

Beyond Gen AI: How Agentic AI Is Reshaping Procurement

Last year, AI learned to advise. This year, it's learning to act.

Generative AI gave procurement a **brilliant assistant** — one that could read a hundred quotes, draft a justification, or flag a risk in seconds. But it **still waited to be asked**. Every action needed a human to start it, and a human to finish it.

Agentic AI is a different kind of help. Instead of answering questions, agents **take the next step on their own** — pulling data, comparing bids, matching invoices, routing approvals — and check back only when judgment is needed. Procurement's first real digital coworkers have arrived.



The shift from systems that record to systems that decide.

25–40%

efficiency gain as procurement turns agentic

90%

of B2B purchases AI-agent-led by 2028

67%

of organizations weighing autonomous agents today

Where agentic procurement is already at work



Sourcing & Discovery

Agents scan supplier databases, verify credentials, and shortlist qualified vendors — compressing weeks of search into minutes.



Smarter Negotiation

Agents read each supplier's past negotiation behaviour, calculate the walk-away point, and recommend the move — even responding to counter-offers within set limits.



RFx & Comparison

Agents consolidate requisitions, build the RFQ, and assemble a landed-cost comparison ready for award.



Invoice & Compliance

Agents three-way match PO, GRN and invoice, catch leakage, and escalate only the exceptions — autonomy with a human as final approver.



What This Means for Procurement Leaders

The question is no longer whether to adopt agents — it's whether your process and data are ready to let them act.

- Digitize the workflow first; agents have nothing to stand on without it.
- Start where data is clean and volume is high, then widen autonomy as trust builds.
- Keep a human as the final line of accountability.



Bottom line:

Gen AI made procurement faster at thinking. Agentic AI makes it faster at doing. The teams that pull ahead won't have the smartest assistant — they'll have a process and a data foundation ready to let agents act.



But agents are only as good as the ground they stand on.

Agentic AI needs two things most procurement functions still lack: a fully digitized end-to-end process, and years of clean, real transaction data to learn from. Gartner names poor data and legacy processes as the single biggest barrier to agentic AI — so the agents that win aren't the ones with the cleverest model, but the ones trained on real history, not a generic demo.

