tonkean | THE PURE PROCUREMENT NEWSLETTER

The Transformational Benefits of Tonkean Intake & Orchestration for SAP

A guide for getting more out of your ERP and P2P investments with AI-powered orchestration



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This ebook outlines how procurement teams using SAP ERP solutions can leverage Tonkean intake and orchestration to significantly increase requester adoption of procurement processes—as well as improve their overall quality of work, reduce “request-to-purchase” cycle times, and increase spend under management for the organization.

Let’s get started.

What Is Intake and Orchestration?

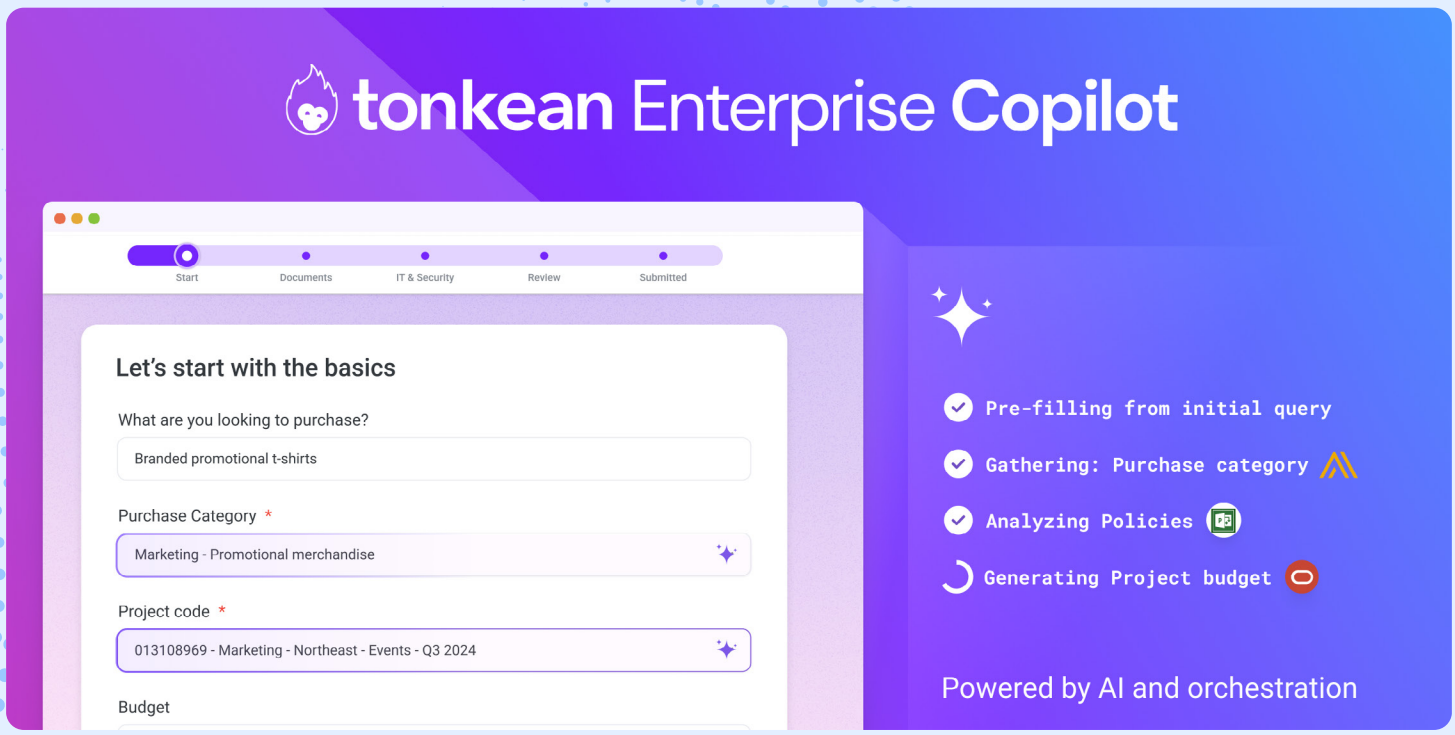
AI-powered intake and orchestration software empowers procurement teams to build procurement process experiences that can anticipate employees' needs, guide them through requests, unify processes that span many different systems and departments, and automate manual steps across work actions—specifically in the context of procurement request intake. It allows internal service teams like procurement to create and manage guided intake processes that are simplified, personalized, context-aware, highly intelligent and that can be initiated through channels where requesters already spend their time: email, Microsoft Teams, etc.

With the best of these tools, an organization is able to centralize a purchase request queue and provide reporting data — as well as seamlessly orchestrate across systems, data sources, and teams — all the handoffs, triggers, automations, and approvals required to resolve intake requests. They also provide a "front door", ideally powered by AI, through which all intake requests can be kicked off. This essentially nullifies the need, for employees, to understand complex procurement or ERP solutions. Instead, internal teams can simply provide an overall seamless experience for the user.

