the business level are within proper guardrails and won't impact core systems.

When IT can govern and control a system driven by business users closest to the work, that will build a critical level of trust.



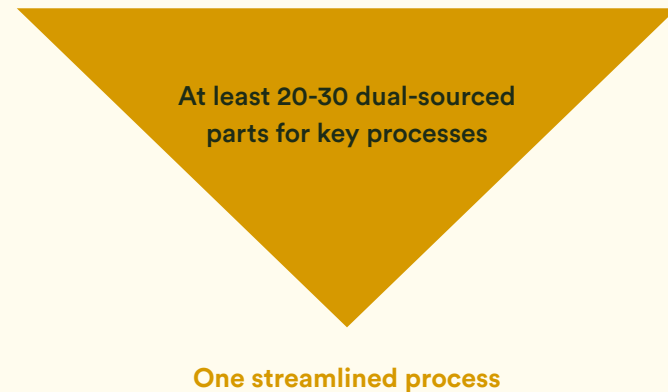
The success story:

Streamlining complex sourcing and procurement brings about consistency

[PSG Dover](#), a leading designer and manufacturer of pumps and accessories for liquid and gas transfer for commercial and military/marine customers, was struggling with this when they had to adapt to greater complexity in its parts sourcing process. If a part became delayed or unavailable, PSG's entire production schedule could be impacted. PSG adapted to change by creating a dual-sourcing program, with multiple potential suppliers for key parts. While effective, this initiative can involve anywhere from 20 dual-sourced parts to several hundred, with each of them requiring an approval process. Clearly, basic office software wouldn't be up to the task.

PSG Dover was able to use Quickbase to [streamline this entire process](#), and unite IT and business users. With these applications meeting government security standards as well, they were able to continue to develop and modify applications for specific needs. Further, these flexible applications can be adjusted on the fly when new considerations come up. And while IT approved security standards and has their hands on the reins with governance controls, they do not need to put in the time-consuming hands-on work that would traditionally come from professional developers.

Now, PSG has standardized their sourcing and procurement process throughout this complex dual-sourcing program. The team now has consistency and quality assurance in part approvals, rejections, testing, and validation. To continue to



keep teams informed and involved, this process also created increased collaboration. With Quickbase's automated alerts and notifications, a growing number of users can work together and directly with suppliers to contribute to this initiative.

PSG isn't waiting for disruption to prepare for potential hurdles in sourcing the right parts. Not only are they building the agility to track suppliers for critical parts, but they are also involving more and more users across the business. The more users with the knowledge and ability to source parts across different manufacturing processes, the more hands that will be on deck during the next moment of massive disruption.

[Learn more about Quickbase's supply chain solutions on our website.](#)



About Quickbase

Quickbase provides a cloud-based platform that empowers problem solvers to quickly turn ideas for better ways to work into apps that make their organizations more efficient. For nearly 20 years, people of all technical backgrounds have been using the Quickbase platform to create solutions that streamline processes, capture real-time data, and improve company operations, all while working in concert with existing IT systems. Based in Cambridge, MA and a former division of Intuit, Quickbase has a 6,000+ customer universe of app-enabled businesses that spans all industries and company sizes and includes half of the Fortune100.

To learn more, visit: www.quickbase.com.