The best and most enterprise-grade orchestration technology makes this possible because it seamlessly wraps around and accommodates all of your organization's existing databases, policies, people, and systems. This ability means that you can connect and pass data back and forth between your organization's mix of people and tools, including ERP and P2P platforms, seamlessly and automatically.

What's one example of such an orchestration platform?

Enter: Tonkean



Tonkean is an intake and orchestration platform for the enterprise. How does it work? The important thing to know is Tonkean provides users an experience layer that's powered by an orchestration engine. But what are those things? Let's start with the former. In processes that internal teams create using Tonkean, requesters are provided with and accompanied by an AI-powered Enterprise Copilot that will help them do things such as purchase goods and services via their preferred collaboration tool (e.g., email or Teams), all while remaining 100% compliant with your procurement policies, rules and processes. Tonkean's Enterprise Copilot removes all the "behind the scenes" complexity for requesters by coordinating the end-to-end purchasing workflow on their behalf across all of your relevant systems, data sources, and stakeholders. Requesters get real help, from high-level questions about your process to detailed, context-specific questions about your policy—but more than that, the Enterprise Copilot can actually populate fields for requesters. In brief, the requester never has to sign into a procurement solution and navigate through a complex form field or fill in a bunch of form fields that they are often unsure about.

What's the impact of this on the procurement side? Tonkean intake and orchestration bridges the gap between the requester experience on one side and your company's policies, categories, and corporate procurement objectives on the other. The days of relying on employee knowledge or willingness to comply with your policies and strategies to improve results are over. Instead, you can meet them where they are. In the context of SAP, for example, **licensed requesters don't even have to remember how to log in to SAP.**

The truth is, your requesters are not meant to be professional buyers. While a portion of your requesters may be experts, the majority of your requesters are most likely "eternal novices". Intake orchestration helps drive results by proposing a solution that accepts this as fact. In the context of organizations leveraging SAP Intelligent spend management solutions, this translates to requesters being able to submit purchasing requests (requisitions) in natural language with a virtual Enterprise Copilot.

For example, a requester could create a requisition that's compliant with your policies and strategies via Microsoft Teams or email without ever having to log into an SAP system.

Let's dive into how this works.



How Does Tonkean Intake and Orchestration for SAP Work?

Let's demonstrate how Tonkean intake and orchestration can handle one of the most dreaded procurement use cases: a low-value, high-volume spot buy.
Let's imagine an employee needs to purchase a replacement part for a printer, office furniture or anything else for which you don't have corporate contracts in place:

1

First, the requester expresses the desire of purchasing the replacement part to Tonkean's Enterprise Copilot via MS Teams, Slack or email or your procurement web portal.

2

The Tonkean Enterprise Copilot checks if any:

- SAP ERP Material Masters / Contracts meet this description
- Punch out catalog/contract items meet this description

3

If results are found, they are returned to the requester for validation and selection

4

If no results are found, additional contextual questions are asked to enable sourcing (via generative AI), for example:

☑ Do you already have a quote/model in mind? Please attach.

☑ If not, can you provide any requirements for the following characteristics (depending on the purchase in question):

- Maximum height/width?
- What brand/model?
- Any shipping instructions?
- Are there color requirements?
- Etc.

5

The requester answers the questions.

6

Based on the answers and your business rules, additional information is requested (e.g., cost center, delivery address, etc.)

7

The requester, once again, answers the questions and submits their completed request

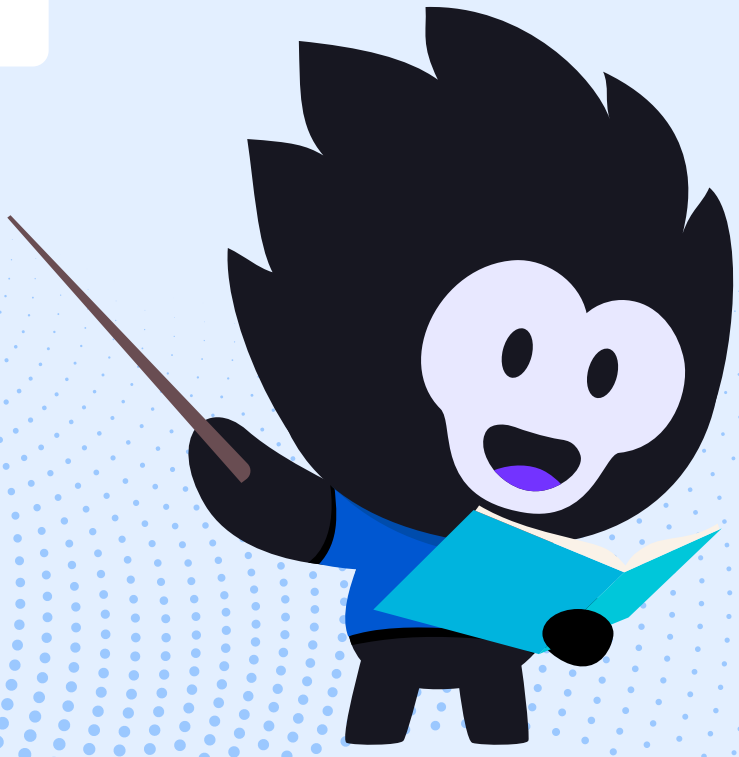
- The Enterprise Copilot can understand the nature of additional information (such as the meaning of a cost center or restrictions on delivery addresses) and help requesters by offering suggestions or by looping in managers/ procurement agents **at the field level** to support the requester.
- Requesters can similarly kick off field level workflows if they need support to provide additional information (e.g. I need help selecting the correct cost center).

8

Based on the fact that this request is a “spot buy” that should be sourced before purchase (i.e., not a pre-sourced catalog/contract item), the request is routed to the sourcing team’s activity queue for processing.

9

Once the good/service is sourced according to requester requirements (e.g. by creating an RFQ event in your Sourcing system, SAP Ariba or otherwise). Tonkean then monitors the RFQ event, and once a supplier is awarded, a requisition is automatically created in your backend SAP Procure-to-Pay application (Ariba, SAP ECC or S4/HANA depending on your context).



During this process, the requester has full visibility over the progress of their request. They can ask the Enterprise Copilot for a status at any point to understand who is working on their request. This is how Tonkean intake orchestration caters to both your super users and “eternal novices” who only purchase once in a blue moon.

The example workflow above can be changed or enhanced to respect your own procurement rules and policies. For example, the process may change based on the estimated amount of the purchase, geography, back end ERP instance or business unit. Tonkean’s no-code process configuration engine supports the most complex, enterprise-level procurement processes.

By engaging requesters in an intuitive way where they already work (e.g., MS Teams or email), procurement is looped-in much earlier than usual and request data quality is far superior than traditional “text requisitions”. This reduces the back and forth associated with teasing out requirements from stakeholders and frees your team up to create unique value only procurement can provide.



Compared to traditional transaction-based requisitioning approaches, this is a paradigm shift!

The Tonkean Advantage: Intake, Automate, & Integrate

Tonkean's unique Intake and Orchestration for SAP Intelligent Spend Solutions offering is structured around a three-step life cycle:

1. Procurement Request Intake and Approvals:

- **Systematically and seamlessly gather all required data to support procurement processes** with flexible, no-code, configurable forms adapted to your different purchasing categories.
- **Remove stakeholder guesswork around procurement** by meeting requesters and approvers "where they live" in Slack, Teams, email, or in your central procurement portal. Key is providing employees an "AI Front Door," which employees can "open" anywhere, and through which all requests can be sent.
- **Gather requester requirements in natural language** with a native conversational chatbot that understands your forms and business processes.

2. Flexible Business Process Automation

Democratize process design and workflow deployment with no-code, executable business process modeling tools—no development experience required.

Leverage best practice Procurement processes from the Tonkean process library as a starting point for categories where no formal processes are currently in place. For example:

- Catalog Purchase (goods)
- Simple Non-Catalog Purchase (goods)
- Complex Non-Catalog Purchase (e.g. software)

Launch and execute business process workflows automatically based on the data gathered from requesters during intake.

Automatically notify and integrate process stakeholders into transactions when required based on your specific business rules (e.g., requesters, IT, legal, procurement, approvers, etc.).

Give stakeholders the ability to dynamically add steps to in-flight processes when required in a particular transaction.

Give managers and stakeholders visibility into all ongoing procurement transactions and the ability to redistribute work or otherwise intervene ad-hoc.

3. Integration with Your Existing Applications

Tie application-specific steps into your business processes with an extensive library of "plug-and-play" connectors using flexible, configurable API functionality. For example:

- Trigger the creation of and monitor the status of a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) in IT's ticketing system when sourcing new software (e.g., ServiceNow)
- Trigger the creation of and monitor the status of a new complex sourcing project in your Sourcing solution (e.g., Ariba Sourcing)
- Trigger the creation of and monitor the status of a new contract workspace in your Contract Lifecycle Management (CLM) system (e.g., Ariba Contracts)
- Trigger requisition creation in your purchasing system when a preferred/ contracted vendor is selected for a professional service requirement (e.g., Ariba Buying, Fieldglass Services Procurement, SAP ECC, SAP S4/HANA)

Thread the needle between the disparate applications that support your end-to-end procurement processes instead of relying on manual, oft-forgotten integration steps (e.g., IT needs to remember to create a ticket in their system for the PIA and get back to Procurement when it is completed).



A unified view of your end-to-end procurement transactions



With this unique combination of functionality, organizations leveraging Tonkean's Intake Orchestration for SAP Intelligent Spend Solutions can achieve a unified view of end-to-end procurement transactions for both procurement, stakeholders, and requesters even if dozens of non-SAP systems are used as part of your business processes.

Tonkean is built for the enterprise.



More Tonkean Intake and Orchestration for SAP Intelligent Spend Solutions Use Cases

While the philosophy behind the Tonkean toolset can be applied to any app in your procurement application stack, Tonkean has developed standard processes and connectors for organizations using SAP Intelligent Spend Solutions.

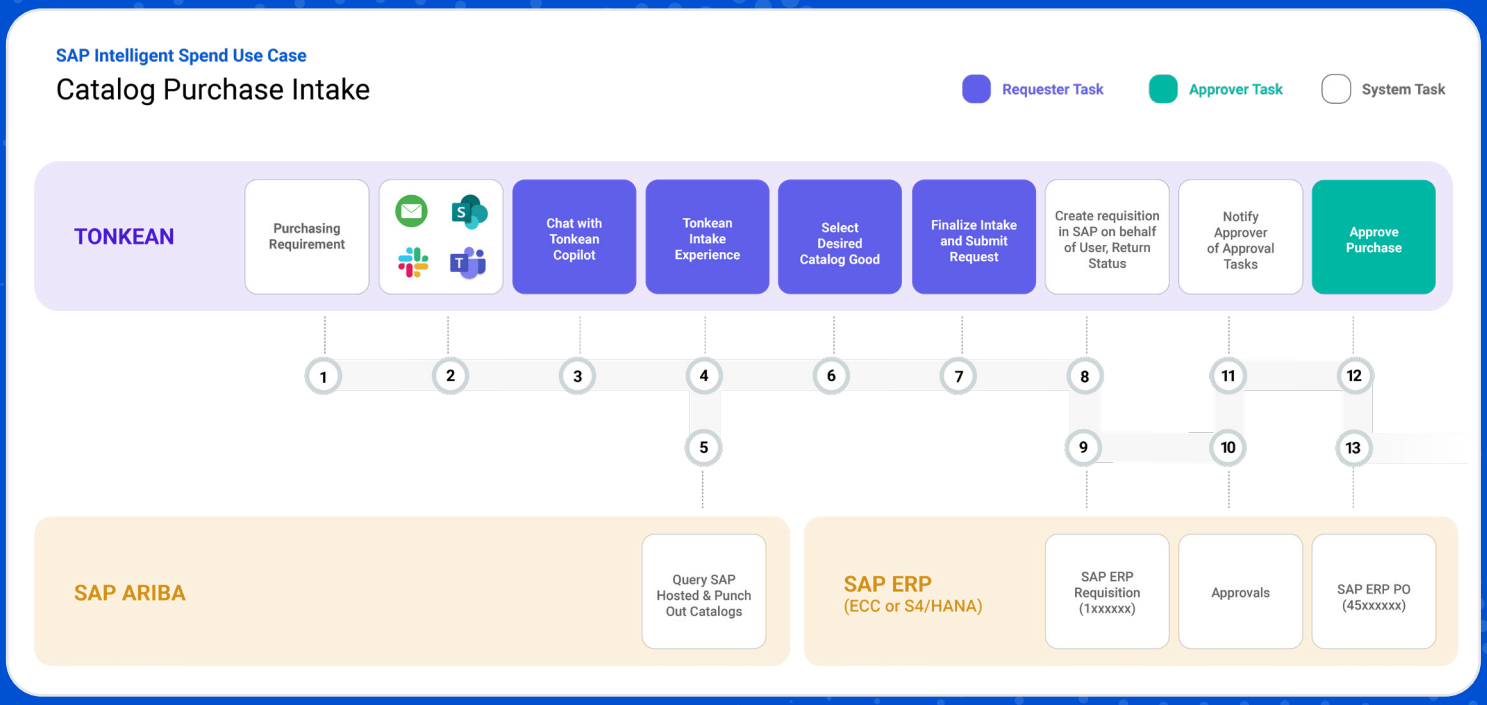
Here are four of the standard use cases provided out of the box:

Catalog Purchase

Repeat purchasing of goods in non-inventoried purchasing categories such as office supplies, cleaning, or industrial supplies are great candidates for SAP Ariba Catalogs as you don't need to maintain pricing master data in your systems but still want to route requests through your purchasing/approval process.

However, requesters still need to make their way to the Ariba Catalogs interface to search and sort through the catalogs to find what they need. For occasional requesters, this can be a noticeable barrier to adoption.

By using Tonkean's Enterprise Copilot, requesters can access your SAP Ariba Catalogs data directly from their preferred collaboration tool (e.g. MS Teams, Slack, email, your Procurement intranet page, etc.). This ease of access increases adoption and compliance with your sourcing strategies by meeting requesters "where they live".



Here's how to complete a catalog purchase with Tonkean in an SAP Intelligent Spend Solution ecosystem

1

A requester has a new purchasing requirement.

2

The requester accesses their preferred collaboration platform and prompts Tonkean's Enterprise Copilot.

3

The Enterprise Copilot provides personalized, context-aware support using natural language. It asks the requester what they need, asking follow-up questions as necessary to appropriately qualify the purchasing requirement by leveraging generative AI functionality. It then directs the requester to the appropriate intake experience based on your business rules (e.g., a web form). In this case: a catalog purchase.

4

The requester can access Ariba Catalogs data and whatever other internal data sources and policies you give Tonkean access to via the intake form, finding required catalog products according to your policies.

5

Your existing SAP Ariba catalogs are leveraged without any additional setup.

6

The requester selects their desired goods from the applicable catalogs.

7

The requester fills out any required additional information with Enterprise Copilot support or user default values (e.g., cost center). Finally, they submit their request for processing.

8

Tonkean creates the requisition in your SAP ERP (ECC or S4/HANA) on behalf of the requester with no procurement team intervention.

9

The requisition number (e.g., 1XXXXXX) is sent back to Tonkean and communicated to the requester.

10

If you have approval flows configured in SAP ERP, they are triggered as usual. You can also choose to modify or remove your SAP ERP approval flows to run approvals directly in Tonkean.

11

Regardless of where approvals are configured/hosted, Tonkean can notify approvers in their communication channel of choice with a role-based experience (e.g., focus on financial information for financial analyst approval, stripping other irrelevant details).

12

Requisition approval is completed via Tonkean who then approves the requisition in SAP ERP on behalf of the approver.

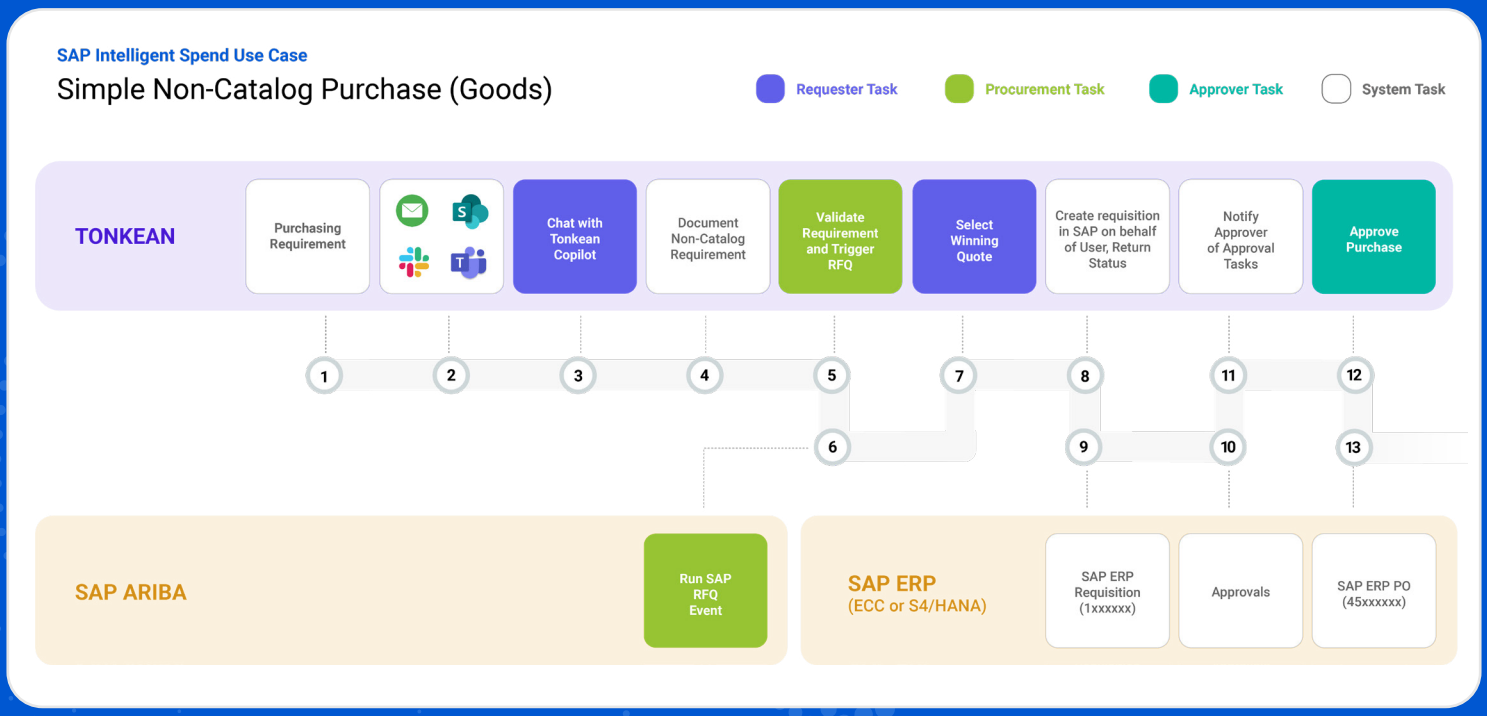
13

When the approval flow is completed, the purchase order is created as per your existing processes and the number (e.g., 45XXXXX) is communicated back to Tonkean and made available to all stakeholders.

14

The rest of the process can also be linked with Tonkean (e.g., goods receipt, invoicing, payment, etc.) to provide end-to-end transaction visibility to stakeholders. By using Tonkean in this manner, you can provide stakeholders with a multi-system audit trail.

By orchestrating the process this way, Tonkean can provide all stakeholders with a complete view of the process. At any point, the requester can query the Enterprise Copilot to check on the status of their requisition or purchase order. Since Tonkean has access to the underlying data, it can return the details to answer the requester's questions in natural language.



Here's how to complete a simple non-catalog purchase in an SAP Intelligent Spend ecosystem

1

A requester has a new purchasing requirement

2

The requester accesses their preferred collaboration platform and prompts Tonkean's Enterprise Copilot.

3

Similar to a catalog purchase, the Enterprise Copilot provides personalized, context-aware support using natural language. It then directs the requester to the appropriate intake experience based on your business rules (e.g., a web form). In this case: documenting their non-catalog requirement for goods.

4

The requester documents their requirements according to the information required by your company. The experience is dynamically updated based on your business rules. For example, you may require three quotes for purchases above $15,000. When the requester provides an estimated cost above this threshold, more questions are asked and the workflow adds an SAP Ariba Sourcing Request for Quotation (RFQ) to the process.

5

Once the request is submitted, procurement receives a validation workflow item. If everything is as expected, they can trigger the creation of an RFQ event in your Ariba Sourcing system (you could also carry out sourcing steps directly in Tonkean or another sourcing system if you don't use Ariba Sourcing).

6

The RFQ event is run in Ariba Sourcing according to how your system and templates are configured. Tonkean queries Ariba Sourcing via API to periodically get the sourcing project status.

7

Once the RFQ is completed, the requester is notified and selects the winning bid.

8

Tonkean creates the requisition in SAP ERP on behalf of the end user with no procurement team intervention.

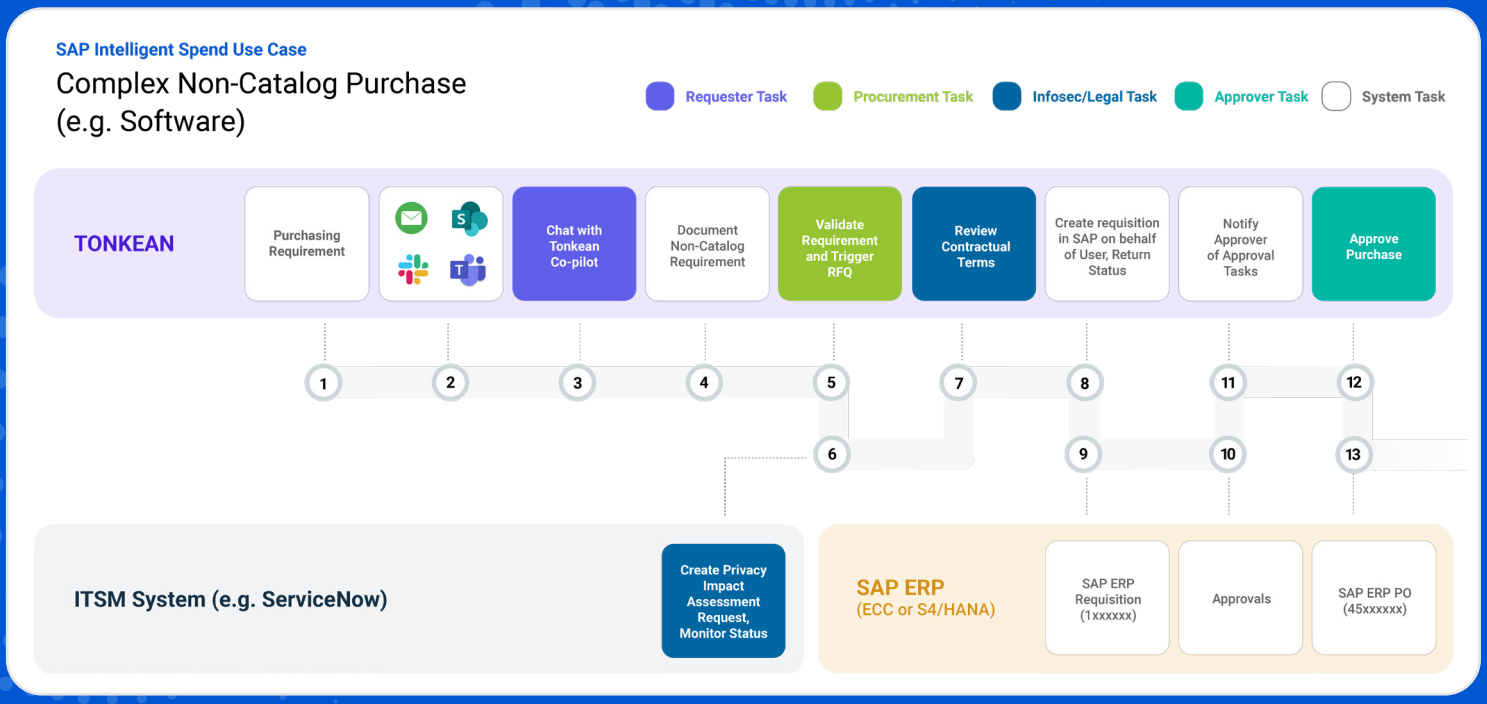
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The requisition number (e.g., 1XXXXXX) is sent back to Tonkean and communicated to the requester.

10

10 to 13. Similar to a catalog purchase, approval flows are facilitated by Tonkean according to how you've chosen to configure them in your SAP ERP system.

You will notice that the beginning of the process is the same for the requester but that his experience is slightly modified based on the context of his purchase (spot buy) and your business rules (three quotes required when purchasing a good above $15,000).



Here's how to complete a complex non-catalog purchase (e.g., for software) in an SAP Intelligent Spend ecosystem

1

A requester has a new purchasing requirement.

2

The requester accesses their preferred collaboration platform and prompts Tonkean's Enterprise Copilot.

3

Similar to other purchases, the Enterprise Copilot provides personalized, context-aware support using natural language. It then directs the requester to the appropriate intake experience based on your business rules (e.g., a web form). In this case: a new software purchase.

It's important to note that your Enterprise Copilot can encourage requesters to use existing software licenses, contracts and/or vendors instead of always facilitating a new purchase request. Provided that data is made available to Tonkean, you can affect demand at the source with the requester instead of needing to catch it after the request is submitted.

4

If no existing software agreements satisfy requester requirements, the requester documents their requirements according to the information required by your company. The experience is dynamically updated based on your business rules. For example, a news software purchase may require an Information Security (InfoSec) review followed by a contract review by Legal.

5

Once the request is submitted, procurement receives a validation workflow item. They contact the vendor, get a quote, and capture the vendor's standard contract. If everything is as expected, they can trigger the InfoSec review in IT's IT Service Management system (e.g., ServiceNow). IT can do their work in their system of record.

If contracts are reviewed and administered in SAP Ariba Contracts, Tonkean could trigger the creation of the Contract Workspace (CW) at this point as well. (You could also carry out contracting steps directly in Tonkean or another contract management system if you don't use Ariba Contracts.)

The beauty is that Tonkean is process/technology agnostic. This means we can thread the needle between your business processes, your SAP Intelligent Spend Management systems, and any other systems provided they offer APIs.

6

InfoSec completes its review activities. During this process, Tonkean monitors and updates the status in the Intake Orchestration solution for all stakeholders to see.

7

Once the InfoSec review is completed, the contract is sent to Legal for review and sign-off. Any revision/negotiation steps with vendors could also be captured in the Intake platform.

8

Once all stakeholders sign off on the purchase, Tonkean creates the requisition in SAP ERP on behalf of the requester with no procurement team intervention.

The rest of the process resembles the 2 previous use cases based on your purchasing approval flow configurations.

This use case highlights the flexibility of Tonkean's Intake Orchestration solution. Whether purchasing software, simple services (fixed price/fixed scope), complex services (time and material/variable scope supported in SAP Fieldglass), or any other combination thereof, Tonkean process templates can be adapted to fit into your organizational context and achieve the desired objectives.

User data can also be pulled in from existing Access Management systems to help automate user and permission management in Tonkean.

That's the power of Tonkean's Intake Orchestration for SAP Intelligent Spend Management solutions.

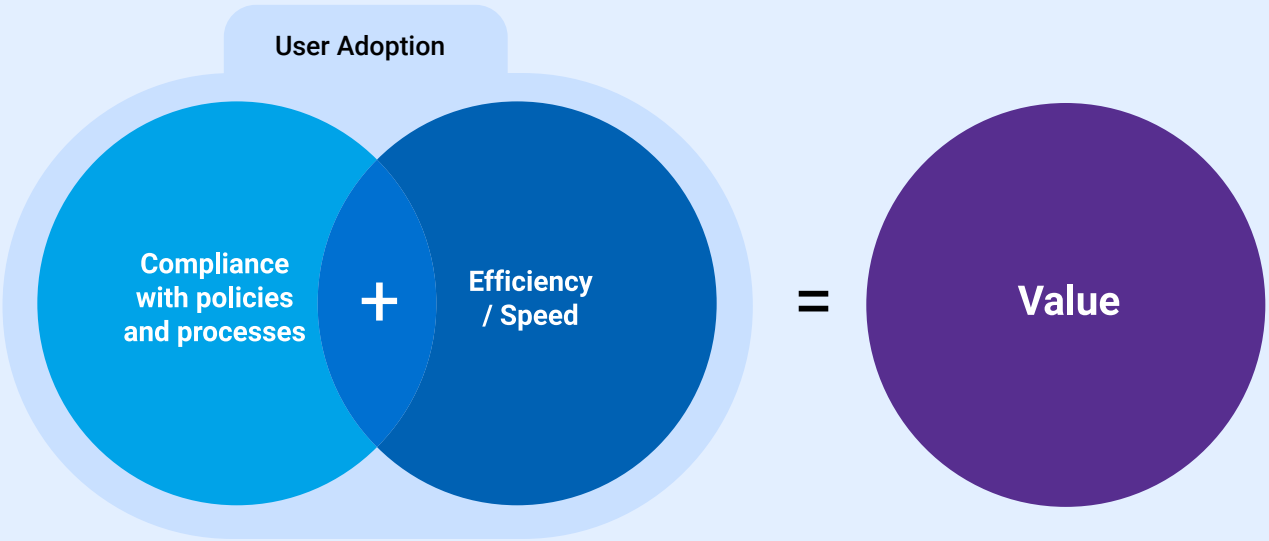
How Does Tonkean Intake and Orchestration Increase the ROI of Existing SAP Investments?

Bottom line: Augmenting your organization's use of SAP Intelligent Spend Management solutions with Tonkean intake and orchestration allows you to get exponentially more value out of your existing SAP investments.

Adoption

The value comes, in part, from vastly improved procurement process adoption. By enabling stakeholders to kick off or approve intake matters from whatever work environments they already spend time in—as opposed to needing to remember how to log into and navigate in SAP systems every time—overnight you can better guarantee compliance, cut down on maverick spend, and eliminate manual work for procurement team members.

In the end, it's positively essential to provide an easy, intuitive user experience for your requesters and stakeholders. Following your business processes needs to be easier than the maverick buying alternative…



In short, great user adoption translates to two main value levers:

- **Compliance with your procurement policies and processes**, which are the operational manifestation of your Procurement strategies.
- **Efficiency, or speed of execution**, which reflects the productivity of your organization when buying external goods and services (e.g., the cost of a purchasing transaction).

Business value

But then there are all sorts of downstream effects from leveraging orchestration that deserve to be enumerated:

- Faster, cleaner handoffs across teams, tools, and functions
- Fewer operational bottlenecks
- Consistently better business outcomes
- More automated steps
- And, of course, much higher overall quality of work, born of higher quality data.

Such operational improvements themselves translate into many different kinds of concrete results:

- Increase user efficiency
- Reduce maverick spend
- Increase indirect spend under management

We're not just speculating here, either. We see it everyday. Our enterprise clients who've utilized orchestration as a means of augmenting their ERP and P2P investments have seen eye-popping results. Some have cut their **cycle times in half.** Others have achieved 100% adoption of key intake processes. Still more have achieved that less tangible—but no less critical—goal of turning procurement, with all the unique expertise it brings to the proverbial table, into a genuinely valued business partner. The transformation is that of a transactional silo turning into a strategic nexus.

Intake and orchestration is a key to unlocking more value, not only from your existing SAP investments, but also from your procurement function as a whole. It's a new category of technology that's poised to revolutionize the procurement function by finally providing procurement the technological means it needs to provide employees seamless, intelligent process experiences and more consistently deliver the sort of unique business value that only procurement can provide. Procurement teams have been searching for years for a tool that empowers them to both operate more efficiently and more effectively—saving time while increasing value. Orchestration technology, by enabling procurement teams to use all of their organization's existing resources and tools more effectively together, is that technology.

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Get started realizing the benefits of Intake Orchestration for SAP today!

Let's talk about your specific SAP ecosystem.